

she answers you without looking up; for, as the saying runs, "You raise your head, you lose one stitch; you lower your head you lose another." How fast her needle flies, though night has come, the children are all curled up fast asleep, and it is so piercingly cold her hands are numb. It seems a marvel each time she sees to thread her needle. Her lamp! let us rather say her corner of Egyptian darkness! Her eyes are fast giving way under the continual night work and the daily smoke. Some melancholy day will see her quite blind. Then poverty will hold the family in a still firmer vise. Pray, where is her education to come in?

The possible depths of Chinese poverty may be shown by two examples: one of a family where the wedding of their son found them too poor to buy a fifteen-cent mat for the k'ang of the bride. They borrowed one. The new wife, who had a comfortable bed-quilt as a part of her dowry, felt guilty to be warm while her new mother-in-law shivered under a tattered excuse for a comforter. After the rest were asleep, the bride would steal out to the other room, put her nice warm covering over her new mother, and go back to her own comfortless bed to shiver. In another village, a dispute as to who should bear the expense of less than two cents' worth of oil an evening, has been known to break up a religious meeting. "But the people are not all as poor as that," says your new missionary, whom no doubts appal and no facts suppress. Unwittingly she thus brings you to the third obstacle:

The multiplication of manual labour. Rightly to understand Chinese life we must turn our backs on the great facts of political economy, and move the hands of the world's great clock back to the times of our great-grandmothers. We long to give our Chinese sister a Christian training. Christian training is instruction, or building up. It is first, as a preparation, intellectual. Even a divine Christ must be intellectually apprehended to be revered. We must wake up our sister's mind; but that is a work of time, and her time, alas! has already so many calls upon it. "Why, how is that?" says the new missionary. "With such a small house, no elaborate cooking, no fussy dressmaking and millinery, no pillowshams and no church fairs, one would think she might have oceans of time."

We will invite her to come and study with us a month.

Intense longing and regret flit across her face. Her "Outside," as she quaintly calls her husband, "needs a new blouse." "Well, bring the shears and we will help you. Fie upon such a miserable little obstacle as that, to blockade the way to the kingdom of heaven! Here is the sewing-machine all threaded; bring us the cloth."

Nay, softly, O sanguine Occidental! The cloth is out there in Nature's lap, tucked away in the cotton-pods. The woman brings it in, four catties of cotton, a great lapful of hard, white wads. Her skilful fingers and feet are soon flying at the cotton gin. After four hours of hard work the seeds are disposed of, and the gin goes back to its corner. Next comes the musical clang of her bow. A whole day of patient, steady labour is needed to reduce those little hard wads to a snowy, fleecy mountain of picked-up cotton. Next comes the cheerful hum of her little spinning-wheel. She is never idle, seek her when you may. But five days slip by before the thread is all spun. We watch and sigh. Next, out comes the clumsy old loom. How monotonous the click-clack of its cradle! How slowly the shuttle goes, though our friend is reputed a good weaver! Five days more have glided away into the eternal past, when a piece of cloth, twenty-five feet long, poor, coarse and narrow, drops from that antiquated loom. Eleven days and a half out of her month gone, and we have only just got to the shears! Another day sees the garment done.

The new missionary cannot sew for all the Chinese women, furnishing time and foreign thread; but she means to see this one experiment through. The woman is a bright one; her mind is being wasted. We will polish it, quicken it, set it fermenting with new ideas; in short, make yeast out of her, with which to leaven the great mass. Then no one will begrudge the day's work and the foreign thread.

"Come and begin to-morrow," she says, as the woman sews on the last button.

"Thank you so much, I should be so glad," says the woman, "but I cannot possibly. My mother-in-law needs a new quilt, my boy has no stockings, my two little girls have no wadded

drawers, and my father-in-law needs a new pair of shoes."

"How long does it take you to make him a pair?"

"Five days."

"And you make the shoes for the whole family?"

"Of course," replies the woman, wondering if the queer new teacher supposes that shoes grow.

"How many pair will keep all seven of you shod for a year?"

"About thirty."

"And how many wadded garments do they need?"

"Good years we have each of us two, that is fourteen in all; and it takes me a month of steady work, with four or five days more for the bedding, and half a month for the summer clothes."

"Over two hundred days of clear, solid sewing!" ejaculated the new missionary, "even if you never had an interruption! And the cloth for all these jackets and drawers, comforters, stockings and shoes, does it all lie out there, eleven days away from the shears?"

"Why, yes; where else could it be?"

The wind is all out of that missionary's sails. They only flap dejectedly. "Time?" she thinks, "Time? Why one person ought to be appointed to eat for a Chinese woman, and one to sleep for her, while a third does her breathing! What a mistake to have an 'Outside' at all! One should be all kernel, and no shell. Oh, for the freedom of those happy lands, where one might at least find an old maid to educate!"—*Northern Messenger*.

"WHOSOEVER WILL, LET HIM TAKE OF THE WATER OF LIFE FREELY."

I WONDER if all of you have heard the story of the sailors who were in a ship, off the east coast of South America, when their water gave out. Nothing more terrible can happen on board ship except fire.

The men made a'l sail they could, and steered due west. Their thirst became fiercer every hour. The hot, tropical sun beat down upon the deck until it almost blistered their bare feet to walk upon it. Their throats became parched, and when the second morning of this dreadful suffering dawned, they could barely speak.