

A STRANGE PEOPLE.



CHINA is a very large empire on the other side of the earth from us. It contains many millions of people. They are heathens—that is, they are without the Bible, without the Gospel, and do not know that there is a Saviour, or that they need to be saved; but they are not savages or barbarians; they have large cities, and towns, and villages as we have; they can make many articles as well as we can, and some better; and they have a course of education for their children, though it is very different from ours. Indeed, they differ from us almost in every respect. You will see by the picture that they differ very much in appearance and dress from people in this country. The person who is represented in the picture as examining the other person's foot is a "corn doctor." He is attending to the duties of his profession in the open street, a thing which nobody would ever think of doing on our side of the globe.

The Chinese think a great deal of education. The emperor appoints school examiners all over the country, and no one can become a great man who has not studied diligently for many years. Of course only a few of the boys who go to school can get the Government appointments, which the Emperor gives to those who pass the best examinations; but all, even the poorest, may try for them, and so every one is encouraged to go to school and study.

They have no large school-houses and playgrounds; not more than thirty or forty boys learn together in the same school, which is generally held in one small room. A Chinese boy goes to school when he is about eight years old. He looks very unlike a Canadian boy, with his loose, blue clothing, his shaven head, and wee pig-tail.

Besides his books he always carries a fan. When he comes to school for the first time, he must bring incense sticks, candles, and paper money to burn as an offering to Confucius, whom the Chinese scholar is especially ordered

to reverence. Copy-writing is very carefully taught in these schools, and it is a much more difficult task than your copy-writing. They are most particular about neat writing, and a piece of paper on which words are well written is so much admired that it is a favourite present to receive.

As there is no alphabet, of course the scholar has no spelling-books; but, instead of this, lessons which are called "Character Classics." "The Thousand Character Classic," is a lesson-book with a thousand different words or signs. When the pupil knows these, he begins the study of the "Nine Books," being the writings of Confucius, Mencius and others; and he is thought to have made fair progress who can read these books well after ten years of study. But the great trouble is that with all their learning they never come "to a knowledge of the truth." They are taught a great deal of idolatry and superstition—to worship false gods and to worship their forefathers.

How sad it is that this great empire should be left so long without the light of the Gospel! There are some missionaries there now—perhaps over a hundred—but "what are they among so many?"



PAYING HER WAY.

WHAT has my darling been doing to-day
To pay for her washing and mending?
How can she manage to keep out of debt
For so much caressing and tending?
How can I wait till the years shall have flown,
And the hands have grown large and stronger?
Who will be able the interest to pay
If the debt runs many years longer?

Dear little feet!—how they fly to my side!
White arms my neck are caressing;
Sweetest of kisses are laid on my cheek,
Fair head my shoulder is pressing.
Nothing at all from my darling is due:
From evil may angels defend her!
The debt is discharged as fast as 'tis made;
For love is a legal tender.