

acter that the Chinese at some remote stage of their history had heard of that period when Mother Eve's covetousness resulted in disaster and calamity.

Did you know Chinese homes you would understand only too well the significance of the two characters for "home" and for "marriage." That word "home"—to us most sacred—is illustrated by the character symbolizing a "pig" under a roof, and the word for "marriage" consists of three characters, a woman and a pig under one roof. Whether the reference be intended or not, it is only too true a hint of the squalor and dirt and the ever-present pig to be found in so many of the homes in China.

Pardon one more example—the name of the representative for Alberta in West China is Li (pronounced Lee). It consists of the character for "wood" written over the character for "son," which being a load of wood on the boy's back naturally means "baggage." It also has the meaning "plum" and is one of the commonest surnames in China.

The writing of even a letter, attempting to give some points of interest in connection with the study that means so much to one the first months in China, is not an easy matter; but I hope the above may at least help to turn your thoughts toward the great language and the greater people of the East.

WE MUST LEARN THE LANGUAGE TO REALLY HELP.

A common language means to some extent a fellow-feeling. Perhaps the difficulties of the Chinese tongue have been to some degree the cause of the long period of isolation this land

has known. Some knowledge of and some sympathy with the language spoken here cannot but mean some knowledge of and some sympathy with the nation that uses it, and will be one step farther in the larger brotherhood that will one day know no limits of either race or tongue. The Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man has been the message of the ages; and is it not strange that the assimilation of new tongues should in the past have played so important a part in the growth of this conception? From the time of the confusion of tongues at Babel until the present so many great forward movements in God's redemptive scheme have been associated with some difficulty in the expression of that message. It seems as if He wished to show that His message could be published by the weakest instruments and under the most unpropitious circumstances.

Abraham, called to raise up a people who would stand for God in the world, was sent into a strange land.

THE PRESENT DAY CONQUEST.

Moses, the next great leader in the history of the great Revelation of God to man, shrank from his mighty task because he "was not eloquent but of slow speech and of a slow tongue." Again, when God wished to shake the world into a newer and wider knowledge of life and of Himself, He loosed those Galilean tongues that held the all-important message, and at Pentecost "every man heard them speak in his own language." Who would not say that the most recent great world-wide movements for Christ is the missionary activity of the present day—this has meant the founding of hundreds of colleges, the opening of thousands of churches, and, above all, the bringing of millions to the feet of the Master; yet it has been done only through the conquest of hundreds of unknown tongues and the expenditure of mental energy sufficient to force these strange languages to become avenues for the Gospel message and for Christian thought. How wonderful and how powerful is this God-given faculty of expressing our trust selves; for whether in China or in Canada, whether intentionally or inadvertently, our language expresses our best and our worst. Accordingly then, as we use our tongues for God or against Him, are our lives a success or a failure, "For by thy words thou shalt be justified and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

Sz Chuan, China.

The Idols Shall He Utterly Abolish

A Significant Movement in China

A MOST remarkable movement, which the most enthusiastic missionary in China had hardly ventured to hope for yet, is the destruction of idols, which is being effected by the Chinese officials themselves. Rev. C. Bone, in the *Methodist Recorder*, gives the following interesting particulars:

"That God's purposes are being furthered by this attack I firmly believe; that the preaching of the last fifty years has made the present vandalism possible all who are familiar with the facts will admit. The cause of the overthrow is, however, the recent issue, by the Emperor, of sundry proclamations, by which the old system of Government examinations has been finally swept away. The occasion is the need of schools, and therefore the seizing of sundry temples which are to be transformed into modern well-equipped colleges. It is safe to forecast that something like what happened in England at the Reformation will be effected in China, and the idols, in the effective line of Isaiah, will be cast 'to the moles and to the bats.' As a Chinese said to me recently, 'The idols may understand Chinese characters' (I smiled as I thought that the idol had yet to be carved who could master that mighty task), 'but they know nothing about astronomy and mathematics, and therefore no advantage would follow were their worship continued.'

"Perhaps the most remarkable instance of idol destruction occurred about six months since at Wuchow, where we have a Mission Hospital under the care of Dr. Macdonald. The Prefect, who was decidedly pro-foreign and progressive, appropriated a fine temple, beautifully situated, in order to transform it into a college. It was, as usual, full of grim,

dusty, cobwebbed idols, which had rested in the dim obscurity of their shrines for many decades, before which incense and altar lights were ever burning. The Prefect gave orders that they be overturned, and even assisted in the iconoclastic attack. They were pulled down, split into pieces, and the debris thrown into the stream which flows along at the door of the monastery. When I visited the temple five years ago it was 'full of idols.' I repeated the visit a fortnight since, and they had all gone, and in their stead was an apparatus for teaching the new education.

"A temple has also been confiscated in Canton, the idols of which have been demolished, though at first there was some difficulty in getting this done. The workmen shrank from the unpopular task. Moreover, the priests, whose income had thus become precarious, thinking they might stir the sympathy of the people on their behalf, announced that during the previous night, whilst the execution of the sentence on the idols was delayed, they had heard strange wailing, and even weeping and sobbing. Moreover the sobbing of the demons had been distinctly heard by them. And so it came to pass that in the morning the workmen, who had been employed to strike the fatal blow, turned pale, and then turned away from the dreaded task.

"However, the work of destruction, had to be finished. Hence, after a consultation between priests and people—and the Chinese dearly love a consultation—it was conceded that the following day should be devoted to wor-ship, and, when this was completed, the work of destruction should begin. The priests, more successful than the priests of the famous temple of Guzarat, who offered to ransom their idol from the grip of