

and bridges? It is ten years since the imperial commission was secured for a line of railway in China, not a foot of which has yet been begun, because the opposition was so strong that the scheme was strangled in its cradle; but no one doubts that railways will eventually be built all over the empire, although it would not be strange if a century should elapse before this comes to pass.

Which is the easier, to teach a heathen to sing a tune correctly, or to lead him to walk in the way which leads to heaven? The psalmody of the Chinese, at least, must depend mainly for its melody upon the rising generation and not upon adults. To bring in a new system of music, and to teach those who use it to be governed by its laws, is in China a hopeless task, unless the pupils, like Dr. Johnson's Scotchman, are "caught young."

How long does any reader, who has a sufficient acquaintance with China to form an intelligent opinion, think it would require in that empire to bring about such a change of practice that every man, woman, and child should take a bath at least once a week and put on a clean undergarment? As yet most of them take no baths at all, and underclothing is unknown. Yet which is easier, to cause such an alteration of customs as this would imply, or to upset all the religious assumptions slowly accumulated by the wisdom of ages? Of the phenomenon of regelation we have already spoken. It is an important one, not easy to be understood. Antecedent to experience, our theory of the propagation of Christianity would undoubtedly be that while it might be a slow process, it would be a sure one. The sacred fire once kindled will not go out. While individual apostasies might be looked for, we should not expect to see whole communities abandon the faith which they have come in some measure to know. Yet experience shows that the most depressing feature of missionary work is the fact that there are many little Christian communities carefully and patiently instructed, which seem for a time to be the germs out of which large churches are to come. Yet later on internal dissensions, the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of poverty, or other causes not foreseen or preventible, have proved a worm at the root of these bright hopes. We could name a city in one of the suburbs of which there was an interesting opening for the introduction of Christianity, and in which one or two preachers were stationed with almost no interruption for about two years. The inquirers numbered fifteen, among whom were scholars, merchants, artisans, and day laborers. The Sunday services were largely attended, and there was a sort of Bible class every evening, at which instruction enough seemed to have been imparted to give every inquirer a clear and connected idea of what Christianity is and what its duties are. Several persons wholly ignorant learnt to read, and large numbers of all grades of Christian books were sold to ready purchasers. Nothing occurred to give the growing work a check, as the opposition of the literati was gradually overcome, and there never was any external hindrance from