

authorities. On the basis of "the favored nation clause" in all treaties, all nationalities have secured for their missionaries similar favors. This year, when China was in extreme weakness, France seized the opportunity and rescinded the regulation requiring that notice be given to the authorities, and demanded instead that missionaries of the Roman Catholic Church be no longer hindered in securing property. Such is the present favor by law of the Central Government. Hence missionaries, either Protestant or Catholic, are found in every one of the provinces.

The criticism often passed is that missionaries, in spite of the law, are annoyed, opposed, and frequently attacked and maltreated. The execution of the law is not equal to the law. In this is China the only country at fault? There are two ways in which we may view this legal regulation. One is, that it shows wonderful favor and toleration of a non-Christian ruler; and such being the case, missionaries should seek to respond to the favor and be lenient on little matters rather than too exacting and recriminating. Another view is that these privileges have been forced from China against her will. In such a case missionaries, for the good of their religion as distinct from political interference, should appreciate the difficulties of China, and again be lenient rather than severe.

Japan has often been magnified of late to the discredit of China, and yet Japan never allowed foreign missionaries to go as such into the interior or to purchase property. They went only for travel or scientific investigation. For no other cause were passports allowed. Hence the missionaries appeared, first of all, as educationalists, and commended themselves to the educated classes. In China the interior has been covered by all kinds of missionaries, many of whom made light of education, and very few of whom have commended themselves to the *literati*. Should we blame China too severely if here and there opposition arises? Even Spain and Austria will not allow Protestant Christians to build churches as do the Catholic Christians, while Russia excludes and persecutes Romanist, Protestant, and Jew. Why do not zealous people agitate for a protectorate or dismemberment of those countries? In fact, the toleration of China, a non-Christian nation, toward Christian workers of all creeds and grades is a matter of surprise. Where is there an equal except Siam? If missionaries are considerate and courteous as well as zealous and aggressive, there is no reason why the spirit of toleration may not grow rather than die away.

A second favorable aspect of China is the growing demand for reform. I do not say that reform of all kinds will come, but there is certainly a demand for it and much talk about it. The most striking illustration is right here in Peking, where, if anywhere, reform should begin. Owing to a close personal acquaintance with the most active movers, I am able to speak with a certain amount of enthusiasm. The movement has originated among the younger men, and especially from the Censors and Hanlin, men who heretofore have been regarded as anti-foreign and anti-progressive.