

and it was erected on a different site at an additional expense, because the occupants could look down upon the Chinese courtyards below, and see enacted before their very eyes some of the vilest crimes enumerated in the first chapter of Romans. Dr. S. Wells Williams says: "They are vile and polluted in a shocking degree; their conversation is full of filthy expressions, and their lives of impure acts. . . . By pictures, songs, and aphrodisiacs they excite their sensuality, and, as the apostle says, 'receive in themselves that recompense of their error which is meet.' . . . Female infanticide, in some parts openly confessed, and divested of all disgrace and penalties everywhere; the dreadful prevalence of all the vices charged by the Apostle Paul upon the ancient heathen world; the alarming extent of the use of opium . . . ; the universal practice of lying and dishonest dealings; the unblushing lewdness of old and young; harsh cruelty toward prisoners by officers, and tyranny over slaves by masters—all form a full, unchecked torrent of human depravity, and prove the existence of a kind and degree of moral degradation, of which an excessive statement can scarcely be made, or an adequate conception hardly be formed."

And yet there are people who say the Chinese do not need Christianity!

2. *What have existing religions done for them?*—There are in China three sects or systems of belief which have moulded the religious faith of the Empire. They are Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism.

(1) **CONFUCIANISM.**—Confucianism, or the Church of the Learned, is the State religion of China. It takes its name from the great sage, but it dates away back to the early dawn of Chinese history. Confucius was, as he himself says, merely a reviver of the usages of the ancient kings, a transmitter of the doctrines of the ancient sages. He was a *reviver and transmitter*—an editor rather than an author. Confucianism cannot properly be termed a religion (indeed, there is no generic word for religion in the Chinese language), but it is rather a system of ethics and political economy. An eminent authority says: "The State religion can no more be called the religion of the Chinese than the teachings of Socrates could be termed the faith of the Greeks." It is silent on the great questions of human origin and human destiny, and it teaches nothing of the relation of man to a higher Power. "I know not life, how can I know death!" was the unsatisfactory answer the sage gave to the disciple who ventured to ask about death; and when asked in his last illness to whom he would sacrifice, he said he had already worshipped.

Ancestral worship is the keystone of the Confucian arch. This is a most ancient cult, dating back at least to the time of Shun (B.C. 2250), and the sages are responsible for perpetuating it. One writer says, they "have bound upon the millions of China a most degrading slavery—the slavery of the living to the dead." The worship of ancestors is the stronghold of Confucianism. This is the real religion of the Chinese; and the hardest thing for a convert to Christianity to give up is his ancestral