

distinction is fundamental. Judged from the standpoint of Christian morality the Chinese have none. They are polygamists. They murder their children when it is not convenient to bring them up. No one seriously interferes with them for it. A father has the power of life and death over his son. He has the same over his wife. A mother-in-law may beat, maim and murder her daughter-in-law with impunity. All that can be done is to fine her a little. Instances of the most revolting abuse and torture are known to us here from week to week. The diabolical cruelties practised in this land proclaim that the spirit of morality is not present. Cases of people coming to the foreign hospitals with their eyes put out for trifling offences are by no means infrequent. A woman came to a mission hospital not long ago to have her eyes treated. It was discovered that her mother-in-law had put quicklime into them, and that it was too late to help her. Social life is anything but ideal where such a state of things exists between the members of one family. As for vice, it certainly is present in every form.

The Chinese conception of sin is a very curious and unsatisfactory one. Sin to them is a peccadillo, a fault, something which will cause them to blush and "lose face," or which will bring some trouble upon them. It is not the wrong-doing that troubles a Chinaman, it is the inconvenience of the thing. Rarely does one of them confess his error directly. They have no idea of a personal God in whom morality inheres, and therefore they have no adequate view of sin, and even those who are converts for years, are often very deficient in moral insight. Confucianism aimed at preserving the vital principle and Taoism at refining it, and whatever meaning we take out of that "principle," it is in sore danger of perishing in this land. These systems have magnified faults of etiquette and custom at the expense of truth and righteousness

and the love of God. They have failed in elevating the people in mind and heart; for in spite of many amiable qualities, it is impossible to have a high regard for a nation so much given to deceit and lies. All the systems of China have left, as their finished product, a race of unscrupulous flars of whom there would be more hope if they were without the conceits inculcated by their sages. Turning from this to Christian lands, we find that at any rate the fundamental notions of right and wrong are clearly understood by the vast majority, and that actions are classed into their proper categories in a manner which shows a good degree of moral penetration. The immoral are classed outside of the Church of God. There are always vast numbers who live a good life, and not a few who have nearly become perfect morally; as far as the affairs of daily life are concerned, there are many who may be so regarded. All the institutions of these countries are founded on moral law. It is undeniable that the condition of Christian countries is incomparably superior to that of this people. The struggle in these countries is after morality, and in spite of discouragements there are great improvements being made. Who ever expects the dead forms of paganism to produce the noble specimens of moral character familiar to us in the home lands? The moral forces at work in Christian lands are many and great. Morality is taught and exemplified in the homes of the people, in public and Sabbath-schools, and in the churches. The example of so many great and good men must also be very potent. All that is lacking in China. The power of an endless life—the Gospel renders a sanction and support to the moral law that can hardly be overestimated. Its doctrines render it desirable that men should be moral—its spirit working in them makes them hate sin, and love holiness, and above all, enables them to keep the commandments of God, not indeed perfectly—but per-