

Northern Messenger

Wm Bronscombe 1903

VOLUME XXXVII. No. 34.

MONTREAL, AUGUST 22, 1902.

30 Cts. Per An. Post-Paid

The Birthplace of Josephine.

(Margaret E. Sangster, in 'Christian Herald'.)

Josephine is not an uncommon name, but it derives for us its most queenly association from the beautiful Creole wife of the First Napoleon, a woman whose charm, grace, tact, and misfortunes have become traditional. When, a few weeks ago, the terrible volcanic eruption at Martinique laid waste an island, and thousands perished in the flood of fire and death, there were some of us whose geographical knowledge was so slender that we could not at once remember much about St. Pierre. But we had an association that helped us out. 'Why, don't you know,' I heard a gentleman say to a friend, 'that's the place where the Empress Josephine was born.' We give a picture of the house in which the

prices. She, on the other hand, loved him more devotedly in the latter days of her life than at first, her love surviving the cruel wrench of the divorce, by which with her childless condition as a pretext, Napoleon sundered their union. With the divorce of Josephine and Napoleon's subsequent marriage to Marie Louise of Austria, his star waned. Napoleon died in exile at St. Helena, but it was his divorced wife, and not the Austrian Princess who, had she been permitted, would have shared his desolate imprisonment.

According to St. Amand, Napoleon owed some of his rapid advancement to the diplomacy of Josephine. 'She prepared the field in which he was to show himself the master.'

From the little house in Martinique to the Tuileries—what a step! To the happy West Indian child, how little was revealed

Time will never come when will be forgotten the splendid fortitude and endurance of the seventy-five or one hundred thousand native Christians of China—men, women and children, who in the year A.D. 1900, rather than deny the teachings of the Cross, willingly laid down their lives for its sake, and that means for Jesus' sake. Likewise instances of their liberality—consecrated liberality—are not wanting, such liberality as puts us to shame sometimes.

The following instance is only one of a long series that might be mentioned. It is so full of pathos and genuine high consecration that we may well, when we have finished reading it, ask ourselves do we really love Jesus.

As I recall it, the story runs somewhat as follows: I do not know the Chinaman's name, but we will call him Hong-chhe, which means 'sent.' For if any man was ever sent, a herald of the Cross—a messenger, then this man was. He was in the employ of the British and Foreign Bible Society, of London. For seven or eight years he had kept his little shop, selling Bibles, tracts, etc., and speaking a word in season, as opportunity offered, in a small village away in the interior of North China. I am not sure what became of him during the Boxer invasion of 1900, but I think he and his family escaped. Anyway, just before that terrible outbreak, the foreign missionary in charge of the district visited this station and found this man not only deeply interested in the work already in hand, but equally concerned about its enlargement, so before the conversation had gone far Hong-chhe introduced the subject of opening a preaching place further on in the interior.

'Teacher,' says Hong-chhe, 'there is a splendid opportunity in that village; a man is ready to rent us a house, the people seem willing to have us come, and many want us to come. Can we not open this place immediately and begin work there?'

Well, what did that missionary have to do? What many a missionary has had to do before and since: tell that man there were no funds for such a purpose. Think of what this means. Do we all realize what it means? It means that the Chinese are seeking the Gospel and we are not providing it. Apparently anticipating some such reply, this Chinaman laid a plan before the missionary which he evidently had been thinking and praying over for a very long time.

'Teacher,' says Hong-chhe, 'it is now some seven or eight years that I have been working for your society. You have given me \$5.00 a month (\$2.50 gold). During that time I have laid by some eight or ten dollars. This I wish to use towards opening this place, but it is not sufficient. It may be enough to rent the house for one year, but it will do nothing to support a helper. I have been talking over the matter with my wife. One evening I said to her: "Wife, do you love Jesus?" She was not just pleased with the question. Surprised at it, she answered: "Why of course I love Jesus; whatever led you to doubt it?"'

'But, think it over carefully and prayerfully,' replied Hong-chhe. 'Do not give me



BIRTHPLACE OF EMPRESS JOSEPHINE, ST. PIERRE, MARTINIQUE

When here a little child she played,
Her old nurse dreamed that she would
wear

A crown upon her golden head,
And sit upon a golden chair.

child, who was to have so strange a mingling of life's glory and life's woes, first saw the light of earth.

Josephine was thirty-three years old, and the widow of the Vicomte Beauharnais, when she married the youthful Napoleon, then twenty-six and a bachelor. The wedding-day was March 9, 1796. Napoleon Bonaparte was already famous, and he was to be the conqueror of Europe. Josephine was called Citizeness Bonaparte at first. She was to be raised to the proud pre-eminence of the throne, wear a crown, and the title of Empress. It seems probable, in the revelations of later days, that she was a shallow coquette, and though the genius of Napoleon was magnificent, he was capable of an immense pettiness. Though his love for her was at first an adoration, it cooled in time, and he wearied of her extravagance and ca-

of the destiny before her. Her daughter, Hortense Beauharnais, married one of Napoleon's brothers, and it was her grandson who became Napoleon the Third, husband of that beautiful Empress Eugenie, who once set the fashions for the world. The child of Marie Louise did not succeed his brilliant father. He died in early youth.

'Do You Love Jesus?'

There are two traits of Christian character for which native Christians of China are conspicuous, viz., Christian heroism and Christian liberality.

Those who were wont to talk about 'rice Christians,' 'self-seekers,' etc., etc., will need in the future to revise their tirades of reproach in this direction and seek other fields where they may ventilate their spite, or hatred, or whatever it may be.