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NEW YEAR'S.

I sometimes feel the thread of life is slender,
And know with me the work must be wrought;
Then grows my heart to other hearts more tender,
The time,
The time is short.

A shepherd's tent of reeds and flowers decaying,
That night winds soon will crumble into naught;
So seems my life, for some rude blast delaying.
The time,
The time is short.

Up, up, my soul, the long-spent time redeeming;
Sow thou the seeds of better deed and thought;
Light other lamps while yet thy light is beaming.
The time,
The time is short.

Think of the good thou might'st have done when brightly
The suns to thee life's choicest seasons brought;
Hours lost to God in pleasures passing lightly.
The time,
The time is short.

Think of the drooping eyes that might have lifted
To see the good that Heaven to thee hath taught;
The unhelped wrecks that past life's bark have drifted.
The time,
The time is short.

Think of the feet that fall by misdirection;
Of noblest souls to loss and ruin brought,
Because their lives are barren of affection:
The time,
The time is short.

The time is short. Then be thy heart a brother's
To every heart that needs thy help in aught;
Soon thou may'st need the sympathy of others.
The time,
The time is short.

If thou hast friends, give them thy best endeavour,
Thy warmest impulse and thy purest thought,
Keeping in mind in word and action ever,
The time,
The time is short.

Each thought resentful from thy mind be driven,
And cherish love by sweet forgiveness bought;
Thou soon wilt need the pitying love of Heaven.
The time,
The time is short.

[illegible] summer winds, aroma-laden, sweet,
Compassionate rest, their work forever wrought;
[illegible] makes the moss and fern will cover.
[illegible] time,
The time is short.

Up, up, my soul, the shade will soon be falling;
Some good return in life's seasons wrought;
Forget thyself, at duty's angel's calling.
The time,
The time is short.

By all the lapses thou hast been forgiven,
By all the lessons prayer to thee hath taught,
To others teach the sympathies of Heaven.
The time,
The time is short.

To others teach the overcoming power
That thee at last to God's sweet peace hath brought;
Glad memories make to bless life's final hour.
The time,
The time is short.

From what thou art each day, whate'er thy station,
Are new creations good or evil wrought;
Seek thou thy joy in others' elevation.
The time,
The time is short.

—*Selected.*

IT'S only whan ye dinna want to fa' asleep 'at it luiks fears me to ye. An' maybe the fear o' death comes in the same way; we're feared at it, 'cause we're no a'thegither ready for it, but whan the richt time comes it'll be as nat'ral as fa'in asleep whan we're doonricht sleepy.—*R. Falconer.*

WHAT IS RELIGION FOR?—How deeply rooted is the feeling that religion has a chief value with reference to the life beyond the grave! This is illustrated in the familiar story of the woman who, when asked if her sick husband wouldn't like a neighbouring clergyman to call and see him, answered promptly, "Oh no! he's not so sick as all that!"—*Ex.*

HE who waits and waits until he may do something astonishingly noble, all at once, will hardly be likely to ever find that wished for time. Seldom do the mountains tower abruptly from the even plain. The lesser hills generally lead up to them by gradual ascent. So it is with the training of our lives. We need first to climb the lesser heights of soul beauty, and then the way to the more sublime is opened up. In fact, there need be no great surprise if the magnificent heroism is never within reach. There is but one Yellowstone Park on the continent, but there are thousands of grassy glades and bosky dells that charm with their modest—if you please, more ordinary—beauty day by day. These hundreds of thousands of weary wayfarers may know, and be refreshed by them. To the most the National Park must remain a pictured dream. So with our lives. It is not by marvels of illustrious excellence and deeds of resplendent, fame-winning virtue that good is to be done. By the quiet, daily kindnesses in business life, and the sweet helpfulness in the family circle, and the Christlike temper towards friends, by unswerving consistency in humble duties faithfully done, because consecrated to the Master—thus it is that the beauty of holiness is shown. Do not *deliberate* too much, therefore, but *do* with your might what your hands find to do.

Mission Work.

THE MISSIONARY.—We clip a sentence or two from a paper by Mr. Cust, a prominent layman, of London, Eng., read at the recent anniversary of the A. B. C. F. M. B. "The missionary appears to me to be the highest type of human excellence in the nineteenth century, and his profession to be the noblest. He has the enterprise of the merchant, without the narrow desire of gain; the dauntlessness of the soldier, without the necessity of shedding blood; the zeal of the geographical explorer, but for a higher motive than science. . . . There stands an honest, God-fearing man—one of the reader's own race and kin and language—sent out to preach the gospel by his Church, and is he not something, in this cold, self-seeking, material age, to be proud of? He has given up the prospect of wealth and honour and ease in his own country, and has gone out to endure hardship for the sake of the suffering, the oppressed, and the ignorant."

ENGLISH PRESBYTERIAN MISSIONS IN CHINA.—It would never do, in China especially, to *feed* the patients as well as treat them. The hospital would soon be over-run with paupers, who would feign all manner of sickness for the sake of their rice. And it would never do to allow the patients, or those who may be there to wait on them, to do their own cooking in the hospital kitchen, as is done in some places. The problem is thus solved: "The in-patients are supplied *ad-libitum* with cooked rice from the hospital kitchen, at the rate of fifteen cash a meal, a daily outlay to each patient of about 1¾d. for his staple food; his condiments he buys for himself. At this rate the kitchen can be worked at a profit. The [illegible] itself to the patients, and [illegible] the cleanliness of the wards," [illegible] work, and it [illegible] medical [illegible] as Dr. McKay has done from the Aaron and Hur so to preaches the Word.

IN the same [illegible] Formosa from o[illegible] Rev. Mr. Thom[illegible] one of the hindrances of the work which is often lost sight of. He writes, "I do not think that Christians at home at all fully realize what is one of the serious difficulties in our way here—the people have not the Bible; this is startling, yet, practically, so it is. When I say 'the people,' I mean the majority who do not understand the 'character,' and have not learnt the Romanised colloquial." The "character" is the name by which the curious clumps of dots and strokes which pass with them for printed words are known. The "Romanised colloquial" is the spoken language of the common people printed in our ordinary English letters—the sounds of the words spelled out phonetically. So well has this been done that intelligent Chinese can learn to read it in a few months. "How full of meaning this fact is! Can we wonder then, bearing this in mind, that the native churches do not always show that progress in the divine life for which we long and pray? Rather is it surprising perhaps that they have possession of as much truth as they have. How should we British Christians do at home without the life giving, quickening, sanctifying, precious Word of God? Therefore it seems more and more important to me that we should press the study of the Romanised Vernacular." In *our* Formosa Mission great prominence has been given to this from the first, and we are glad to see that our brethren of the English Presbyterian Mission are following the good example. It is welcome news that the Church in Formosa is to have its newspaper. The announcement of so important an event in the mission is very modestly made: "Mr. Barclay's issue of a monthly Church paper from the printing press here will, I hope, give an impulse to the study of the Romanised colloquial. Two numbers have been printed and distributed, and I think are likely to have a beneficial influence on Church life generally." Even the rulers are beginning to believe in the missionary doctor, and the invasion of the French has been the occasion of helping the mission hospital. "Dr. Anderson has repeatedly been sent for by mandarins in the city here; and the other day, on visiting the hospital, I saw a quantity of medical stores which had been sent to him as a present from the Tao-tai, and which had been originally bought, doubtless at great expense, in Hong-Kong, to be in readiness for the expected bombardment of Taiwanfoo."

CHUNDER SEN'S OPINION.—"I hate the idea of conjugating Christ's success in India in the future tense," wrote Chunder Sen, only a brief season before his death; "it is a thing already largely achieved—yes, I say most emphatically, the Spirit of Christ has already gone far into the depths of India's heart, and I declare as my solemn, deliberate conviction, that the sanctifying, saving influences of Christ's life and teachings have already wrought wonders in this land. Jesus Christ brings more than a system of morals; He imparts the germ of a new life; this is His wonder-working power."

THE GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY.—The signs of the breaking-up of old faiths, of the rapid disintegration of that twin barrier of caste and custom which for so many ages has withstood, and that successfully, every effort of outside influence to effect a lodgment and to work a change in Hindu character and Hindu life; the expressed conviction of the people that the religion of Jesus Christ is the religion of the India that is to be; their eager and pathetic appeals to foreign aid for the overcoming of that inertia which hinders all moral and social reform, the rapid spread of secular education, the influx of ideas—all these considerations emphasize most strongly the duty which rests upon us to seize the passing moment and to improve to the utmost this golden opportunity in the history of the Indian races.—*Missionary Herald.*

CONFUCIUS, BUDDHA, OR CHRIST.—A man had fallen into a deep, dark pit, and lay in its miry bottom, groaning and utterly unable to move. Confucius walked by, approaching the edge of the pit, and said, "Poor fellow, I am very sorry for you. Why were you such a fool as to get in there? Let me give you a piece of advice; if you get out, don't get in again."

A Buddhist priest next came by, and said, "Poor fellow! I am very much pained to see you there. I think if you could scramble up two-thirds of the way, or even half, I could reach you and lift you up the rest." But the man in the pit was entirely helpless and unable to rise.

Next the Saviour came by, and hearing the cries, went to the very brink of the pit, stretched down, and laid hold of the poor man, brought him up and said, "Go, and sin no more."—*A Chinese Preacher.*

ENGLISH IN JAPAN.—The most remarkable feature in the present literary history of Japan is the strenuous effort that is being made to introduce the study of English into all the schools of the people. Owing to the lack of teachers it is impossible to bring it into the curriculum of the common schools this year; but notice has been given that next year the teachers of these schools [illegible] proving [illegible] of the English language. [illegible] given an immense impulse to the study of English, resulting, I am told, in the sale of many tens of thousands of spelling-books and readers during the past few months. What results will be gained in the knowledge of English, it is impossible definitely to predict; but it seems probable that, by the end of eight or ten years, hundreds of thousands of the people will be able to read English with more or less ease, and the score of English books now published in Japan will have been increased to hundreds. We shall all watch with the deepest interest the remoter results of this most remarkable experiment.—*Missionary Herald.*

PREACHING TO THE CHINESE.

BY A MISSIONARY IN MANCHURIA.

THE management of a Chinese crowd is far from an easy matter to a tyro in the art of dealing with Eastern masses.

The remembrance of one episode is still fresh in my mind. When talking to a large audience with, for me, considerable freedom, I, in a moment of weakness and in a side whisper, satisfied one anxious enquirer by telling him that I was twenty-eight years of age. "Er shih pah! Er shih pah!" (twenty-eight! twenty-eight!) went round the crowd like electricity; a broad grin deepened upon every countenance; the question and answer were repeated on every hand; books which were being examined were carelessly dropped, and one enterprising well-dressed youth, while I was looking in an opposite direction, playfully pulled my moustache, to make sure, I presume, that I was not masquerading. What could be done? I mournfully gathered up my books, stalked away in as dignified a manner as possible under the circumstances, with loud cries of "Er shih pah" ringing in my ears, and returned to my inn a sadder and a wiser man.

But it is not always so. When the attention of a crowd is once fairly fixed their demeanour is all that a preacher of good tidings can desire; sentence after sentence is repeated after you by approving listeners; while nods of the head and assenting "Ah's" testify that the truth is going home to the hearts and consciences of the people. On the whole it is happy work preaching to the Chinese; they are, with rare exceptions, so respectful and pleasant in their demeanour, and so evidently willing at all events to give you a fair hearing; they will often eagerly conduct you to a place where you can stand and speak undisturbed by traffic, protect you from ignorant and vicious men, and if, as was often the case with me, you are imperfectly understood, one man quicker of apprehension than his duller neighbours will constitute himself your interpreter and put your bad Chinese into understandable language. Of course the longer one is in China, and the more conversant one becomes with the language, manners and habits of the people, the greater the pleasure and profit of labouring amongst so unique a race.

Woman's Work.

WOMAN'S HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETIES.

[CIRCULAR LETTER.]

BRANTFORD, Jan. 1st, 1886.

MY DEAR SIR,—The General Assembly at its last meeting in Montreal empowered the Home Mission Committee to prepare a Constitution and Rules for the formation of "Women's Missionary Societies" on behalf of Home Mission work. The Executive of the Home Mission Committee submit the following for the formation of *Congregational Societies.* As these societies increase in number, a Constitution and By-laws will be prepared for *Mission Bands, Presbyterial Societies,* and a *General Woman's Home Missionary Society* of all the presbyteries of the Western Section of the Church.

WOMAN'S CONGREGATIONAL HOME MISSION SOCIETIES.

I.—The society shall be called the "Woman's Home Missionary Society of the ....., in connection with the Presbyterian Church in Canada."

II.—The object of the society shall be to aid the Home Mission Committee in its work in destitute localities by contributions in money, or by assistance in other ways to the missionaries and their families in distant parts of the Home Mission field.

III.—The officers of the society shall be a president, a vice-president, a corresponding and a recording secretary, and a treasurer, to be elected annually and to hold office until their successors are appointed.

IV.—The president shall preside at all meetings of the society, and perform such other duties as are incident to the office. She shall call special meetings upon the request of three members, and shall be, *ex-officio,* a member of all standing committees. She shall sign all drafts upon the treasury before they are p[illegible]

V.—In the absence of the president, th[illegible] president shall perform all the duties [illegible] office.

VI.—The treasurer shall receive and he[illegible] keep an account of all money given [illegible] society, and shall disburse it as directed [illegible] society.

VII.—The recording secretary shall keep a record of the proceedings of each meeting, give proper notice of special and stated meetings, and prepare the annual report for the society.

VIII.—The corresponding secretary shall conduct the official correspondence generally, and in particular shall correspond with the Home Mission Committee, with missionaries supported by the society, and with churches and individuals regarding the formation of new societies, in order to awaken still greater interest in Home Mission work.

IX.—Besides the annual meeting for the election of office-bearers, the society shall hold stated meetings, at which papers on Home Mission work, and extracts from letters of Home Missionaries may be read, addresses be given by members of the society or others invited, and the general business of the society transacted.

X.—Each person paying one dollar annually (or such other sum as the society may decide) shall become a member. The payment of..... .....by one person at one time shall constitute life membership.

XI.—Where there are not Presbyterial Societies, and until such time as these are formed, all moneys collected may be sent direct to the Rev. Dr. Reid, Toronto, or to the Convener or Secretary of the General Assembly's Home Mission Committee. The convener and secretary will gladly give any further aid and instructions that may be desired in the formation of such societies. The annual reports of such societies should, in the meantime, be sent to the convener on or before the 1st of May in each year, in time for the annual report for the General Assembly.

XII.—Several adjacent congregations may unite in forming one society, where this is thought more desirable than the establishing of a separate society in each congregation.

As it is exceedingly desirable that there should be a "Woman's Home Missionary Society" in every church, the committee ask your kind assistance in putting this draft constitution into the hands of the women of your congregation who are interested in this work, or bringing the matter before them in such a way as you deem best, in order that steps may be taken for the formation of such a society without delay. Any number of copies of this constitution will be forwarded you as desired.

Yours very truly,

WM. COCHRANE,

Convener Home Mission Committee.

Jesus, in life's way
Lead us, or we stray;
Then behind we shall not linger,
But shall, trustful, watch Thy finger;
Lead us by the hand
To the Fatherland.

—*Count Zinzendorf.*