

Missionary World.

THE GOSPEL IN CHINA.

The *Swaatow Church News* tells a bright story of the "casual" manner in which the Gospel finds its way from point to point in China. A Chinaman went on business to Shanghai from his native place in South China. In Shanghai he bought a copy of St. Luke's Gospel. On his way home he looked into it, liked it, and read it again. When he reached home his neighbours wished to hear his news from Shanghai. So he told them all he had met with and all he had seen, and finally he mentioned the book he had bought, and read a little of it to them. The next evening there were a number again wishing to hear his news, and he read a few more verses in Luke's book. This occurred several times, till there were a good many interested, and wishing to read the book for themselves. No other copies could be procured there, so they took the one volume which they had, and taking it to pieces leaf by leaf, made a good many copies of it, and gave each man a copy, and then every evening they met and read it. "Afterwards a preacher came to the town and preached the doctrine of the Lord Jesus in the streets and lanes, when to his surprise his hearers said to him, 'What ye are preaching we already know; we have long worshipped Jesus and have ceased to worship the idols which we once worshipped.' May not this volume of a book be compared to a seed which fell in good soil and brought forth fruit?"

A sale of work in Windsor Lecture Hall, Belfast, Ireland, in aid of the fund for training medical missionaries and the Zenana mission, was opened by Dr. J. G. Paton.

In his address he spoke as follows: "He was very much pleased to see so many assembled here in connection with such an undertaking as the one upon which they had now entered. Things had changed now, when not only in the churches they could get up great meetings, but when so many ladies and gentlemen came together to advance mission interests by the sale of work such as they had prepared and placed before them here. If the missionaries for whom they were preparing this work could look in and see so many people assembled together to assist them, how it would thrill their hearts with joy to think that they had the sympathy and prayers of so many friends so far away. Often when a tomahawk was raised above his head, he had felt that he could not pray as he should have liked. But he felt there that his safety did not depend on his prayers alone. How many of God's people were everywhere praying for missionaries; and these prayers were heard by Jesus, and the dear Lord knew how to answer. Well, if the missionaries could look and see them there assembled, they would get encouragement. But he hoped some of those present would write and tell them of this work and of this meeting. They had no idea of the encouragement a missionary derived from a letter sent by some kind-hearted Christian friend assuring him that he had their prayers and sympathy while labouring with difficulties and dangers; and very often God ordered it that such letters arrived at a time of trouble and trial. Now, he was not one of those who were easily upset with difficulties, for he thought everything ought to show that he was in the hands of Jesus and feel that he is safe. He was away from his family for nine months last year, and during all that time he only saw them once, and he became very much disheartened, (an unusual thing for him to do) when he was about to sail in the prospect of taking a wider tour through the country that he thought would be more beneficial, in a money point of view, to his mission than any he had made. He got word while waiting for the coach to start at twelve o'clock at night that the country was flooded, and that unless he would risk going by the bush he must remain where he was. When he rose next morning everything showed that they would be detained for a long time. Just then he received a letter from a Quaker lady in a far-off land, sending him £1,000 to help in his work. A letter such as that coming at such a time cheered one a great deal. He understood this bazaar was

in aid of female medical missionaries. He could assure them that such missionaries were doing a great work in India and China. He had not been there himself, but he knew how the missionaries' wives helped them in the New Hebrides. Ladies could do a great deal in the way of medical assistance, where medical men would not be received in India and China. He hoped their bazaar would be a great success, and that the results would encourage all the female missionaries connected with their church, and greatly aid the object for which they had opened this bazaar. (Applause.) He hoped all their churches would be able to throw their hearts more into God's work in the future than they had ever done. He believed they were in a new era, and just in proportion as any congregation or church threw its heart into the work of carrying the Gospel to the heathen in proportion was God's work fulfilled, and its own home work prospered. In conclusion, he wished them all success, and hoped every person present would become more and more a burning and a shining light for Jesus."

The Rev. D. C. Scott, in his report of the Blantyre Mission of the Established church of Scotland, in British Central Africa, says:—"The daily services every morning at 8 o'clock (on Sundays at 7 o'clock) have been found most helpful. The change produced by coming together to worship, and the strength derived from it, have to be felt to be believed. We are beginning to reap what we have laboured so long for—the complete religious appeal in all departments of the industrial work. The head workers come to this early morning service as well as the Mission boys proper, and the work is better done. There is no shock now felt in coming out of the service and going down to the printing office or round the garden. Worship seems to make life wholly religious in hard work. If I were to tell you the hard work that is done by every one of the Mission children you would think that we were bound to be wholly secular, and yet I can vouch for this, that it is wholly religious. Night after night the printing boys worked all night till day-break dawned on their candles burning (stuck all over the printing shop), certainly not for pay and not for fame, but only for the sake of getting through extra work. We are actually seeing with our eyes the ideal of an industrial Mission."

In a recent publication, Mr. Harold Frederick, speaking of the progress of Christianity among the Russian Jews, says:—"The formal desertions from Judaism have been almost wholly confined to the educated classes and to residents in cities like St. Petersburg and Moscow. In this latter place, of which I saw much more than of any other Russian city, the proportion of converts has always been exceptionally large. The story is told there of the Lutheran church, of which all the officials—beadles, ushers and the like—were named Blumenthal, Rosenberg, Morgenstern, and so on, and into which, one Sunday when special services had drawn a large attendance, a Russian wag strolled in, hat on head. The 'baptized' dignitaries, scandalized, hurried towards him with indignant gestures. 'O, I beg pardon,' he said, looking blandly from one Semitic face to another, 'I thought I was in a synagogue.' Very often, in the two great cities mentioned, one will find Hebrew families in which the parents hold by the old path, but have had their children baptized as communicants of the English Church."

Rev. Dr. Steel, of Sydney, who has just passed away, estimated that the amount of money expended in missions among the islands of the Pacific during this century is about £2,000,000. The number of islands evangelised is large—probably not less than 350, and converts number half a million. Cost per convert, £4. It is a curious calculation, and Dr. Steel would not have made it, only for the habit some people have of counting the cost of every convert.

The native ordained pastors in India are increasing in number at the rate of 90 per cent. in nine years.

PULPIT, PRESS AND PLATFORM.

Ram's Horn: Nobody can tell much about how much a preacher is doing for God by the size of his salary.

Lady Henry Somerset: Christianity is an infinite tenderness to individual weakness and error—the patience of a mother for the fretful, wayward child.

Westminster Teacher: It is a sweet thought that God lets Himself be reminded of His promises, that He remembers His covenant when He sees its seal or token.

United Presbyterian: Forces move in right lines. Sin always moves in the direction of penalty and misery. Righteousness and truth, with unvarying certainty, tend to life, blessing and reward.

F. W. Robertson: Eternity is crying out to you louder and louder as you near its brink. Rise, be going. Count your resources; learn what you are not fit for, and give up wishing for it; learn what you can do, and do it with the energy of a man.

Westminster Teacher: God gives us our years one by one, and He wants us to make them beautiful years, filling them with deeds and words and influences which shall make them radiant and blessed. Another New Year is coming to us. What are we going to do with it?

Rev. A. H. Byles: It is a grand thing that men are beginning to read the political utterances of Amos and Isaiah, to read Christ into modern life, and to regard His teachings in the Sermon on the Mount as the one and only solution for the pressing social and political problems of to-day.

Bishop Ryle: I have not much faith in temporary compromises of strikes which are often mere stop-gap expedients. The constant recurrence of trade disputes was becoming one of the most serious social problems of the day and they bade fair to blight the national prosperity and drive capital out of the country.

Peninsula Methodist: Life is one grand continuous opportunity, from childhood to our latest day. The conscientious, the resolute, the industrious and thrifty turn each hour into golden treasures; while the listless, the stolid and the lazy allow the teeming hours to lie idle at their feet, with countless treasures unknown, unappreciated and undeveloped.

Dr. Pentecost: "It no doubt would shock Presbyterian proprieties, but it would wake up Presbyterian congregations, if, when the preachers said a good and true thing and it went to the heart or conscience of some one or many in the congregation, it was emphasised and passed on to the whole congregation with a cheer or a hearty 'Hear, hear.' All I have to say is that I would not rebuke such an outbreak."

Home Journal: "Throughout Germany 'domesticity' in a wife is still considered the highest of virtues. The emperor said in public not long ago: 'I could wish no better to the young men of my nation than that the girls of Germany should follow the example of their empress, and devote their lives, as she does, to the cultivation of the three great K's: *Kirche, Kinder und Knechte*—the church, the children, the culinary art.'"

Mrs. Jane Welsh Carlyle: "So many talents are wasted, so many enthusiasms turned to smoke, so many lives blighted, for want of a little patience and endurance, for want of understanding and laying to heart that which you have so well expressed in these verses—the meaning of *the Present*—for want of recognising that it is not the greatness or littleness of the 'duty nearest hand,' but the spirit in which one does it, that makes one's doing noble or mean. I can't think how people, who have any natural ambition, and any sense of power in them, escape going mad in a world like this, without the recognition of that."

Teacher and Scholar.

Jan. 21 1894 } GAIN AND ABEL. { Gen. iv. 3-13

GOLDEN TEXT.—By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. Heb. xi. 4.

If Seth were born shortly after Abel's death, then (ch. v. 3) the events of the present lesson would take place nearly one hundred and thirty years after our first parents were created. In that time the world might have come to have considerable population as seems to be implied v. 14. The lesson narrates the beginning of history out of paradise, which includes now not merely the first pair but the family.

I. The offerings.—The offerings brought as worship to Jehovah by the brothers are not said to be due to any command. They indicate the naturalness of worship as a proper expression of man's feeling towards God. The material of the offering in each case corresponds and would be appropriate to the calling of the offerer. They are both among the offerings afterwards provided for in the Mosaic economy. Abel's offering, however, was the fat, the choice pieces of the firstlings of the flock, but no indication is given that Cain similarly deprived himself of his best to honor Jehovah. In some way, possibly by fire, Jehovah indicated His acceptance of Abel's offering but not of Cain's. The reason of the difference lay in the offerers. Designedly the narrative tells that God's respect was in the first place to the offerer and only secondarily to the offering. The same thing comes out in God's question to Cain. This implies that Cain's failure to do well was the reason of his non-acceptance.

II. Anger leading to murder.—His own rejection, together with Abel's acceptance, made Cain burn with anger. The inward heat showed itself outwardly in his countenance. The anger was directed against both God and Abel. It calls forth a divine warning, an indication of God's desire that the sinful should not perish, but come to a true state of mind with respect to his sin, and the danger in which it places him. By the question Cain's attention is directed to his own heart. If he does well he will find acceptance with God, his countenance will be lifted up. But when he does not well, as now in being angry with his brother, though this secret evil-doing is known only to God, there is great danger that it will hurry him on to an open outburst of sin. Sin is like a wild beast couching at the door of his heart (R. V.) desiring to seize upon him, but he ought to rule over it (R. V. margin). What Cain said (v. 8) to Abel his brother, is not told, but perhaps is to be inferred from what follows. The door of Cain's heart is thrown open to the crouching sin, so eager to possess him, and he becomes a murderer. The bitter fruit of the first sin is seen in the malice, hatred and envy which united to accomplish the cruel, barbarous deed.

III. The punishment.—At once, it would seem, Cain is called to account for his crime. God shows that he takes notice of all wrong suffered and done. The brotherly relationship, prominently brought out by repetition, heightens yet more the terrible character of the crime. God's question makes Cain answerable for his brother. Cain's answer shows how sin seeks to defend itself by further sin. He utters a bold falsehood and in unloving defiance disclaims all responsibility. Men have been too ready to forget that this repudiation of responsibility for others, came first from a murderer endeavoring to cloak his deed. But Cain is taught that murder will out. His brother's blood is as a voice crying from the ground. By an inward necessity it rises to heaven demanding that it be avenged. The sentence is now passed. A curse falls on Cain. The ground which has been compelled to receive the innocent blood of his brother, becomes the instrument to execute the curse, by being smitten with barrenness and yielding not increase to his labor. Restless and unsettled he is to be a wanderer from place to place. Cain despairingly sees in this a punishment greater than can be borne. In this, and in the fear of being slain, the expression of which lies beyond the lesson, the first murderer bears testimony to the law of retribution written on human nature.