

# Missionary World.

## MISSIONS TO CHINESE WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA.

Work among these classes is like the sympathetic jewel, the opal, which needs the warm grasp of the human hand to bring out its brightness and beauty. So this work needs the grasp of the same human hand, to bring out from what seemed dark and unattractive that which is animating and beautiful. Who has not seen, as this work has developed, the very faces changed into brightness? Those who visit among Chinese women and children, as teachers, missionaries, and volunteers—all say we reach the hearts of these secluded people by showing kindness. One says, "I wash and dress a poor sick baby, go for the doctor, settle a quarrel, go to the police, listen to their tale of woe, invite them to my house, watch for half an hour to make a signal of sympathy to some poor slave, while a friend with me will engage the mistress in conversation; and in many cases where all religious teaching has been refused, the response, after these repeated acts of kindness is, 'I wish you come and teach us, we want to see you every day.'" The writer heard one Chinese woman in an underground room where no ray of light entered, the woman not having been outside that room for ten years, sing in a sweet voice, "Nearer, my God, to Thee." Who can tell but that one hymn may fit that soul to shine as the stars forever.

There are one hundred pupils in Chinese schools in San Francisco under care of the Occidental Board, and hundreds who have gone out from them in years gone by. One Chinese woman is doing evangelistic work in China, another in San Jose, Cal., another in Portland, Ore.; and Metu, our Japanese girl, is organist in the church and in many ways assists. We have missionary and temperance societies, and social and industrial meetings where Christian Chinese women give lessons in the Gospel.

In San Francisco, over one hundred families are visited. In Los Angeles, prayer-meetings in the homes have been greatly blessed. The husband of a Chinese woman fitted up a room in their house with new carpet, lamp and lounge, then said to his wife, "This room for your Christian friends, have prayer-meeting here." In San Jose, one of the Chinese girls from the Home in company with a lady visits from house to house. This girl having the love of Christ in her heart and the power to communicate it in their own language, we hope great good will be done. In Sacramento, the work has doubled within a short time. Prayer-meetings are held with the women. Several lead in prayer, and can read the Scriptures intelligently. May we, Christians women, realize our responsibilities and privileges in being permitted to carry the sweet Gospel of peace to the Chinese in our land. In San Francisco, work has already been begun on our new "Home" for Chinese, Japanese, and Syrians, who are appealing for our help, and already the enquiry comes, "Can we not furnish a room for some poor soul fleeing from a slavery worse than death?" The cost of furnishing the girls' rooms will be from fifty to seventy-five dollars apiece.

We cordially invite all who visit San Francisco to come to our new Headquarters and Mission Home, where we can talk over "all His wondrous works."—Mrs. E. Y. Garrette.

It is said that the Rev. Mr. McAll began preaching in Paris knowing only three words in French—"God loves you." And that has been his theme ever since.

The first woman physician to India was Dr. Clara Swain in 1869, to China Dr. Lucinda Combs in 1873, to Japan Dr. Florence Hamblet in 1883; and to Corea about four years ago Dr. Meta Howard. All sent out by the Methodist women.

The tomb of Mahomet is covered with diamonds, sapphires and rubies valued at \$10,000,000. How fortunate for Christianity that the very site of the tomb of its divine Founder is unknown; and so love and reverence are compelled to expend themselves in far worthier ways, even in walking in His footsteps and carrying His kingdom to the ends of the earth.

Three missionary societies have passed the million-dollar mark, to wit, the English Church Missionary Society, which is also almost half way toward two millions; the Methodist Episcopal, and the Presbyterian; nor are two or three more so very far behind.

"Richest are they  
That live for Christ so well  
The longest day  
Would scarce suffice to tell  
In what wide ways their benefactions fell."

When Morrison set forth for China in 1807 he must needs journey from England via New York. After his final arrangements for the journey had been made in this city with the vessel owner, the latter wheeled around from his desk and said with a smile of superior sagacity, "So, Mr. Morrison, you really expect you will make an impression on the idolatry of the great Chinese Empire?" "No, Sir," replied with emphasis, this pioneer missionary to the Middle Kingdom with its hundreds of millions, and then utterly closed against all foreigners—"No, Sir, but I expect that God will."

The Free Church Monthly does well to recall that in Tahiti fourteen years passed without a convert—now there are 850,000 Christians in Western Polynesia. At the end of ten years Judson had only 18 to show as the fruit of his toil; since then the rate of increase has been so great in Burmah that during the interval a new church has, on an average, been established every three weeks. Ground was first broken in China in 1842; now there have been gathered into the Church nearly 50,000 converts. In Fiji the Wesleyans entered in 1835, when the darkness of heathenism reigned everywhere; but in 1885 there were 1,300 churches in the group, with 104,000 habitual attendants on public worship.

### HUMDRUM OCCUPATIONS.

The Prince of Wales, in the interesting little speech which he made at the Agricultural Hall, Islington, in opening the National Workmen's Exhibition, lamented the effect of the subdivision of labour in depriving the labourer of any opportunity of taking pride in his work. If a man only makes a small part of any product, he said—for instance, the head to a pin, or even the pin to a head—he can hardly throw his mind, still less his soul, into that very fragmentary achievement. The consequence is that the maker of such fragments finds it impossible to express his higher nature in the work by which he lives. He becomes a mere mechanic, a mere drudge; and though the consumer benefits, and benefits largely, by this subdivision of labour, getting both vastly cheaper and generally vastly more effective products by means of it, the operative suffers, having nothing to do into which he can really pour his heart and soul.

The Prince of Wales is quite right in his inference; but it may fairly be doubted whether to the majority of men it is a great misfortune to have an occupation which does not absorb the attention and elicit the character of the man, as any artistic occupation absorbs his attention and elicits his character. Are humdrum occupations without great advantages? Consider only that almost all occupations, even when requiring at first very considerable skill and delicacy of manipulation, tend to become humdrum so soon as the art is acquired of doing them with the highest efficiency. Unless the method of doing them has to be varied in every separate case, the art soon becomes a sort of tact hardly requiring the serious attention of the artificer. Look at a woman with even the most elaborate fancy work. As soon as her fingers are well trained to it, and discharge their function as they

ought, you see that she hardly needs to think at all of what she is doing, and that heart and soul wander off to the topics which interest her most. You see a smile steal over her face as she remembers her children's quaint little vagaries, or she sighs as she thinks of the dying mother or the anxious husband. Her heart and soul are no longer in the mere work, elaborate though it be. The stitch has been thoroughly learnt, the practice of it is merely automatic—"reflex action," as the physiologists call it—and the heart and soul are at liberty to expatiate on any subject which most deeply interests her. In a word, even the difficult technique in which she is engaged, has become for her a humdrum occupation.

Now, when Nature takes so much pains to reduce the organization of even the highest skill to an automatic process, is it likely that there can be any great misfortune in the mere fact that a constantly increasing proportion of the work of the world tends to become automatic, and falls naturally into the character of humdrum work? We suspect that it is no misfortune at all, that it may be on the whole a beneficent provision for liberating the heart and soul of the worker to dwell on the class of subjects which best feed—or, at all events, in the higher class of minds best feed—the heart or the imagination. We remember hearing how three sisters, all of them women of a good deal of intelligence and warmth of character, were once comparing their favorite occupations. One of them said she enjoyed her music so much; another that reading poetry was her chief delight; while the third, and certainly the cleverest of the three, said: "Well, for my part, there is nothing that soothes me so much as patching an old chemise." The truth was that that not very intellectual occupation set her mind and heart free to dwell on the thoughts and objects which most deeply interested her, while at the same time giving her the soothing feeling that she was doing something useful, and contributing to the economy and comfort of the household. Indeed, we doubt very much whether it is either always, or often, a great blessing to have for your chief work in life that which takes up your whole attention, and admits of no excursions beyond its range. It may be a very great blessing when the subjects of thought on which the mind chiefly dwells are of a very painful and unnerving kind. But in nine cases out of ten, this is not so; and the only effect of an occupation which concentrates the whole energy of the mind, is to exclude from a man's thoughts those casual glimpses of his fellow-creatures' interests and feelings by which mainly he comes to understand them, and to realize that there are a good many competing interests in the world, and that he is not the very centre of creation.

We believe that what are called the engrossing and intellectual occupations are by no means those which most promote the health and unselfishness of the soul. As it is not an engrossed mind which catches the most vivid glimpses of the beauty of Nature, so it is not an engrossed mind which catches the most vivid glimpses of the needs and characteristic attitudes, and unsatisfied desires of the people about us. What Wordsworth says of Nature is equally true of man:—

"Nor less I deem that there are Powers  
Which of themselves our minds impress;  
That we can feed this mind of ours  
In a wise passiveness."

It is humdrum occupations which best minister to this "wise passiveness." Who has not experienced those flashes of new insight in the course of a solitary walk or ride or other purely automatic proceeding, which seldom, or never, come to us when engaged in what requires our full attention? It is the humdrum occupation which best liberates the heart and soul and imagination of man to muse on that which fills it with life and energy. From Joseph and David onwards, how many star-gazing shepherds have become poets or astronomers or shepherds of the people in the higher sense? And though, of course, these greater results of humdrum occupations are relatively rare, how much of the humanity of man has grown up in the musings on each other's needs and interests which the soothing humdrum occupations of knitting or netting, or the carpenter's shop, or the cobbler's awl, or the tailor's or seamstress's needle, promote.

We cannot believe that Nature takes so much pains to organise into a sort of automatic mechanism such large portions of our life, if that process does not tend to stimulate the growth of the gentler affections and to give the heart and soul a liberty and spontaneity of insight they could not otherwise acquire. If even the sharp Yankee enjoys the perfectly useless whittling of a stick for the purpose of soothing his mind with the mere appearance of work, while his active wits are engaged in pondering the next attack he shall make on the witless world, we can well understand how a useful occupation which is purely humdrum and makes no draft upon the attention, soothes the mind while it muses on the growing needs of children or friends, or on the strange medley of human joys and griefs, and hopes and wants. Engrossing occupations frequently injure the mind by the self-importance they are apt to produce, and still more, perhaps, by rendering it unfit for those leisurely side-glances on the world about us, in which the best experience of man is gained. Even the poet's highest thoughts, even Shakespeare's finest reveries, seem to be the fruit not of hard study, but of those careless flashes of insight which it the best effect of unexacting humdrum occupations to promote. The men who throw their whole heart and life into their ordinary occupations are very apt to have a poorer reserve of vividness and insight for their human relations, than those who feed their souls on life's various visions while they occupy their fingers with a useful and fruitful but unexacting toil. And even if the work they do be hardly of a kind in which they can take pride, may not that be all the better for them? After all, we are in many respects only parts of a great whole, and to feel that we are only parts of a great whole, is very good as promoting humility, and because it does not stimulate our vanity and excite our self-approval.

—The Spectator.

### THE QUEEN OF THE BELGIANS.

Though possessing all the pride and prestige of the house of Hapsburg, with the blood of Maria Teresa in her veins, and tenderly devoted to her own native land, the Queen of the Belgians has so thoroughly identified herself with the country of her adoption that she is apt to forget sometimes that she has other ties. Music and painting are a solace and a recreation to Her Majesty, who is very bright and cheerful among her whole household. She likes to improvise little concerts at which her ladies have to take part as performers; the Queen herself plays the harp. The opera and the fine concerts given so frequently in Brussels are zealously patronized. The annual fancy fair held for charitable institutions, when the first ladies of the land vie with each other in producing works of art, finds always in her a faithful contributor, and the paintings signed "Marie Henriette" are eagerly sought for at a high price. And so she identifies herself with her people in their good works, their joys and their sorrows. Queen Marie Henriette has often been spoken of as a wonderful equestrian, and so, indeed, she is. All who know Brussels must be familiar with the pretty pony carriage and its beautiful little Hungarian horses, dark cream colour, with black manes and tails. They are all bred on her own stud farm, and sometimes when royal visitors are staying with Her Majesty two or three carriages may be seen driving to the Bois de la Cambre with four horses and outriders, the horses all identical.

### BOOKS IN ODD FORMS.

At Warsenstein, in Germany, there is perhaps, one of the most curiously original collections of books in the world. It is really a botanical collection. Outwardly each volume presents the appearance of a block of wood, and that is what it actually is; but a minute examination reveals the fact that it is also a complete history of the particular tree which it represents. At the back of the book the bark has been removed from a space which allows the scientific and the common name of the tree to be placed as a title for the book. One side is formed from the split wood of the tree, showing its grain and natural fracture; the other side shows the wood when worked smooth and varnished. One end shows the grain as left by the saw, and the other the finely polished wood. On opening the book it is found to contain the fruit, seeds, leaves, and other products of the tree, the moss which usually grows upon its trunk, and the insects which feed upon the different parts of the tree. These are supplemented by a well-printed full description of the tree. In fact, everything which has a bearing upon that particular tree secures a place in this collection.

Knowledge is the treasure of the mind; discretion the key to it; and it illustrates all other learning, as the lapidary does unpolished diamonds.