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"BY PURENESS, BY KNOWLEDGE—BY LOVE UNFEIGNED."—ST. PAUL.

EDITOR.

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THE POET OF THE POOR.

EENEZER ELLIOT, a poor iron-dealer of Sheffield, (Eng.) sprung from the lowest ranks, has astonished the world by strains worthy of a Burns. The following comparison of the outward and visible glories of creation, with the prospects which are opening on society from the light of knowledge, is extracted from one of his productions:—

God said, "Let there be light!"
Grim darkness felt his might,
And fled away;
Then, startled seas, and mountains cold,
Shone forth, all bright in blue and gold,
And cri'd, "'Tis day! 'tis day!"
"Hail, holy light!" exclaim'd
The thunderous cloud that flam'd
O'er daises white;
And, lo! the rose, in crimson dress'd,
Lean'd sweetly on the lily's breast,
And blushing, murmured, "Light!"
Then was the sky lark born;
Then rose the embattled corn;
Then floods of praise
Flow'd o'er the sunny hills of noon.
And then, in stillest night, the moon
Pour'd forth her pensive lays,
Lo! heaven's bright bow is glad!
Lo! trees and flowers all clad!
In glory, bloom!
And shall the immortal sons of God
Be senseless as the trodden clod;
And darker than the tomb?
No, by the MIND of man!
By the smart artisan!
By God, our sire!
Our souls have holy light within,
And every form of grief and sin
Shall see and feel its fire,
By earth, and hell, and heaven,
The shroud of souls is riven!
Mind, mind alone,
Is light, and hope, and life and power,
Earth's deepest night, from this bless'd hour,
The night of minds, is gone!

(From the London Watchman.)

CHINA.

Our latest intelligence from China informs us, that events are conspiring to bring about a revolution in the institutions and political condition of that empire, among which are, the recent death of the Empress Dowager,—who, it is said, exercised great influence on the Councils of the Emperor, and formed the chief barrier to the advancement of the principles prevalent among the *literati*,—and the appointment of Keying as principal guardian to the young Emperor, Sze-king, who has just come to the throne. Keying, it is expected, will hold a high and influential position in the Cabinet; and, from his knowledge of foreigners, the tendency of any new measures is likely to be towards a more liberal course of policy. The changes anticipated, and spoken of as inevitable, will, we have reason to expect, contribute still further to promote the cause of Christianity in that extensive Empire.

The Protestant Missionary establishments in the Chinese Empire are in Hong Kong,—a small island at the entrance of the Canton River, ceded to Great Britain by the late treaty—Canton, Amoy, Foo-Chow-Foo, Ning-po, and Shanghai. In the British Colony, and in these great and populous cities, Missions have been established by the London Missionary Society, Church of England Society, General Baptist Society, the Free Church of Scotland; by the following American Societies: the Board of Foreign Missions, the Presbyterian Board, Baptist Board, Methodist Episcopal Board, and the Episcopal Church Society; and by the Rhenish and Basle Missionary Societies.

What has, as yet, been effected by these Missions is chiefly of a preparatory character; for, although several of their members were acquainted with the Chinese language previous to their entering the country, the greater number of them had to acquire it subsequently to their arrival in China. This is a most arduous undertaking,—which none can duly estimate, except those who have had some experience in such matters. In our former article, we referred to the peculiar nature of the *written* language of China, and shall now endeavor to give our readers a general idea of the dialects, or *spoken* language, in order to enable them to understand somewhat of the nature of the formidable difficulties which a Missionary has to overcome before he can address the Chinese on the subject of Christianity, with any measure of success.

In the *spoken* language of China, consisting of only four hundred and eleven monosyllables there are about two thousand sounds, the greater number of which can be distinguished only by *tones* or inflections of the voice. This peculiarity greatly increases the difficulty of acquiring a thorough knowledge of it. There being so small a number of words, and these distinguished by nice and very slight intonations, mistakes in understanding the language when spoken will frequently occur. In acquiring a correct knowledge of the pronunciation, Europeans are greatly embarrassed; for without considerable experience, they find it very difficult to catch with the ear the nice distinctions in the sounds; and on the other hand, to enunciate with sufficient accuracy, so as to be readily understood by the natives. The great number of homophonous characters, though differing wholly from each other in their meaning and form, requiring to be expressed by precisely the same English orthography, is a serious impediment, in speaking the language. *Pang*, for example, represents ten distinct words differing in tone, and signifying to help, a bee, to bind, to spin, to let go, corpulent, a room, a sail, a club, a seam. These ten spoken words are readily distinguished by the Chinese; and whoever utters the word *pang*, must of necessity do so in one of these ten ways, so as to express some one of these ideas, to the exclusion of the others. Hence it is obvious, that the success of a Missionary in preaching the Gospel to the Chinese must greatly depend on his possessing an accurate acquaintance with the tones of their language. The *written* language may be understood without a knowledge of the tones, but, in speaking, a correct use of them is indispensable.

The chief difficulties presented by the peculiarity of the language have, however, already been overcome by a considerable number of the Missionaries who are constantly engaged in preaching the Gospel to attentive assemblages of the people; who, they discover, are not so much degraded and stupidified by idolatry as to be incapable of understanding and feeling the importance of revealed truth. In the city of Canton there are five places where the Gospel is publicly proclaimed in Chinese every Sabbath day.

The number of persons who hear it is between four and five hundred. The Missionaries find, that, according as their acquaintance with the people increases, they have greater liberty in carrying on their operations without molestation.

At Amoy, a handsome Church has been erected by the Mission of the American Board, in which the Gospel is preached in Chinese, on the Sabbath morning and afternoon, and the Bible class meetings held on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The congregation on the Sabbath morning is from a hundred and fifty to two hundred, and that of the afternoon, generally, about twice as large. On

these occasions the attention of the people is encouraging, and sometimes of that fixed character which induces the preacher to hope that his hearers feel they are not listening to an idle tale. In Shanghai, the Mission of the London Society have a chapel capable of containing 400 persons, in which there are six Chinese services on the Sabbath, one every morning during the week, and two every evening. There are not fewer, on an average, than from 800 to 1,000 persons who assemble weekly in it to hear the Gospel.

A Native Chinese, *Tin-Shen*, ordained to the Christian ministry, in 1846, is pastor of a Church in Hong-Kong, consisting of upwards of twenty members, all converts from idolatry. The chapel in which he preaches is filled by an attentive congregation of his countrymen, to whom, with peculiar earnestness and power, he commends the Gospel. To this native Church six converts had been added during the past year, one of whom is a person possessing excellent natural gifts, and well versed in the literature of his country.

A new and important element has, of late years, been introduced into Missions, likely to prove of incalculable benefit to multitudes; and beautifully accords with Christ's expression of regard for the natural life of man—that he "came to save men's lives." We refer to the medical department of these Institutions—the provision they contain for affording relief from bodily suffering, to the inhabitants of those countries in which they are established. A considerable number of the members of the Protestant Missions in China, are duly qualified surgeons and physicians eminently skilful in their profession. They have established Dispensaries and Hospitals; and it is a leading object of these institutions, to impart religious instruction to all who go to be healed of their bodily diseases. At one of these Hospitals, 2,109 patients have been received during a period of six months; and at another, the number of patients attended to during a period of ten months, amounted to 10,000; cases of unsurpassed interest have presented themselves, and a signal blessing has attended their treatment. Besides great numbers from the mass of the people, the professional services of the Medical Missionaries have been sought by several of the highest dignitaries of the Empire. The general success of the treatment of disease has produced a deep impression of the superiority of European science, and the care and kindness experienced by the patients has strongly tended to convince them of the benevolent character of the Christian religion. Every patient is supplied with Tracts, while in the Hospitals, and also on leaving them; and thus much knowledge of divine truth is spread over a wide extent of country.

The Missionaries regard the distribution of Tracts as a very important part of their work, especially at the present time, when the Empire is opening to foreign intercourse and influence. The streets, dwellings, shops, boats, cities, and country, are visited for this purpose, and they find the people eager to obtain books. Numbers of tracts are carried to places far beyond the reach of Missionaries, by persons who come from remote districts and villages for purposes of business or pleasure. A Committee composed of delegates from the different Protestant Missions, met at Shanghai, in June, 1847, for the purpose of revising the Chinese New Testament. They found the existing versions, however, so imperfect that the result of their indefatigable labours proves to be a new translation, far surpassing in accuracy all previous attempts. According to our last intelligence, the work is, by the present time, completed. By means of metal types,—in place of wooden blocks, formerly used,—the new translation will be beautifully printed, and put into circulation at 3d. or 3½d.

per copy. Thus much may suffice as an illustration of the efforts of the members of the respective Chinese Missions to diffuse Christianity in that extensive Empire.

One of the most encouraging aspects of China, however, remains still to be mentioned.—The language being so difficult to Europeans, our hope regarding the means of the evangelization of that country must be chiefly in native agency. This the Great Head of the Church seems to be providing: in the year 1844, eight individuals, seven of whom were natives, united together and solemnly devoted themselves to the work of the Lord,—to spreading the knowledge of his name throughout the eighteen provinces of the Empire.—The number of these native evangelists has gradually increased, and now amounts to upwards of one hundred and thirty. The Lord has greatly blessed their testimony, and about 3,000 of their countrymen have, by their instrumentality, been turned "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." They moreover contemplate carrying the Gospel to Japan, Cochin-China, Corea, &c. In fine, present appearances seem to indicate, not obscurely, that a glorious day is about to dawn on the remote nations of the Eastern Asia; when respecting them, it shall be said, "From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the Righteous One."

(From the Sunday-School Journal.)

TO THE EDITOR,

SIR,—In looking over a volume of Pliny's Letters, the other day, I met with that one so often alluded to, addressed to Trajan, relating to his conduct towards the Christians of that day. I have never seen a translation of it; and thinking it might be acceptable to your readers, I have taken the liberty to put it into the best English I am capable of. T. K. P.

Pliny to Trajan.

GREETING:

I am accustomed, sire, to refer to you all questions about which I stand in doubt; for who can better guide my indecision or instruct my ignorance? I have never been present at the trials of the Christians, and am therefore, unable to say as to what points inquiries ought to be made, or how far they ought to be punished. I have also been in no little doubt, whether there ought to be any difference made as to the ages of the accused, or whether the weak should suffer as well as the more vigorous; whether pardon should be granted to penitence, or whether some indulgence should not be granted to those who have been Christians, but have abandoned their profession; and also whether the mere name should subject one to punishment where crimes does not attach itself, or whether crimes attendant upon the name should alone incur the penalty.

Meantime, in regard to all who have been brought to me (accused) as Christians, I have adopted this method,—I have asked them directly whether they were Christians? On their confessing it, I have asked them a second and a third time, threatening them (at the same time) with punishment if they persisted in their confession, I have ordered them to be taken out (for punishment.) For I have had no doubt whatever they confessed, that their persisting and unbending obstinacy ought to be punished. There were others of a like infatuation, whom, as they were Roman citizens, I noted down to be sent back to the city.—Soon, however, under this treatment, the crime extending itself, as is wont to be the case, several other kinds, (*species*) were noticed.

There was a little book issued anonymously containing the names of many persons, who deny that they either now are, or ever have