

Chinese Work at Home.

The following letter received recently by one of the teachers in the Chinese Sunday schools of Montreal from a Chinaman returning home speaks for itself. It need not be said that the recipient prizes it very highly and willingly publishes it for the encouragement of others in like work.

HONG KONG, November 30th 1897.

MY DEAR TEACHER:—It seems a long time since I have seen you. I hope that you are very well. I do not forget all your kindness to me. You were very kind to teach me about the Gospel of Jesus, to worship God in a proper manner and to avoid idolatry. Now I know God and love to worship Him. My heart trusts in Jesus as my Saviour. He died for my sins. I want to do right and pray God every day to help me. Please pray for me. I shall be very glad to get a letter from you. May God bless you all.

LING FOOT.

Three Faces.

BY T. IVERTON.

For the Review

I once visited a temple dedicated to the worship of Confucius. In the interior there was a large image of the sage. The face is not attractive. It is strong, but cold and dull. Nevertheless it is true to what we know of the sage from other sources. He was a practical man, content with a shallow political virtue. He never had the prolonged struggle with evil through which Gautama passed, and is satisfied with far lower attainments. His main interest is in time, not in eternity, in men rather than in God. He is a philosopher and not a saint. Confucius does not take so serious a view of moral evil and human suffering as Buddha. His aim is to get a well regulated State, and believing that his one philosophy would secure that he rests happy. We may admire him much and concede that he is a good man, but there is something in us that he does not reach. Very different is the impression made by the great image of Buddha, St. Kamakura, in Japan. Here we have a nobler countenance.—The countenance of one who had passed through conflict and suffering, and who has now found repose. Unmistakeable traces of sorrow are left in the calm and thoughtful face, but there is nothing to indicate bitterness of heart. Buddha is an Ephaistos that is no longer in Lemnos. And yet the very pose of the figure speaks of despair rather than of hope, of sorrow rather than of joy. Pacing backwards and forwards in the grove of the monastery, hallowed by the devotions of ages, I wondered how much peace weary souls had found in the Nirvana of Buddha, and still more, if the Father of mercy may not have in some dim way communicated His consolations to them. Then the words of Christ, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," came into my mind and suggested thoughts about the appearance of the Son of Man. What might His face be like? It resembled that of Buddha more than that of Confucius. He too knew conflict, and sorrow and yet had great peace. His face is the index of a heart free from all bitterness and full of tender love. Thus far Buddha keeps us company. But then there plays around the face of Christ the light of immortality and makes it radiant with an ineffable and winsome sweetness. The face of Confucius is dull and cold. That of Buddha sad and sympathetic; that of Christ sympathetic, hopeful and loving. These differences will be perpetuated in those influenced by these great teachers. The disciples of Confucius will be strong men of affairs without refinements or depth of feeling. The devotees of Buddha will be inclined to rest in indolent repose. Christians will ever cherish a hope that forbids clinging to the past, and that urges to noble efforts in every good cause. Christian motives and hopes will secure the strength of Confucianism. The influence and Spirit of Christ will produce more refinement than any meditations on Buddha. He saves the soul by the death of its fondest hopes. Christ by the infusion of a new life in which all good shall be realized. The teaching and example of both

Confucius and Buddha fail because there is no spirit in them. The words of Christ are spirit and life to every soul that receives them. I looked away towards the Olympus of Japan and saw it rise in solitary majesty above the surrounding hills, and so, it occurred to me, does Christ rise above all other teachers—solitary, sublime and peerless, the only one competent to deal with the sins and sorrows of the world.

Voices of the Spring.

That person must be strangely constituted who does not feel glad at the coming of spring. Nature herself seems joyful. The leaves are brightest and the song-birds are gayest, while the first flowers of the year seem somehow to be sweeter and purer than those of the advancing months. The very woods are vocal with new-found song. But it is not with the music of the birds that we are now concerned. Spring, like all God's works, has its special teaching and message for those whose ears are open and whose hearts are willing to learn.

The first of these is suggested by the freshness of spring. The leaves never look so vividly green as when they first come to clothe the bare branches that stood out so gaunt and black through all the storms of winter. We are attracted by the leafage because it is fresh, and by the songs of the birds because they have so long been silent.

Now nothing lends greater beauty and attractiveness to a man's life than this same quality of freshness. It is quite possible for a Christian to stagnate. He may content himself with resting on a past experience, and may live on from month to month without any new and fuller vision of Christ, learning nothing new, receiving no fresh impulse, gaining no increase of spiritual vigor, engaging in no effort to advance—becoming just a drone instead of a worker. Such is the inevitable result of prayer omitted, of the Bible laid away on the shelf, and of Christian service neglected. But there is on the other hand, a type of life that resembles nothing so much as a fresh, running stream. Does not the Master Himself use the same figure? "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into eternal life." "He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

But spring sings to us also with a voice of hope. All through the winter it has seemed as though the bulbs and roots and seeds had perished in the frozen land. Thaw has followed frost, showers have fallen, occasionally the sunshine has been genial in its warmth, and there have occurred spells of that dark, still, close weather when the wood-lark sings late and the rooks begin to repair their nests in the high elms. But still the spring has lingered and no green blade has pierced the surface. The very air seemed heavy with disappointment.

Now all is changed. the long-closed buds are opening, pale green spikes are everywhere showing in the mellow glebe, snow drops may be found in sheltered nooks, the hum of insects is in the air, and the song of birds echoes through the forest glades. Winter taught us patience: spring, with its promise of a coming summer, bids us rejoice in hope. The nights are still cold, vegetation makes but slow progress, late frosts may still do mischief, it is yet many months ere the fruitfulness of harvest will gladden the farmer's eye. Still he rejoices, because everything is full of promise for the future.

Can we not learn this lesson of hope for our own life? We may have passed through a long season of disappointment and weary waiting. Plans that we formed—plans not merely prudent but pious—have so far been quite unsuccessful. We have endured cold and stormy weather and perhaps have allowed the frost to enter our hearts. Now listen to the lesson of spring. The promise made to Noah that "while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease," has a far-reaching application.

There is no such thing as loss in God's universe. Cause must be followed by effect, though not always at the time or in the way that we may expect. Every