

World of Missions.

In the Protestant boarding schools for boys in Japan there are 1,550 scholars, and for girls 2,527.

There are more Christian converts in India to-day, after a century of missionary work, than there were Christians in the world A. D. 300.

The greatest hindrances in mission lands, especially among barbarous and semi-barbarous natives, come from Christian lands in the shape of rum, gunpowder, and opium.

The Livingston Mission of the Free Church of Scotland has been strengthened by a party of medical and industrial workers lately. Three of the party are trained nurses, one a medical doctor, and two are practical builders who are going out to erect a large church and hospital at Bandowe. The converts there have already prepared most of the bricks, and have pledged themselves to give the labor to put up the buildings.

Last week's Christian Leader says:—At a meeting of the Foreign Mission Committee of the U. P. Church held in Edinburgh a lengthened conference regarding the Manchurian missions of that body took place. A telegram has been sent to Shanghai asking all the ladies to come home, and also instructing missionaries whose furlough is near to leave at once. It is left to other missionaries to judge best how they should act. Telegrams have also been despatched to all quarters where information regarding the missions is likely to be obtained.

Rev. Dr. Ross, of Monkden, Manchuria, in a recent address on Chinese Missions in Hope Park N. P. Church, St. Andrews, said: Christian ethics were greatly admired in China, but missionaries were regarded throughout the land by the non-Christian population as merely political agents. Subsequent to the war of 1860 the withdrawal of the troops was looked upon as an admission of defeat, and the work of the missionary, who appeared upon the scene at a later stage, was viewed with suspicion. They regarded it as an insidious method of preparing for future conquest. With respect to the Boxer rising, he did not believe there had been a massacre of native Christians, though some of their teachers and leading men might have been killed. Dr. Ross did not anticipate that the war would last long, as meantime the Chinese armies could not withstand the European forces. Should, however, a Napoleon arise in China, the country might easily become the most powerful in the world. Such were its resources in men and material wealth it could within five years overrun the whole of Europe. This he urged as a reason why every effort should be made to Christianise its immense population.

Missionary Policy in China.

An English missionary, in a letter from China, throws an interesting light on the methods employed. He says—"The policy of the Roman mission is to defend her converts, try cases themselves, inflict punishments, demand the heads of assailants from the Chinese Government, ask for enormous money compensation for damage to property in riots, and wherever possible have a French gunboat at hand. Our policy is to avoid interference as far as possible, and so we tell our men that if they get into rows we shall not try to get them out. I am convinced that our system is right, but on account of the constant miscarriage of justice in the Chinese courts it is very difficult.

Women in India.

Child-marriage is the great curse of native women in India. It is estimated that there are 24,000,000 child widows in that country who are cut off from all the comforts and joys of life.

A girl may be betrothed at infancy, and if the man die before she reaches the marriageable age of twelve or fourteen years, she must ever after remain a widow, and suffer the penalties of widowhood. She must sell her jewels for her support; she must shave off her beautiful, glossy locks, and put on the widow's garb, and become the meanest slave of the household. It is a life not only of seclusion, but of stigma. These victims of the marriage system become the worst enemies of the Hindoo household. Many of them, discarded by their friends, and trodden upon by their own people, find a refuge in the harems of polygamous Mohammedans, of whom it is said there are 50,000,000 in British India.

It is true that the British law in India permits the widows to marry again; but custom, far more powerful, forbids it, and the family abetting remarriage, even in the case of maiden widows, would, in most parts of India, be doomed to social ostracism. Over 500 remarriages of widows are reported as having taken place during the past few years. This is but a few out of the 24,000,000, but shows that even this great reform has had a beginning. It is a sad fact, that out of the 99,000,000 of Hindoo women under British rule, and several millions more under Mohammedan and Hindoo rule, only one-half million can read or write.

Would it be amiss for us, each for herself, to question her own heart with regard to the place we give foreign heathen mission work in our secret hours of communion? There are those women with narrow lives, darkened by ignorance, sorrowful, lonely, beyond our uttermost comprehension, do we care enough about them to pray for them? Or are they so far distant that their cry, of pain never reaches our ears?

"What would these sister women's starving hearts count dear, To pay for one short day of love and honor, And they—thy Father's daughters, too!"

Christianity in Japan.

Mr. Miyagawa, pastor of a Congregational church in Kobe, Japan, has recently undertaken a tour round the world, and he attended the World's Council of Congregational Churches in Boston last fall. He has lately given through one of the English papers his view of Christianity in his native land, and he confesses that the evangelical churches there are passing through a period of trial, not to say of stress. He says that during the first prosperous days of foreign intercourse everything foreign was admired; now, in the period of reaction, everything foreign is suspected. In consequence, many of those who followed the crowd for the sake of popularity are sifted out of the church in its days of adversity. There is an apparent decline because there was a fictitious advance. The only converts who can do a church permanent good, he thinks, are those who remain after persecution. The educational force of the empire, he confesses are arrayed strongly against Christianity, and he admits the injustice of the late edicts which put the mission schools upon an inferior plane only because they are religious as well as educational. He thinks the public system should be non-sectarian, but the private schools should be judged upon its merits, not by means of an arbitrary distinction. The Congregationalists of Japan, Mr. Miyagawa says, have "a

very broad theology," although he declines to characterize them as "rationalistic." He says that the leading pastors in the Congregational ranks have taken their theology direct from Germany; that they preach the divinity of Jesus Christ while ignoring any presentation of the Atonement. These churches, he says, devote themselves to a teaching that is "religious, moral and ethical rather than dogmatic and theological." It is evident from his report, as from that of others, that the churches in Japan just now need the prayers of all Christians that they may be loyal to the faith once delivered to the saints. The soul must walk very close with God that is able to endure the persecution that we fear yet awaits the Christians of Japan.

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