

REPORT OF WOMAN'S WORK FOR THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN OF CHINATOWN, VICTORIA, B.C.

This work has been pursued only at intervals, occasioned by the absence of one or other of the workers here, holiday seasons, sickness in the "Home," and other business.

After my arrival in the province and return from Port Simpson and Chilliwhack last autumn, weeks passed before I had an opportunity, properly speaking, to visit Chinatown. The first date in my note-book is that of November 25th, 1890, when Miss Leake and Sarah accompanied me.

To-day there are not so many men who leave their stores to watch and wonder, as we pass, seeking entrance here and there. I am persuaded, however, every movement is observed suspiciously by some one. The most interesting visit we made that first day was in a store where two women resided. One of them had a baby boy and a little girl of eight years; the other had four boys and one girl of seven, all very small. What delighted us was the evident pleasure of the two women. I called upon these two almost every time Sarah and I went out together, until first one and then the other moved away—to be found after some weeks, as a pleasant surprise, in quite a different neighborhood, and apparently changed circumstances. Sarah, and, when she was married, Carrie, and I were welcomed till they began to bind the feet of the little girls, and until our attempts at rescue work alarmed the husbands.

The change was very marked, especially when we failed to accomplish anything by arresting a procuress who would not give us a girl who had appealed to us, with real or feigned desire, to come to the Home. The magistrate dismissed the case, because, he said, the woman's own admission could not be taken as evidence against her since it *was not given under oath*. Since then there has been other and stronger evidence that the authorities of the city do not intend to contend with the evil, consequently the *evil-doers* "wax worse and worse," are far more impudent and defiant.

One of the worst courts in the city lies beside our new Chinese Church. It is hidden from the streets by fine new brick blocks in front and rear, the old houses having been moved back. The ruined lives of white and black, Chinese and Indian, are to be found here, and some of our baptized people living within sight and sound.

Do you wonder if earnest efforts have been made to bring about a change? You would rather wonder if there had been none. Yet gentlemen, forcing the police to see, are rewarded for their self-sacrificing determination by the question, "What can we do?" "What can you prove?" "If we drive them away from here, they will only go somewhere else." Oh! for men who will consecrate themselves to God for political work, both municipal and provincial, for the salvation of the masses of our own Dominion.

Then, again, the High Binders, sharing in the profits and protecting this business, arouse strong opposition to anything affecting its interests.

The power of this influence we felt, when next we went our rounds after the police-court case already mentioned. Everywhere we went we were received with coldness, and the request not to come again.

The feeling was so clearly expressed in word and manner to Carrie (and so that I might understand it, without showing me too great rudeness), that I thought it wise not to go again during the summer months.

In August I began alone, cautiously. The power of resistance had somewhat worn off. But on my third visit to the mother and five children, whose little girl's feet, since spring, had been undergoing the process of binding, the door was significantly kept locked, though the husband passed through the outer room and saw me waiting. A very tender feeling came as I thought, "Is this how they meet the gentle knocking of the Holy Spirit at their hearts?"