

The Giant at the Cross Roads.



PRICE FOURPENCE.

The Giant at the Cross Roads.

by

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FOREWORD.

Any sailor would tell you, I think, if you asked him, that fog is the danger that he fears most. How great that danger is, how helpless are our best sailors in spite of the inventions and discoveries which have made our ocean-going steamships such amazingly wonderful things, the regular series of accidents to shipping which happened in the spring of this year has reminded us so strongly. And to be in a train in a fog makes us remember that it is not only at sea that it is dangerous. The great size of our ships, the speed and weight of our trains, add to the greatness of the danger, and if an accident happens the number of people involved in it may bring us face to face with a tragedy such as we associate with the name of the *Empress of Ireland*. The thought of one of these marvellously planned and built ships, equipped with every device that can be thought of to ensure safety, sinking so swiftly with a thousand souls on board is one that we are glad to be able to forget.

But as we think of them we thank God as we remember the lives that have been saved through that latest marvel of electrical science, wireless telegraphy. The cry for help, sent out at random into the air, is picked up by unseen boats miles away, who rush at full steam to the rescue and are able to save all or some of those who were about to perish. What would you think of an operator who received such a message and did not pass it on to his captain and so do what he could to help those who were in such peril?

As you read this book you will, I think, realize—if you have not done it already—that in the spiritual world you, like everybody else, are a sort of wireless operator. If the Holy Spirit is in us and our ears are open, we cannot choose but hear cries for help—coming not from ships, but from nations, speaking of the need and peril, not of a thousand souls, but of millions of souls. The fog that they are in is ignorance of the Gospel of the love of God, and the greatness and the strength and the possibilities of a race or nation simply add to the greatness of the disaster which will be theirs unless those who can help do help. Such a call for help this book sounds, and it is a call for help which comes from China with its three hundred or more millions—the Giant who stands bewildered at the cross roads to which God has guided him. And in the call from China and behind it we hear, we cannot but hear, the call of God Himself, Who needs our help, the help of every one of us, to point out the path of life, of light and of usefulness to China and the other nations of the world who walk on still in darkness.

What would you think of one who had it in his power to help, who heard the cry for help *and did nothing*?

July, 1914.

GRAHAM T. BARTHOLOMEW,
K.M. Secretary.

A LIST OF BOOKS.

The following books are recommended to readers of "The Giant at the Cross Roads" who desire information beyond that contained in the book itself. They may all be ordered from S.P.G. Those marked * are in the S.P.G. Lending Library:—

- *"The Chinese People," Archdeacon Moule (S.P.C.K., 5s. net).
- *"China" (Handbooks of Church Expansion), Norris (Mowbray, 2s. net).
- *"China" (Story of the Nations Series), R. K. Douglas (Fisher Unwin, 5s. net).
- *"Changing China," Lord William Cecil (Nesbit, 3s. 6d. net).
- *"Our Opportunity in China," Batty (S.P.G., 1s. net).
- "The Uplift of China" (1914 edition), A. H. Smith (U.C.M.E., 1s. net).
- "The Regeneration of New China," Nelson Bitton (U.C.M.E., 2s. net).
- "The New Life in China," Wallace (U.C.M.E., 1s. net).
- "The Anglican Church in North China," P. M. Scott (S.P.G., 2d.)
- *Articles on China which have appeared in *The East and The West* from 1903-08, collected in one volume (on loan only).
- "Chinese Religion" (Lay Reader Series), (S.P.G., 2d.).
- "Mission Work in Shantung," Bishop Iliff (S.P.G., 3d.).
- *"The Claim of Suffering," Elma K. Paget (S.P.G., 1s. 6d. net).
- "What Medical Missions are Doing" (S.P.G., 1d.).
- *"The Siege of the Peking Legations," Roland Allen (Smith, Elder, 7s. 6d.).
- *"The King's Business," Chapters IV. (Part 3), XII., F. Arnold Forster (Wells Gardner, Darton & Co., 3s. 6d. net).
- "The Gospel of the Resurrection" (Chapter I., for the education of the Jewish Nation), Westcott (Macmillan, 6s. cloth and 1s. net paper).

Readers will naturally be anxious to keep themselves informed of the latest news from China. Careful attention should be given to any articles dealing with China that may appear in *The East and The West* (S.P.G., 1s. net quarterly), or in *The Mission Field* (S.P.G., 1d. monthly).

NOTES.

1. **Envelopes of Pictures**, to illustrate "The Giant at the Cross Roads," with an outline map of China, may be obtained from S.P.G. Price 2d., or 1s. per dozen.

2. **S.P.G. Map of the World.**—(30-in. by 16-in.) Price 6d.

3. "**Suggestions for Leaders of Study Circles**" on this book. Price 2d. Indispensable to Leaders of Circles or Discussion Classes, etc.

4. **Lantern Slides.**—In connection with "The Giant at the Cross Roads" a special set of slides has been prepared. It is suggested that where a Study Circle has been formed in a school or King's Messengers' Branch, a lecture on the slides might be given to the whole school or Branch by members of the Circle, each member describing two or three slides. Should the slides not be available for the actual day required by any Circle, we hope that it may be possible for a special meeting to be held on another day in the week, so as to allow us to send the slides then. Circles are advised to book the slides as soon as possible. In addition to the cost of carriage a fee of 1s. will be charged.

All applications for slides should be sent to S.P.G. Slide Department, 15 Tufton Street, Westminster, S.W.

5. **A Chinese Missionary Play**, by Miss Mary Debenham, author of "The Open Window," "The Song of the West Wind," "The Great Muster," "The Sowing of the Wilderness," etc. Specially written for those who have studied this book. Its reverent preparation and production should afford a valuable means of helping others to learn what we have learnt. Particulars and copies may be obtained from S.P.G.

6. **Books of Reference.**—A list of books will be found on page 3.

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THE Giant at the Cross Roads.

CHAPTER I.

The Giant Asleep and Awake.

(*Pictures 1, 2).

We all know that if we want to study a great picture or a beautiful piece of architecture we must stand back and look at it from a distance. If we are too close to it we cannot possibly judge of its proportions or see the relation which the different parts bear to each other.

It is much the same with the study of history. It is far easier to judge of the importance of an event that took place long ago than of what is happening, as it were, under our eyes. If we had been Saxons living in this island soon after the Battle of Hastings how bitterly we should have complained of the hardships of Norman rule. We should have hated the Conqueror, who took our forests for hunting and built his frowning castle above our homestead. We should have grumbled at the French that was spoken in the law courts and at having to put out our lights at 8 o'clock. And had we been in the place of the Norman baron we should have doubtless been very well content with our new inheritance in this pleasant land, and should have felt it worth while to follow a leader who had such rewards to bestow. And neither Saxon nor Norman would have realized that the coming of these enterprising, masterful strangers was exactly what the country needed to bring fresh life and a wider outlook to her island people. We find it hard to realize that history is being made day by day, that even we ourselves are helping to make it, "working in the walls of time" by what we do and leave undone; though we are often too much taken up with our small everyday concerns to see that events are happening which may change the face of the world. It may be that in days to come students of history will look back upon the age in which we live as one of the most thrilling periods in the story of the nations. A great change and awakening is taking place in the Far East, a change which will affect not the East alone, but Europe also, and indeed the whole world, in ways which at present we can hardly foresee.

THE SLEEPING GIANT.

A hundred years ago Napoleon, speaking of the great Chinese nation, remarked, "*There sleeps a Giant.*" What did he mean, and what truth was there in the words he used? Look at Napoleon's "Giant" on the map of Asia, a continent rather than a

* These numbers refer to the envelope of pictures illustrating this book (see page 4).

country, thirteen times the size of the British Isles, without the great dependencies of Mongolia, Manchuria, Eastern Turkestan, and Tibet; divided into eighteen provinces, the largest of them about the size of France and the smallest larger than Ireland.

And this country has a population of nearly 400,000,000 people. Perhaps that does not convey very much to our minds, so let us put it in another form. Every fifth man in the world is a Chinese, and if we could stand in a given place and watch the people of China pass by us in single file at the rate of one a second the procession would never end, for before the last had come into sight some sixteen years would have gone and a new generation would be grown up.

The Giant is an old giant too, old enough to command the reverence of this little country of ours—a mere baby in comparison. Hundreds of years before the sons of Jacob settled in Egypt these wonderful people were dwelling in the valley of the Yellow River. Two hundred years before Christ, when the inhabitants of Britain were savage people, dressing in skins and living in huts of wattle and daub, the Chinese were building their Great Wall to guard their northern frontier from invading tribes. A wonderful achievement it would have been for any people, a wall 1,500 miles in length, going up hill and down dale, 25-ft. in height and 25-ft. in breadth, so that two carriages could be driven abreast on the top.

A LAND OF CONTRASTS.

And behind that Wall, which one writer has compared to the thorn hedge shutting in the enchanted palace of the Sleeping Beauty, the Chinese people have lived their own life, a life which reminds us somewhat of the world "Through the Looking-glass," where everything seems to go by contraries. The people seem so wise, so much ahead of their time in some respects, and yet so strangely behindhand in using their own knowledge. In the days of the Roman emperors the Chinese had their competitive examinations. Printing was in use before King Alfred ruled in England, and every boy, even the poorest, had his chance of schooling. Yet they still use their old, unwieldy written language, where pictures or symbols represent words, and the poor scholar has to learn some tens of thousands of them by heart instead of the alphabet.

The Chinese knew of the use of the mariner's compass some 800 years ago, yet, in spite of their great coast line, they never had a navy worth the name and hugged the shore in their cumbersome junks. They have settled all over the world, yet they have no oversea possessions. They discovered long ago the properties of gunpowder, but they only used it for fireworks. They have known the use of coal for 2,000 years, and they have enough of it in a single province to supply the world for 1,000 years, but they have scarcely worked it except on the surface for fear of making holes in the body of a dragon who might object to such a proceeding. When the first railway line was laid in 1874 everything possible was done to prevent the purchase of land for the purpose, and the telegraph posts and wires were torn down by the people,

in dread lest this new-fangled invention should offend the spirits of the place. When at last the line was opened a man was paid, by the offer of a pension for his wife and family, to commit suicide under the engine and so bring bad luck on the undertaking.

In the little everyday manners and customs of social life Chinese ways seem to be the exact opposite to our own. White, not black, is the colour worn for mourning. Hats are kept on in company, and the dinner begins with the fruit and ends with the soup. A man greeting a friend shakes hands with himself. Books begin at what we should call the end, and the lines run vertically instead of across the page. If you would offer a compliment to a stranger you guess his age at ten or a dozen years older than you believe to be the case.

And among these clever people, whose learning and civilization is so much older than our own, dark and evil customs flourished. Women were despised and neglected. A girl baby had but little welcome, and might even be left to starve or be thrown into the river if her father had any difficulty in providing for his family. A woman who had become a Christian admitted that she had killed four of her little daughters, and excused herself by saying that it was happier for them to die than to come to womanhood. The girls grew up untaught, their feet crippled by the horrible old custom of foot-binding. The toes were turned under the soles and tightly bound, unfastened only to be plunged into hot water to soften them, and then tied up once more. Eighteen months of torture it is said was necessary to get the poor little foot into the desired shape, and the size varied from two and a half to five inches. No cruelty was intended; a mother of the better class would have looked upon herself as quite lacking in her duty if her daughter's feet had been left to develop in the natural way. It was the ancient custom of the country and, therefore, must be correct.

Life was held of little account, and suicide was very common. A man who had a grudge against a neighbour would kill himself on the other man's doorstep so as to bring bad luck on the house. So the nation went on, century after century. Each generation studied the same books, played the same games, followed the same ways as their fathers before them, and looked upon the rest of the world as barbarians. *Chung Kuo—the Middle Kingdom*—was their name for their own country, and its inhabitants were known as the Celestials, meaning that China is the centre of the earth and all other nations insignificant inferiors.

We all meet sometimes a clever boy who has never been to school or moved outside his own home circle. His family admire him greatly, and he has learnt to take himself on their valuation. He has brains and ability, but he has never matched himself against other people, and he is quite certain that they have nothing to teach him. Such a young gentleman may go on very comfortably and with great satisfaction to himself until he comes into contact with the world outside his own circle. Perhaps he enters for an examination without having taken the trouble to learn the right way of preparing for it. Perhaps he challenges someone to a trial by fists, having never thought it worth his while to learn to box.

In either case he is apt to have a rather rough awakening. This was what happened when, in the year 1894, China went to war with her little neighbour, Japan, and to her exceeding surprise was badly beaten. Still greater was her surprise when eleven years later the same little nation fought and defeated the great Russian Empire, the European Power so dreaded in the East. The great, self-satisfied Middle Kingdom began to realize that there was something in modern methods of warfare.

The need for better railways was coming home to her too. During the great famine of 1876-79 food had been shipped to the north for the starving people, and then had to wait at the port of call until it could be carried in small quantities on mule-back to the place where it was needed. At such a time as this the railways of the despised Western nations certainly had their advantages.

By war and by commerce, and not least by the missionary work of those who hazarded their lives to bring to China what she needed most of all, the country had begun to come into touch with other nations, and had been made to feel herself behindhand. Again and again reformers rose up—some genuine patriots, others with their own ends to serve—and still the efforts at reform were set back by those who hated the idea of change. The great Empress, who was absolute ruler of the country for nearly fifty years, had set her face fiercely against all foreign influence, but even she was astute enough to see at last that the tide of change was no longer to be stayed. She herself was patron of the movement for abolishing foot-binding. She did away with the old system of examinations and had pledged herself before she died to grant a constitutional government. But it was after this masterful ruler had passed away, leaving a child of four years old as her successor, that the changes came with a rush that have left the lookers-on breathless and amazed. In 1911 a rebellion broke out which led in January, 1912, to the abdication of the Emperor and the proclamation of the Chinese Republic. The pigtails, the distinguishing mark of those who owned the rule of the Manchu emperors, were cut off; foot-binding is now less fashionable; China is crying out for Western education, not for boys only, but for girls; the army is to be trained in European methods, the ships are to be built by European firms—the Giant is awake indeed.

We come back to Napoleon's old comparison. We have spoken of China as the land shut off by the thorn hedge of the old story, and we are reminded of yet another fairy tale—of the champion who climbed to the enchanted castle and carried off the treasures while the giant slept. But the moment came when the giant awoke, a very anxious moment for the smaller and weaker people who had been making the most of his time of slumber. What would the giant do when he awoke? The question was a serious one for them. And then think of a kindly and beneficent giant, a giant like Herakles in the old Greek story, who used his power to conquer, one after another, the evil monsters that devastated the land; or think of such a giant as S. Christopher in the beautiful Christian legend, who put his glorious strength at the service of the Crucified One.

What is the Giant going to do when he realizes his own power? Is it going to be used for help or for destruction, for a blessing or a curse to the world? It is just this question that thoughtful people are asking themselves, looking to the Far East, where the Giant is on his feet at last. It is no wonder that many people ask the question in fear, when they think of all those millions learning the art of modern warfare and using modern weapons. Their land can hardly support them now. Who is going to stay them if they come sweeping westward?

But we are Christian people. We believe that God rules the world and that nothing happens by chance. We want to look at history as the old Jewish prophets looked at it, when God showed them in visions one great nation after another rising to power and falling into decay. At the back of the vision there was the truth that "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever He will." He has a part for each nation to play in working out His great purpose.

We are learning to look beyond our own country out into God's great world. It is right that we should be interested, right that we should care very much about what is happening in the East. And we want to learn to care in God's way. It is not enough for us to feel the importance of the great changes, and to be afraid lest the waking Giant should interfere with our peace. For if we believe, as we say in the Catechism, that Jesus Christ redeemed us and *all mankind*, then the souls of these Chinese people must be very precious in His sight, and He must long to see them make their own the blessings He has won for them. And if we mean what we say when we pray, "Thy Kingdom come," we must want to see this wonderful nation enlisted in the service of our Master.

Let us come back for a moment to the story of S. Christopher, the giant who wanted to put his strength at the service of the strongest master. He followed the Emperor until he saw him tremble at the name of Satan. "My master is afraid," he said, "this service is not for me," and he sought out the Evil One and did his bidding for a while. But one day his master turned aside from a road where the Cross stood by the wayside, and Christopher asked what he feared. "I fear the One Who hung upon that Cross," was the reply, "for long ago He conquered me." "He is my Master then," said the giant, and he sought how he might put his strength at the service of the Crucified One. Then by the counsel of a certain holy man he found a humble dwelling by the river side and offered himself to carry travellers across the stream. And one night, when the wind was raging and the river in flood, a voice called from the bank, "Good Christopher, carry Me across," and the giant coming forth found a little Child standing out in the wind and rain. He lifted Him in his arms and waded into the water, but the stream ran fiercely and the little Child in his arms seemed a weight too heavy to bear. And for the first time in his life a great fear came upon the giant, and he cried out to the little One, "Who art Thou?" And in answer came the words, "I am the Master to Whom thou hast vowed thy strength. Thou shalt be called Christopher, because thou hast carried Christ."

The Giant of China is awaking and learning his strength. He is waiting now, uncertain to what master his service shall be given, needing such a guide as the holy man who gave wise counsel to the giant Christopher. And who shall the guide be if not the Christian Church—God's baptized people, called to be lights in the world? How wonderful if God is calling us to do our part in showing this awakening Giant how to lay his great powers and possessions at the feet of the Crucified One.

Study Problem.—To find reasons why we ought to be interested in what is going on in China.

Assignment 1.—Let two or three members suggest how disastrous the Norman conquest must have seemed to the conquered Saxons. Let two or three others bring one reason why it was so important an event in English history.

Assignment 2.—Let members bring pictures, etc., illustrating Chinese customs, etc.; and diagrams showing size and population of China compared with England and other countries.

Assignment 3.—Let some of the members make a list of the main events which have brought about the striking change in China, and let all discuss together the good and the harm that the Giant awake may do to the rest of the world.

CHAPTER II.

The Meaning of History.

(Pictures 3, 4, 6).

We have seen that if we are to get a true idea of a building or a picture we must stand a little way back from it. It is not only that we can judge better of the beauty of a fine building if we look at it as a whole, but we begin also to enter into the thought of the architect and to understand the plan that was in his mind before the building was begun. We see how each part does not stand alone but fits into its place in the whole scheme, how the arches spring naturally from the pillars, and how the design is carried upward in the lines of the roof. And as we look our admiration grows for the great mind that planned it all and set the skilled workmen to carry out the idea. The bricklayer, the stonemason, the carpenter, the carver, each had his little part in the work. Each one did his share in expressing the mind and thought of the architect. The rough plan from which the artificer had to work gave only a vague idea of the beauty of the finished building. Only when the work was complete could he have the joy of seeing perfectly how his own little bit fitted into the master's plan.

Now remembering that, as Christian people, we are quite sure that nothing happens in this world by chance, let us stand back a little from the early history of the world and try to see the hand of the great Master using the nations as His workpeople to carry out

His plan for mankind. "Thou hast made us for Thyself," said a great writer of the early Church, "and our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee." So we may begin by saying that God's purpose in creating human beings was that they might learn to know and love Him perfectly, and the history of the world is just the story of God's showing of Himself to men and of men feeling after God, often not knowing what they wanted, sometimes making grievous mistakes, like people stumbling in the dark, but always, as the wise saint wrote of old, restless until they find Him. How the great purpose would have been carried out had man given himself up obediently to God's leading we can only guess, but very early in the story we find man setting his own will against God's will, and by his disobedience bringing sin, suffering, and death into God's good and beautiful world.

But man's failure did not change God's loving purpose. As soon as the sin had been committed the promise of the Saviour was given, and the history of the years before Christ is the account of the preparation of the world for His coming. The race of men who had been created to be the children of God had gone astray and forgotten Him, therefore it was necessary to find one man with faith to receive God's message and obedience to do his part in keeping and handing it on.

Thus it was that God's call came to Abraham, the Eastern sheik, dwelling in the city of Ur in Chaldea, and bade him turn his back on all the familiar surroundings and go forth as a stranger and a wanderer into a land of which he knew nothing. God called him away from the city life, where men lived close together and bought and sold, and people followed an idolatrous worship, to be alone in the wide plains and among the rocky hills and hear the voice of God more clearly. There in the great silence, under the starry sky, the obedient servant learnt to listen and to understand his Master's message. He learnt the beginning of God's great lesson, something of His greatness, majesty, and unflinching care for His chosen people. And he learnt to look forward to a time which he himself would never live to see, when his descendants would be a great nation, would possess the land where he pitched his "moving tent," and would be the teachers and benefactors of the whole world. Once and again he proved the reality of God's care for him and his, and when he died he passed on to his descendants, as their most precious possession, the truth which he had learned.

Thus we see one family bound to God by a covenant, pledged to worship and obey Him, and looking forward to the glorious future promised to their descendants. The family grew into a nation and learnt by degrees more and more of His will. Again and again they broke their promises, and again and again God let them bear their punishment and gave them a fresh start; and the hope of the future, of the King Who was coming to reign in peace and righteousness, grew clearer and brighter.

When at last He came the nation had lost its independence and was under the rule of Rome. It is easy to see how the faithful Jews clung to the hope of a deliverer, who should set them free and make them a great nation. Only they were inclined to think

more of their proud position as the chosen nation than of their duty as the teachers of the world; and the most part of them were so taken up with the thought of a great conqueror and of an earthly kingdom that they did not recognize the Deliverer Who came to save them from their sins.

It is easy for us to see the hand of God in the history of the Jewish nation, because the writers of that history keep the thought of God's dealings with His people continually before us. But if we will try to look at the story of other nations in the same way, we shall find that there is no real difference between sacred and secular history, and that, though the Jews were the chosen guardians of God's message, yet other races played their part in preparing the world for the coming of Christ and in spreading the Kingdom which He founded.

GREECE AND ROME.

The title fastened to the Cross of our Lord was written in Hebrew, the language of the country, and also in Greek and Latin. Every passer-by was sure to understand one of these languages, for at the time of our Lord's death the Greeks were the teachers and the Romans the rulers of the world.

The Greeks, in their beautiful country with its mountains and well watered plains and the sea running up everywhere into the land, were some of the most wonderful people the world has ever seen. Travellers still come from all parts to look at their works of art, and all scholars study their literature. In their religion there are many beautiful stories, almost like parables of Christian truth, which seem like the guesses of earnest men feeling, as S. Paul says, after God. But mixed up with these lofty thoughts there is much that is low and unworthy. The Greeks believed in many gods and goddesses; like men and women in their passions and ways, who quarrelled among themselves and were jealous of each other and sometimes cruelly persecuted human beings who had been unlucky enough to lose their favour. So that, after a little, the earnest thinkers among them began to be dissatisfied with their belief and to seek after something better. One of the wisest and best of these philosophers, or lovers of wisdom as they were called, was the great teacher Socrates, who died in Athens about 400 years before the birth of Christ. He was a brave soldier and a good citizen, and more than once risked his life by speaking out against what was wrong and unjust. Above all, he wanted to do away with shams and falsehoods, and to get at the real truth about life and duty. The Athenians lived much in the open air, and Socrates would stand in the market place or pace up and down under the beautiful Colonnades talking to anybody who would listen to him, arguing and questioning, and forcing himself and other people to get to the bottom of things. But his outspoken words had made him enemies; there were some who declared that he was destroying religion and corrupting the younger men. He was tried and condemned to die by drinking a draught of poisonous hemlock. On the night before his death his friends

were allowed to be with him, and we may read the account of their last talk together. Socrates felt very strongly that death could not be the end of man's soul, and told one of his friends, who asked what he would wish done about his funeral, that the body which they must lay to rest would not be Socrates. But the Greek ideas about the life after death were very dim and shadowy, with nothing like the "sure and certain hope" that comforts Christian mourners. It is touching to read of these brave, wise men, on the eve of their parting, groping after something that would cheer and help them, and to feel that a little child, well taught in an English Sunday school, could have given them the key they needed.

Socrates died, but his teaching did not die with him. The greatest of his pupils, Plato, passed on to the world what he had learned from his master, and some of his thoughts almost startle us, they come so near to Christian truth. For instance, he says in his book, "The Republic," that a perfectly good and just man can only be proved to be so when he is ill-treated and unpopular, and that it would be a test of the perfect man if he were unjustly condemned and put to death by crucifixion. The Greeks were great colonists and had settlements all along the Mediterranean coast, so that their learning and their thoughts spread far and wide. The Jews also had by this time begun to settle beyond their own land, and these "Jews of the Dispersion," as they were called, were much interested in Greek learning, while the Greeks on their side were attracted by the writings of the Jews. The famous Greek version of the Old Testament, called the Septuagint, was translated in Alexandria, where there was a great colony of learned Jews. We know that S. Paul spoke and wrote Greek, and he had certainly studied the writings of Greek poets and philosophers, and found it useful to be able to quote from them when he was preaching or writing to Gentiles.

The Greeks had prepared the way for Christ by teaching men to think. The Romans were the fighters, the men of action, and God used them to do the same work in a different way. They had conquered for themselves a great Empire which extended over the whole of the known world, and this helped to prepare men's minds for the thought of the Catholic Church, the Kingdom which was to gather in all nations. The conquered people became in time proud to be admitted as Roman citizens, and S. Paul, a Roman citizen himself, uses this figure in his Epistle to show the newly baptized Christians the glory and honour of belonging to the Kingdom of Heaven (Phil. iii. 20, R.V.) Also the strong Roman rule and the law which gave accused persons the right of appeal to the Emperor saved S. Paul more than once from the Jewish mob, and gave him the chance of a hearing. For, though later emperors persecuted the Christians, in the first days of the Church the Romans allowed their subjects to follow any religion they chose, so long as it did not interfere with their loyalty to the Emperor. They had lost their old belief in the gods their fathers had served, but they had a feeling that it was good for men to worship someone, and their city was full of temples, set up to new gods borrowed from the nations they had conquered.

Last, but not least, the magnificent Roman roads, the remains of which we can see at the present day, made it possible for the missionaries to carry their message from end to end of the Empire. A great historian has said that travelling has never been so easy from the time of the Roman rule until our own day.

Rome was a sort of gathering place for the whole world. If we could have stood in those days at one of the great city gates we should have seen men of every country and of every sort and condition streaming in. Soldiers returning from a campaign or from a distant station; merchants with wares to sell; men with some petition to present to the Emperor; curious travellers, eager to see the city; prisoners, like the great Christian missionary himself. Once the Church found a footing in the imperial city, people from all parts of the world had a chance of hearing the good tidings and of carrying them back to their native land.

So we see that, in the history of the ancient world, the different nations each did their part in preparing the way for Christ. The Jews kept and cherished God's truth. The Greeks taught men to think, to try to get to the bottom of things and to seek after a better religion than they knew. The Romans made it easy for the new teaching to spread.

MODERN NATIONS.

But the great Roman Empire, which had seemed so strong, was beginning, at the very height of its power, to go to pieces. The old fighting race had grown rich and self-indulgent, and could not stand against the strong young nations who were pressing westward. They were wild, uncivilized tribes, but they were vigorous and warlike, and they defeated the trained soldiers of Rome and more than once they took and sacked the city. It seemed as if all civilization and learning were going to be swept away.

But in the wisdom of God new life and hope came out of what looked like destruction, and the help came through the newly founded Christian Church. A Power greater than the power of Rome was beginning to conquer the world and to subdue these strong, fierce invaders who had never submitted to any other rule. One after another the wild tribes learnt the Christian faith and found their own work to do in God's great plan for mankind. As we have said, it is not so easy to judge of history that is near to us as of the story of long past ages, but some things seem to stand out clearly.

ENGLAND.

We look back 900 years and see this English nation of ours, cut off by the sea from the rest of Europe—a sturdy, independent people, but dropping behindhand in civilization and enterprise. We see the Saxons conquered by those wonderful invaders, the Normans, gaining from them, through much trouble and hardship, all the good they had to teach—better ways of building and of warfare, more polish and more learning. We see our forefathers,

sturdy and independent still, but learning to look out beyond their own shores, and growing fit to take their place among the people of other nations.

THE COLONIES.

Four hundred years ago, when the New World had been discovered and men were learning more about navigation, there came a passion for exploring and for founding colonies beyond the sea. England, Spain, Portugal, and France all had their great sailors eager to push out into the unknown. Some of these early explorers owned among their motives the desire to spread the Christian faith. Such was Jacques Cartier, the Breton sailor, who set up the Cross side by side with the lilies of his country's banner, and claimed Canada for Christ and France. Such was the Devonshire gentleman, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, who gave England her first colony of Newfoundland. The friend who tells the story of his voyage declares that the hope of bringing the heathen from darkness to light is one of those good motives without which no colonist should dare to set sail. But only too often this thought seems to have been left out, and in the desire for wealth and territory our countrymen have forgotten how the flag that flies at every English masthead is marked with the Cross.

England is the most successful of all colonizing nations, and rules over an Empire on which the sun never sets. Surely we may see the hand of God when a Christian nation is called to such wide dominion and given such a wonderful opportunity of spreading the truth. Unless, like the old French explorer, we claim the land for Christ as well as for our country we must be failing to take our part in God's plan for the world.

We have tried to see something of the working out of God's purpose in past history. We are quite sure that that purpose still holds good. We want to think reverently how the events that are happening in our own day may help it forward.

Study Problem.—To discover from the history of the nations reasons for believing that things do not happen by chance.

Assignment 1.—Let members suggest the different kinds of workmen employed in the building of a cathedral, and discuss together the stages of its growth from the very beginning to its completion.

Assignment 2.—Let one member show how S. Paul was specially fitted by (a) his Jewish birth, (b) his Greek education, and (c) his Roman citizenship to be the first great missionary. Let all discuss together the reason for the title on the Cross being written in the three languages.

Assignment 3.—Let each member state what he thinks gives the British Empire opportunities for doing a greater work in the world than any other nation at the present time.

CHAPTER III.

The Forging of the Weapon (1).

(Pictures 5, 7, 8).

It is a wonderful thing to go into a factory where weapons are being made. Think, for instance, of all the thought and the work, the clever brains and the skilful fingers that are needed before one of our modern rifles is ready for use in war. How the steel must be tempered and the wood seasoned and every screw and bolt shaped and prepared for its special work. How many different processes and complicated machines are employed before the whole is put together. And we can understand this when we remember that upon the soundness of that weapon and its fitness for its purpose the lives of Englishmen—nay, the safety of the British Empire, may depend.

Therefore, we do not wonder that, when a nation has some great part to play in carrying out God's purpose, we find that nation going through a very long and careful preparation. The ups and downs of its history, the trials and struggles through which its people have to pass, are like the fire and water, the hammering and the shaping which temper the metal and perfect the mechanism of the service rifle.

THE TRAINING OF THE JEWS.

The greatest destiny ever given to a nation was that of the Jews. From them our blessed Lord took His human nature. To them was entrusted the work of handing on God's truth to the world. As we read their story we can see how they were prepared for the greatest moment in the history of mankind. We have seen how God chose Abraham, the man of faith and obedience, to carry out His purpose, and how Abraham's family and the nation which it became kept and handed on, from generation to generation, the truth and the promise which they had received. Then came the hard days of the Egyptian bondage, and the Israelite slaves as they toiled and laboured in the building of those cities whose remains are still the wonder of the world, and gathered straw for their bricks in the blazing heat, felt as if their God had forgotten His people. They did not understand that it was just this common trouble that was making them into a nation, drawing them together as only suffering could do, keeping them distinct from the heathen people who oppressed them. God brought them out of Egypt, and so gave them a new bond of union in their deliverance to be commemorated through the centuries in their yearly national thanksgivings. Surely the people who had seen their oppressors dead on the shores of the Red Sea could never forget the night when they stood, a frightened crowd of fugitives, with "the foe behind, the deep before," nor cease to trust the God Who had cleft for them a way through the waters.

But the lesson of trust was very slowly learned. On the very borders of the Promised Land, with the reward almost within their grasp, their hearts failed them. They were not ready yet for the

task in front of them, and as the imperfect metal goes again into the fire, so the faint-hearted people were turned back into the wilderness. There they had to learn, in forty weary years of journeying, camping, and journeying again, fighting their way sometimes through the desert tribes who opposed them, that there was nothing too hard for them to do in obedience to the call of God. They had come out of Egypt an undependable rabble, with the weakness and the timidity which are ever the result of slavery. When their children entered Canaan forty years later they entered it as a conquering army, disciplined by the hardships of the wilderness life, and confident in the general who had once and again led them to victory. By force of arms they occupied the land, but though they had entered into their beautiful inheritance, there dwelt around them in the coast cities and in the wilderness to the south and east the heathen nations with whom they were to have no intercourse. The laws as to clean and unclean meats which prevented a Jew from eating with one of another race, should have kept them out of temptation, but when Joshua, the grand old leader and elder, was gone his people fell into the very sins against which he had warned them so earnestly. Again and again they slipped into the evil customs of the nations around them. They lost the grand idea of a nation with God for its Ruler, and clamoured for a king, a warlike chief to lead them out to battle, like the kings who commanded their heathen neighbours. It is the same story over and over again, the people falling into the same sin, suffering the consequences, repenting and falling again, until the threatened punishment had to come. And the chosen people, with their city sacked and their Temple in ruins, were carried captive to Babylon. But God's punishments are never mere acts of vengeance, they carry with them the means of repentance and a new beginning. The Babylonian captivity killed for ever the Jewish inclination to idolatry. In their dreary exile among the heathen, cut off from their beautiful Temple service, they learnt to prize their religion as they had never done before. The little faithful band who came back after seventy years and, with a weapon in one hand to keep the enemy at bay, built up the ruined walls of Jerusalem, were ready to fight and die for their faith.

They did fight for it, and died for it too in the stormy days between the Old and New Testament, and grew the stronger because of the persecution they suffered. As in the old days in Egypt, suffering drew them together. They had begun to scatter and settle in different places, they learnt the Greek language and were interested in Greek literature. But wherever they went and whatever they learnt they were Jews first and foremost, looking to Jerusalem and the Temple as their rallying point, and clinging to the promise "made of God unto our fathers." So at last, in the fulness of time, the promise was fulfilled, and the Redeemer came to His own people.

And here is the sad part of the story. The iron and the wood that are needed for the earthly weapon of warfare can be shaped and fashioned as the maker chooses. But just because man is the highest part of God's creation and his destiny is so

great and wonderful, therefore, he cannot be shaped like inanimate objects, such as wood and metal, unless he uses his own gifts of intelligence and free-will to carry out God's purpose. And that was what the Jews as a nation failed to do. They had come to look upon God's favour as a right that could not be forfeited, not as a trust to be used for the good of the world. They looked for a conqueror who would make them a powerful kingdom, and they were angry with the Teacher Who showed them where they failed. The Saviour "came unto His own and His own received Him not."

Only those faithful Jews, who were ready to trust and obey and wait for fuller teaching, had the glory of helping to carry out the Divine purpose, and of passing on to the world the truth that was revealed to them.

THE MAKING OF THE CHINESE PEOPLE.

Now let us leave the history of the Jews and look at the great awakening Giant in the Far East of whom we spoke in the first chapter. Let us step into the great factory in which nations are made ready to fulfil God's purpose, and see what outside influences have helped in the shaping of the Chinese people.

AN ANCIENT HISTORY.

What can it mean, both to the Jews and to the Chinese, to have a history that goes back for 5,000 years? We know how our American kindred come to England because they want to look at old buildings and study old institutions, which by right of their English ancestors belong to them also. As we hear of it we feel proud of our past, glad that we have all these centuries to look back upon and the deeds of ancient days to inspire us. But when the Chinese boy thinks of his country's heroes he can go back forty centuries to the time when the great Emperor Yao, "the intelligent, accomplished, and thoughtful," ruled "the black-haired race" of the Chinese. In the seventieth year of his reign, so runs the story, the aged monarch found the cares of government too heavy for him, and Shung, called "The Divine Farmer," was chosen, and summoned, when ploughing on the hillside with an elephant and an ox yoked together, to share the Imperial throne.

"The memory and light of these two," says Archdeacon Moule, "seem to gleam afar in the shadowy depths of Chinese history as something clearer than myth." They were the sort of rulers whom China delights to honour—wise, just, and peaceable—and to this day the river that divides into two near the place where the farmer Emperor left the plough bears the name of Yao and Shung. During this same golden age of heroes occurred a terrible flood, when the Yellow River burst its banks and devastated the country round. The saviour of the district was a certain official called Yü, who for nine years gave all his energies to the task of leading the waters back to their original course, and was so absorbed in his work that he thrice passed the door of his house without stopping to enter. As a reward for his services to his country he was made Emperor after the death of Shung. The stories of these early

heroes are part of the education of every Chinese boy, and we can tell from an event which happened about 200 years before Christ how great was the value set upon them. The Emperor Shih Hwangti wished to alter the mode of government, and feeling that the records of the old great days helped to set the people against any change, he issued an edict that all the books in the country, except those that dealt with medicine, divination, and agriculture, were to be destroyed. The guardians of the books did their utmost to resist the decree; many of them died rather than give up their precious records. When, some fifteen years later, the Emperor Kaotè came to the throne and realized how serious a loss the country had suffered, it was found that many scholars had learnt the most precious texts by heart. And "from the sides of caves, from the roofs of houses, from the banks of rivers volumes were produced by those who had risked their lives for their preservation."

ONE LANGUAGE.

And we must remember that the Chinese boy as he studies his country's history can read the tale in the very words in which it was written for him 2,400 years ago. To most English people the "Anglo-Saxon Chronicle" and the early English poems would be almost as unintelligible as the Hebrew version of the Old Testament; for both we are dependent upon a translator. But though the spoken language of one part of China would not be understood in another, the written language is the same everywhere, and has not altered since Confucius wrote the books which every educated Chinese must read. The present Bishop of North China has declared that this common language, in which the great classics are written, has more to do with the unity of the Chinese people than any other force. "This unity," he says, "binds together northerner and southerner, the emigrant who lives side by side with the Englishman at Singapore and the mandarin who has never left Peking, the scholar steeped in classical lore and the beggar in apologies for rags." They share the same heritage, look back to their country's great past, venerate her early heroes, and learn by heart the same famous books. So that, vast as their country is, they are like one great family, bound together by strong family pride.

INDEPENDENCE OF OTHER NATIONS.

Twice in her history China has been conquered and ruled by a foreign invader.

The Mongols.—In the thirteenth century the fierce Tartar chief, Jenghiz Khan, was the terror of the neighbouring countries. He and his wild followers swept into Europe, laid waste the cities of Moscow, Kiev, Cracow, and Pesth, boasting that he could ride over their ruins without meeting sufficient obstacle to make his horse stumble. From the bleak and dreary plains of his own country he coveted the more fertile land of China, fell upon the northern provinces and devastated ninety cities. His grandson, the mighty Kublai Khan, followed up the conquest and made himself

master of the whole of China. His empire extended from the Black Sea to the China Ocean, and from Northern Mongolia to the frontier of Annam. He was not only a great warrior, but a wide-minded, intelligent ruler, eager to learn from other nations. It is, thanks to his interest in foreigners, that we know so much about his court, for thither came three merchants from Venice, enterprising traders who won the favour of the great Khan, and were promoted by him to high office in the country. The youngest of the three, the famous Marco Polo, after his return to his native Italy was taken prisoner in a sea fight with Genoa, and beguiled the weary hours of captivity by telling long stories of Kublai and the magnificence of the Chinese court. One of his fellow prisoners took down the tales, and we can read his account of his great master—"a cordial, genial, friendly human being . . . taking the most wholesome, friendly interest in everything, ready to learn and eager to know." It must have been this quality that made him adopt so readily the civilization of the people he had conquered. The wild Tartars went to school with the nation they had come to rule. They adopted the Chinese writing and studied their literature, and the strong rule of the foreign monarch drew the different parts of the nation together and actually helped to unite them.

Then, 400 years later, came the Manchu tribe from the north-west, and taking their opportunity when the Chinese were fighting amongst themselves, conquered the country which they ruled until two years ago. But there is a saying that "China is a sea that salts all the waters that flow into it," and what had happened before happened again. It was not the conquerors who changed the nation, but the nation who taught their ways and customs to the conquerors. China remained just the same under her new rulers, just as self-dependent and contemptuous of other countries, and it was usually the Manchu rulers themselves who set their faces most strongly against new fashions. So that the very changes in the government of the country seem to have drawn the Chinese people more closely together and helped to produce the unity which is the most remarkable characteristic of the nation.

PHYSICAL FEATURES OF THE COUNTRY.

One of the outside forces which go to the making of a nation is usually the character of the country. China is so vast that we meet there every variety of heat and cold, but there are certain outstanding features which have certainly had their effect upon the people. The rivers have been called "China's wealth," being the great means of transport, but the Yellow River is well known also as "China's sorrow," and from the days when Yü, the engineer Emperor, set himself to fight the unmanageable river we hear of continual floods. Again and again has the river burst its banks and changed its course, whole districts are submerged, thousands of people drowned or rendered homeless, patiently tended crops destroyed; and with unflinching industry and perseverance the Chinese people have worked at building embankments and making canals.

"From dealing with huge breaches of the Hwang-Ho . . . down to giving a little town like T'ai-an a constant supply of fresh

water, nothing has been too great or too small for China's engineers." Drought is another danger that threatens the farmer, the fear of famine from too much or too little water is always before the great mass of the people. Add to this that the country is really unable to provide for the enormous population, and we can understand that nearly everyone lives from hand to mouth and in the constant expectation of disaster. And this hard, uncertain life has produced in the Chinese a persevering industry and a wonderful, cheerful patience which other nations might copy with advantage. "The Chinese," says one who has worked among them for many years, "are seldom in a hurry, and time does not seem to be much prized or husbanded by them; but very few of them can afford or would care to 'stand all the day idle.' Industry, continuous, patient, and overcoming hindrances and obstacles and long-lasting discouragement characterizes the life of the agriculturist, woodman, and artisan alike." We may say that it characterizes also the life of the scholar, when we hear of men entering again and again for the same examination, resolved to win at last the coveted degree. In one province, in the year 1889, there were thirty-eight candidates over eighty years of age and thirteen over ninety. We are glad to hear that the Government decided to grant an honorary degree to some of these persevering old gentlemen.

Watch the agriculturists in early October in a year of abnormal rain and flood. "The whole plain is under water, and the late rice crop is submerged and apparently ruined. But with infinite patience and cheerful hope the Chinese husbandmen are harvesting in boats, and with minute toil they lift shock after shock out of the water, tie it to a tall stick with the hope of wind and sun drying it, and so lift piecemeal the drowned harvest from its watery grave. In a neighbouring plain, inundated by the great rainfall and water-spouts . . . we passed in our native boat (in some places going over instead of under the bridges, so deep was the water) village after village lying below the level of the canal, with their houses two or three feet deep in water. A barber's shop stood open and we could look inside, and there sat a customer with his feet dangling in the wet and the barber up to his knees, yet both cheerful, patient, and merry in their misery."

Another writer tells of a large party of Chinese who had been invited to a feast, the hour fixed being 10 a.m. The guests arrived, hungry and expectant, at the appointed time, and found that by some change in the arrangements another party were to be entertained first while they themselves acted as waiters. Without a word or sign of complaint they turned to and cheerfully handed to the more favoured guests the good things they had been expecting. The feast lasted long, and was followed by a long delay while more food was being prepared, but the patience and the politeness of the visitors never failed, and when they sat down at last at 3 p.m. to the long-deferred banquet they assured their host that the arrangement suited them exactly.

Persevering, industrious, patient, cheerful, content with the very least the world can give, with their long past history to

inspire them and the wonderful unity that should help them to act together, surely there must be great work reserved in the providence of God for such a nation as this.

Study Problem.—To discover how the history of the Jews and of the Chinese has prepared them for their share of the world's work.

Assignment 1.—Let two or three members describe—if possible, what they have seen in a factory—the various stages in the manufacture of a rifle or other article.

Assignment 2.—Let each member state what he considers to be the event in their history or the feature of their country which has made the most difference to the Jews and to the Chinese.

Assignment 3.—Let two or three members state what they think are the special qualities of the Chinese national character, and let all discuss together the strong points of English character and compare them with those of the Chinese.

CHAPTER IV.

The Forging of the Weapon (2).

(Pictures 9, 10, 11).

We have been thinking of the work that is needed for the making of a weapon to be used in warfare, and we have seen how the changes in the life of a nation are like the hammering and the tempering that prepares the rifle for its important work. We noticed, too, the difference between the parts of the rifle which can be fashioned as the maker pleases and the human beings who must yield their own brains and wills to carry out their Master's purpose. And this brings us to another difference between the preparing of the weapon and of the nation, which is that, in the case of the human beings, the most important part of the preparation is done from within. The outward events in our lives, the place in which we live, the trials and joys that come to us have much to do with the forming of our characters. But more important still are the thoughts, the hopes, and the desires that rule our hearts. If we know what a person thinks about, what he wishes for, what he loves, we know in what direction his character is growing. And that is why the religion of a nation has more to do than anything else in determining the character of that nation.

THE TEACHING OF THE JEWS.

In this, of course, the Jews were different from all other people, because they were chosen in the wisdom of God to know more of His truth than was revealed to the rest of the world. But we must always remember that God taught them, as we teach children, by degrees. A little child begins his lessons with A B C and with awkward attempts at writing and drawing, far away from the copy, but good for such unskilled fingers. The Jews of those early days

were like little children, and God taught them one thing at a time as they were ready for it, so that we need not be surprised to find them doing actions which to our fuller knowledge seem cruel and wrong.

Abraham lived among idolatrous people, and he had to learn and to hand on the truth about the One God, Whom he could not see, but Who ruled the world.

Moses, the great law-giver, raised up to lead the Jews at the moment when they actually became a nation, had another truth to teach them—that the God of power is also a holy God. The Tabernacle service, with its carefully arranged sacrifices, showed them the need of atonement before sinful man can appear in God's presence, and again and again they saw the punishment of death inflicted upon those who disobeyed. It was a stern lesson, but the natives among whom the Jews were to live had many evil customs connected with their worship, and it was necessary that God's people should realize the difference.

Later on, in the evil days of Ahab, the idolatrous king, God sent His people another teacher, the stern prophet who comes suddenly into the story to foretell the long drought. We must remember that the neighbouring tribes were quite ready to believe in the God of Israel as one of the many gods who watched over different nations. "He is God of the hills," they said, and they hoped that His help would fail His people if they fought them in the plains. The Sidonians worshipped the sun-god Baal and Ashtoroth, the goddess of the moon; the Philistines prayed to the fish-god Dagon; and many nations offered horrible human sacrifices to Moloch, the god of fire.

So Elijah forced his people to face the question in that wonderful gathering on Mount Carmel. There must be no divided worship. "If the Lord be God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him." We all know the story, one of the most thrilling that ever was written—the one man against the 450, so strong in his trust that he could challenge them fearlessly on behalf of his God. And when the prophets had cried in vain upon the god who could not hear, and the fire of the Lord flashed down upon the ancient altar, the crowd of waiting people fell upon their faces and owned the sign, "The Lord, He is the God."

The Psalms were the work of many different writers at many different times. Some of the writers hold a clearer and nobler idea of God than others, and many speak of His coming dominion over all the world (Psalms xlvi. 7, lxviii. 2, 9-31).

In the dark days of the Captivity and the troublous times after the return God sent His prophets with clearer and clearer teaching. It seems certain that the last twenty-six chapters of the book which we call Isaiah were written much later than the rest, and by an author whose name is unknown to us. "Comfort ye, comfort ye, My people" (Isaiah xl.), he writes, and he goes on to describe the Deliverer Who was to come, the Shepherd of His people, into Whose Kingdom all nations should bring their best. And later on (Isaiah liii.) he draws the wonderful picture of the Servant of God Who by His obedience and His

suffering wins the redemption of the world. So the Jews were trained to look forward to the fulfilment of God's promise, and just before the birth of our Lord this feeling of expectation was specially strong. There were many patriotic Jews who, as they saw the Roman fortress frowning above the court of their beloved Temple and paid their taxes grudgingly to the Roman Emperor, would recall the words of the prophets and feel that the Redeemer must soon come to Zion. And there were some like Saul the Pharisee, who were trying sincerely and earnestly to keep the law and yet had to confess sadly that their lives were always falling short of the pattern. And then the Redeemer came, and for those who gave themselves up to learn from Him a wonderful new light burst upon the old teaching.

Most of us know what it is to work away patiently at some study or handicraft, not quite seeing the reason of our teacher's instructions, but trying to follow them as well as we can. Then one day we reach the point when the meaning of it all begins to dawn upon us. Just such a time of wonder and of joy must have been that afternoon of the first Easter Day, when the mysterious Stranger joined the two disciples on the road to Emmaus and "opened unto them the Scriptures." They had been mourning because He Who "they trusted should have redeemed Israel" had been taken by their rulers and put to death. But, after all, what had the prophet said about the treatment that would be given to God's chosen Servant? (Isaiah liii.). Old lessons learnt at their mothers' side, Scriptures read Sabbath by Sabbath in the synagogue suddenly took a new meaning. They began to see whither all this careful preparation had been leading them. Surely that wonderful walk must have been like the hour of sunrise, when all the dim, shadowy landscape grows clear and distinct in the brightening dawn.

THE RELIGIONS OF THE CHINESE.

The Jews had a clearer knowledge of God than any other people, but yet in the beliefs of every nation we find some glimmer of truth, sent by God Himself to prepare them for fuller teaching. It is not easy to say exactly what is the belief of the Chinese. It is commonly said that the nation has three religions—Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism—but all these three can be followed together. A man may be at the same time a Taoist, a Confucianist, and a Buddhist, and may hold other beliefs and follow other practices which belong to none of the three.

Some writers think that, far away back in the dim distance of their early history, the Chinese worshipped one god. It is true that until quite recently the Emperor went every year to pray for himself and his people upon the beautiful marble daïs in Peking, where stands what is known as the Altar of Heaven. He had spent the previous night fasting, and there, alone upon the daïs, under the open sky, he, as the father of the nation, would kneel in worship before the tablet of Shang-ti, the "High Ruler." Perhaps the Chinese brought the belief and the custom with them from their far-away home and from the days when

their chieftains, like the priest-king Melchizedek, led the worship of the people. But as far as we can gather, the general religion of the early times was rather what we call Animism—that is, a belief in a number of spirits, good and bad, who had power to bless or to hurt mankind. Nearly all savage people hold this belief, for unless they have a clear faith in a God Who rules heaven and earth it is only natural that they should make guesses at the cause of the sunshine that ripens their crops, the rain that floods the fields, and the sickness that lays men low. The Chinese believed in two sorts of spirits—the Yang, or good spirits, and the Yin, or evil ones—and their religion seems to have been just a propitiating of the spirits, bribing them by worship and gifts to leave the worshipper, his family, and his crop in peace. This old religion of fear lasts still among the Chinese people. In every house we shall find a little figure known as the “kitchen god,” who is supposed to report to the powerful spirits all that goes on in the household. All sorts of offerings are made to him to persuade him to give a good report, and now and then a sticky sweet is put into his mouth to prevent his opening his lips and telling too many tales. But from time to time teachers have arisen among the Chinese, who have seen further into the truth and have tried to show it to their fellow-countrymen.

First among these teachers comes Lao-tze, who lived about the time when the Jews were captive in Babylon. He held some office under the Emperor, either Keeper of the Imperial Treasury or perhaps of the precious archives or the State Museum. But the times were evil, and Lao-tze, weary of the wrong-doing and low aims which he saw all around him, gave up his office, and after living in retirement for a while, left the country and journeyed westward. He stayed for some time with the keeper of the mountain pass which led over the frontier, taught him his own belief, and left with him a book in which he had written down his thoughts. He called his teaching “Tao,” which means “The Way.” So many strange legends are told of him and so many evil practices have grown up among his followers, that it is difficult now to find out exactly what he taught. Certainly he desired that men should lead peaceful, simple lives, and should try to draw near to the great Power Who rules the world of nature, and in his book there are some beautiful precepts, which sound almost as if they had been given by a Christian. “Recompense injury with kindness,” he said. “Rejoice in the success of others and sympathize in their sorrows. Cherish gentle compassion, economy, humility. Watch against the small beginnings of evil.”

One of the strange legends which grew up after the death of Lao-tze is of some of his followers who withdrew from the world to think and to be alone with nature, and who live still among the mountains, half buried in the ground. Their nails have grown so long that they circle round their necks, and grass and flowers grow from their bodies. So they wait, in peaceful patience, until their bodies shall wear away and their souls be free. We can easily see from these wild stories that Lao-tze’s teaching was too lofty for his disciples; they slipped back into the old worship of evil spirits, and

the Taoist priests are known for their bad and corrupt practices and for taking money from those who come to them for help against bad luck.

While Lao-tze was Keeper of the Treasures there came to him one day a young man who had a book to place among them. He was a scholar, and perhaps had some opinion of his own learning, and he began to talk to the old philosopher. But Lao-tze was not at all encouraging, for the young man was full of rules and plans for improving the world, and Lao-tze told him that if men made fewer rules and kept them better it would be a good thing for everyone. Probably he thought his visitor a rather fussy and conceited young man, and wanted to be left in peace with his thoughts and dreams.

But this visitor was the man who for 2,400 years has been honoured and followed by one-fifth of the population of the world—the philosopher and teacher, Confucius.

He was born in the year 552 B.C., lost his father when he was very young, and was sent as a lad to watch the cattle on the hillside, where he would sit in the noonday heat musing over the good days past and the hope of reform and improvement for his native land. At the age of twenty-two he became a teacher, and later he held office for a short time as a magistrate. But he, too, like Lao-tze, fell on evil times; he was led to resign his office and spent the rest of his life wandering from place to place, followed by a band of faithful scholars. Confucius had no idea of founding a new religion; he collected and edited the sayings of wise men of old, so that all men might study and lay them to heart, and he drew up rules of conduct that should teach men their duty to their neighbours and to the State. One good thing which he found already in the nation and insisted upon most strongly was the love and respect due from a son to his parents. This has always been one of the strongest characteristics of the Chinese people, and we cannot help seeing that the promise of the fifth commandment has been fulfilled in the case of this, the oldest nation in the world. The respect and affection shown to parents during their lifetime shows itself after their death in that reverence for ancestors, which has grown into something like worship of the spirits of the dead. In every house there is the tablet with the names of the ancestors, before which a stick of incense is burnt, that the spirits may watch over and help their friends on earth.

The Chinese say that Confucius has been honoured for so long because his mind was set on righteousness. It is true that he has left his countrymen a wonderful and beautiful rule of life. He has given them precepts of courage, contentment, and patience, has taught them, almost in the words of Scripture, the Golden Rule, never to do to others what we should not like done to ourselves. But there the teaching stops; Confucius can give men no help to keep that rule. He can point them to no-one to whom they may look up in reverence and worship. When his followers asked him what happens after death to the soul of man, he could only reply that he had enough to do to think of this life and must leave the future alone.

It has been said that man is naturally a "praying animal," which means that, however ignorant he may be, he feels the need of looking up to someone greater and better than himself, to whom he can offer his worship and his requests. And, therefore, the Chinese people, though they reverence their sage Confucius, have never been able to rest content with his teaching. They have even come to look upon him as a sort of god, not only bowing—"kow-towing" they call it—before his tablet, as every schoolboy must do once a month, but building temples in his honour.

In the year 250 B.C. the teachers of the third religion came first to China, but their belief did not take much root in the country until some 300 years later. Gautama Buddha, the founder of their religion, was an Indian prince, whose gentle heart was so grieved by the sorrow and suffering in the world that he gave up his life to find some remedy for it. He taught men the beauty of self-sacrifice and of patience, but the only hope he could promise them was to get rid altogether of feeling or desiring anything. The soul of man, he taught, would pass after death into some other body. If he had lived a good and kindly life he would live again in a higher state; if he had spent his days in cruelty or self-indulgence he might be born again as a lower animal—a bird, beast, or reptile. And after passing through thousands of such different lives, he might hope to find rest by becoming nothing, by losing all feeling, and so ceasing to suffer. Buddha could tell his people of no god and taught them no way of worship, but, because men cannot live without prayer, the Buddhists have made a god of their founder, and worship him and others of his best followers. In China prayers are addressed to one of them called Amidabha (pronounced Omitufu), of whom the beautiful legend is told that when, after long struggle and sacrifice, he had almost reached his eternal rest, he turned back to the world to help his fellow-men. To him and to Kuan-yin, the goddess of mercy, the Chinese have learnt to pray, but the prayers are often only the repetition again and again of the name of the god. A missionary calculated that one woman, who afterwards became a Christian, must have repeated the name of Amidabha about 200,000,000 times.

THE PREPARATION FOR CHRISTIANITY.

What have the religions of China done to prepare her for her place in God's great plan for the world? Each of her teachers has given her something, and yet has failed to satisfy her needs. Lao-tze tried to lead her to high and holy thoughts about the beautiful world of nature, but his teaching was all too vague and shadowy, and his followers slipped back into the worship of evil spirits.

Confucius gave his countrymen a rule of life, but could point them to no helper who would give them the strength they needed to fulfil the law.

Buddha taught self-sacrifice and patience and the hope of a reward hereafter for those who lived humbly and kindly, but his hope was only the loss of all thought and feeling, of all that makes

life worth living. And each of these teachers, both by what he taught and by what he could not give, has helped to prepare China for something better.

Christianity can tell the Taoist of Him Who created the wonderful world, and can lift his thoughts from a multitude of good and evil spirits to the God of heaven and earth and to Him Who calls Himself the Way.

Christianity can speak to the follower of Confucius, who confesses, like S. Paul, that he cannot keep the law which he admires, of the power of redeeming love and of the grace given by God the Holy Spirit. It can tell the man who keeps in loving memory the names of friends passed out of sight, of the blessed belief in the Communion of Saints.

Christianity can lead the Buddhist to the worship of One Who perfectly fulfilled the law of self-sacrifice, and can tell him of a future life when all man's highest hopes and desires shall find their fulfilment, where pain and sorrow shall be no more and eternal rest shall mean untiring service.

THE COMING OF THE DAWN.

We spoke before of the coming of the dawn to those who walked in the twilight. Let us picture a traveller on the mountains, astray in the darkness, uncertain of his path, resolved to lie down and wait for daylight. Gradually the pale light broadens and strengthens in the east, the grey shapes in the valley beneath begin to take form; groups of trees, the cottages, the roads, grow clear and stand out from among the shadows. Now the sun's edge shows in a golden rim above the hill. The traveller's path lies clear and safe before him, he can rise and go forward joyfully—life and meaning have come into the world.

How good to think that such a sunrise may come to the ancient land of China, showing her the truths at which her teachers tried to guess, and answering the riddles to which they could give no reply. How wonderful if we may do our part in hastening the coming of that dawn.

Study Problem.—To discover what their religions have done and are doing for the Chinese.

Assignment 1.—Let the members read the story of Jacob and discuss together what great religious truths he did not know.

Assignment 2.—Let members bring stories showing the Chinese belief in spirits and discuss together why the three religions have not destroyed that belief.

Assignment 3.—Let each member be prepared to say how he or she would answer one who wished to leave the Chinese to their own religions.

CHAPTER V.

The East and the West.

(*Pictures 12, 13*).

In our first chapter we thought of the awakened Giant standing, like S. Christopher, at the cross roads, doubtful to what master he should vow his service. We have been trying since to find out what manner of Giant this great nation must be and how he has been prepared for his work in the world. We remember how Christopher waited, doubtful and uncertain, until a holy hermit pointed him to the way of the highest service; and it seemed to us that the Christian Church alone can be the guide and teacher for this new Giant of the Far East. Let us see how Christian nations in the past have used their opportunities of helping and teaching. For though China has never before opened her doors to Western people as she is doing now, yet, all through the last 2,000 years of her history, there have been times when Christian travellers have stood, as it were, upon her threshold; entered in, too, sometimes, bringing their gifts to China or seeking for what she had to give.

THE APOSTOLIC TRADITION.

And first of all we must look back into the great, heroic days of the first Christian century, when the men who saw our Lord face to face during His earthly ministry went forth in His strength to make disciples of all nations. It is true that a writer in the thirteenth century assures us that no one of the Apostles ever came to China, but there is nevertheless an early tradition that the Apostle who failed in hope but not in love, S. Thomas, the first missionary to India, pushed on to preach the Gospel in the great Empire of the East. In the old Syriac Prayer Book we find thanksgivings for the work of "Mar" (a Syrian title, meaning lord) Thomas, through whom the Sinæ (the Chinese) were converted to the truth. Archdeacon Moule, who inclines to believe the tradition, says, "The story looks like an archway, veiled perhaps in summer haze, leading into the long vista of a day of light and shade, of sunshine, dead calm, thunder-gust, and tempest alternating—the day of Christianity in China, to close, we trust, soon and for ever, not in dark night, but with the dawn of the eternal day of the Kingdom of God."

THE NESTORIANS.

In the seventh century we find certain evidence of a Christian Mission to China. The missionaries were followers of Nestorius, whose teaching had been condemned as partly false by the Church at the Council of Ephesus in the year 431. It seems to have been rather the followers of Nestorius than the teacher himself, who had fallen into error as to the divine nature and human birth of our Lord, and if they erred in doctrine there is no doubt as to their eagerness to spread the Christian faith as they had received it. About 300 years ago a most interesting memorial of their Mission

was found near Sian-fu. This is a great slab, 9-ft. high, 3-ft. wide, and 1-ft. in thickness, with a long inscription giving an account of the creation, the fall, the birth of our Lord, His ascent into heaven, and "launching of the boat of mercy," and of the coming of the Nestorian teachers to China and the help given them by various emperors. Another record, a paper roll 1,100 years old, written by a Nestorian Christian, was discovered a short time since in a sealed cavern in the Province of Kansu.

In old romances and books of travel we often come across the name of Prester John, a sort of fairy tale monarch of the East, of the most fabulous wealth and splendour. One account calls him a great Christian leader, who fought against the Turks. Another tells that he had seventy kings for his vassals, and was seen by his people only three times a year. Nothing was too marvellous to happen in Prester John's country. It is impossible to say how the story began, but it seems quite possible that the mysterious monarch may have been a Nestorian bishop, or possibly a Tartar chief, converted by the Mission, and holding the double office of priest and king ("Prester" being the shortened form of "presbyter" or priest). Certain it is that the Nestorian Church was strong and flourishing in the East in mediæval times, and we have a very interesting story of those days, marking, perhaps, the very first contact of our own nation with a native of China. A famous Nestorian monk, Bar Sauma, born in Peking, came to Europe to incite the Pope to a fresh Crusade. In spite of the errors of his Church he seems to have been well received in the West, and in Gascony he met with one chivalrous Crusader, our own King Edward I., who received the Holy Communion from his hands. We should like to feel it a good omen for the future, this meeting of our brave and far-seeing Plantagenet King with the monk from the mysterious Eastern land, and the drawing together of East and West by the greatest of all bonds of union. But by the end of the thirteenth century the good days of the Nestorian Church were over, and one of the early Roman missionaries gives a sad account of the evil lives of the monks and of drunkenness, even at sacred services.

THE TRADERS.

In the meanwhile travellers were coming to China for other reasons. Far away back in the days of the Roman Empire an embassy was sent from Rome to open trade with Canton, and when the Emperor Justinian ruled, there were numbers of merchants bartering their wares for the silks, and perhaps the tea-leaves of the Chinese. And in the thirteenth century we come to the arrival of the young Venetian merchant, Marco Polo, with his father and uncle at the court of Kublai Khan. We can only wish that all the Western merchants who have been drawn to China for purposes of trade had left such memories behind them as those gallant gentlemen of Venice. As we have already seen, the great Khan put the fullest confidence in his Italian visitors, raised young Marco to a position of trust, loved to learn from them about the customs of their own country, and, best of all, begged that teachers

of their religion might be sent to his people. There could not be a better testimony to the Venetian visitors than this, that the Tartar chief should desire to learn about the God they served, and it reminds us that the most powerful help or hindrance to missionary work is the life lived by professing Christians in a foreign land. It is sad to feel that many of the traders who became known upon the Chinese coast gave no such witness to the truth of their religion as did the three Venetians.

The Portuguese, who came in the sixteenth century and settled near Ning-po and Foochow, made themselves so hated by their cruelty and treachery that it was hardly wonderful if the heathen people among whom they lived rose in revenge and massacred them in numbers. Their behaviour was not likely to make the Chinese more friendly towards foreigners, and when the English, early in the seventeenth century, sent their ships to Canton they had to fight their way in. The foreign merchants had no safe or easy time, for the Chinese described them as "Outer Barbarians," and declared that they should be ruled like beasts, not treated as ordinary men. It is very difficult for us now to judge fairly whether the Eastern nation or the Western visitors were most in fault, and how far the Chinese prejudice against foreigners was caused by the conduct of those who settled on their shores. But there is one subject on which our country cannot be considered free from blame—a sad story which England ought not to forget, if only that she may realize the duty of atoning for what has happened in the past.

THE OPIUM TRADE.

Many hundreds of years ago the Arab traders first introduced the poppy into China, and it was widely cultivated, both as a beautiful garden plant and for its use in medicine. Later on came the evil custom of smoking opium, a custom which grows upon those who practise it, taking from them energy and intelligence and binding them with chains that are very hard to break. In the eighteenth century the custom was becoming so common and doing such terrible harm that the Government took notice of it and made the importation of opium illegal. But the English East India Company was making great profits by the opium trade with India, where the drug was specially prepared for the Chinese market, and the officials of the Company were quite prepared to licence and assist the ships which smuggled opium into the country. There were plenty of greedy and corrupt officials in China ready to take part in the trade, and the unhappy opium smokers were prepared to pay a heavy price for the drug which had become necessary to them, so that the trade grew and increased in spite of the laws against it.

In 1840 war broke out between England and China. It was natural that England should be annoyed at the refusal of the Chinese to open their ports to foreign trade and at the contempt with which her representatives were treated, but we cannot help admitting that the English Government used the victory to force China into receiving the drug that was working such fearful evil in

the country. Since that time the conscience of England has been awaking to feel the disgrace to a Christian nation of making money by a trade which even a heathen country condemns, and the export of Indian opium to China has been gradually stopped. The whole question has to be dealt with very carefully and wisely, for the Chinese Government, in their eagerness to get rid of the evil, have been inclined to go too fast, and to forbid the cultivation of the poppy altogether in districts where the people have no other means of livelihood.

It is good to remember how the Treaty of Nanking, which in 1842 opened the five ports—Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ning-po, and Shanghai—to foreign trade, opened them also for missionary work. As the Bishop of North China reminds us, "We cannot fail to notice how God brings good out of man's evil. The opium trade was from the first an evil thing, and England's part in it has been a grievous national sin. Nevertheless it is true that, in the providence of God, this evil trade, this national unrighteousness, was the immediate cause of English missionary effort to evangelize the people of China."

And now we must turn back to the story of those who came to China, not to gain, but to give the best they had to bestow.

THE FRANCISCAN MISSION.

In the stormy days of the thirteenth century, when the world was full of strife and self-seeking, God raised up two earnest soldiers of the Church, S. Francis and S. Dominic, who founded the orders of preaching friars, men ready to go anywhere and do anything to further the cause of Christ's Kingdom. So, when the tidings reached Europe of the great Mongol power that was sweeping all before it in the East, it was natural that the friars should be chosen as messengers to attempt the task of winning these mighty chiefs to the Christian faith. The first three expeditions seem to have failed to reach the capital of the Empire, Cambeluc, as they called it in those days, Peking, as we know it now. But in 1289 the Franciscan friar, John of Monte Corvino, set forth with the Pope's commission for the Far East. We honour now the missionary who leaves country and kindred at the call of God, but in those days such an expedition was a real leap into the dark, a farewell with little prospect of return. Into the mysterious East went the Italian friar, and was lost to sight and sound for well nigh sixteen years. Then at last came a letter, with the account of a missionary campaign worthy of a true soldier of the Cross. Single-handed, for his companion, a Dominican friar, had died on the journey, the brave John had upheld the banner of the faith in China, in spite of opposition and persecution, not so much from the heathen as from the degenerate members of the old Nestorian Church, who had fallen away so sadly from the earnestness of their early days. He tells of the church he had built, with a campanile, or bell-tower, such as the Italian builders raised beside their churches. There is something touching about that little bit of Western architecture in the far away East—a link between the

lonely missionary in Cambeluc and the stately cathedrals and little hillside towns of his native land. He tells of the baptism of 6,000 converts, and of how he had gathered around him a company of 150 boys, whom he had carefully taught and who formed the choir and congregation at his daily services. He had mastered the language and translated the New Testament and the Psalter, and he might, he says, have done much more if he had but two or three companions to aid him.

In response to this letter seven suffragan bishops were consecrated and sent out to consecrate John, Archbishop of Cambeluc. Only two arrived at their destination, but it is pleasant to think of the joy that their coming must have brought to the lonely missionary cut off so long from any news of home and friends. No wonder that he writes that "Those who are separated far and wide, and, above all, those who wander on behalf of the law of Christ, should comfort each other with messages and letters."

For thirty-five years the faithful John remained at his post, dying at last among his converts in the year 1328 or 1329. During that time another helper came to him from home and worked under him for three years, by name Oderic of Pordenone. Oderic returned to fetch more workers, and has left us an account of his travels. He died at home, fretting sorely because he was not allowed to return to his work in the East, and he lies buried in the Cathedral of Udine, near Venice, where we may see his sculptured portrait upon his tomb. He is represented as an old man in Tartar dress, wearing the long thick moustaches of the Tartar, as if he had made himself one with the people whom he had travelled so far to win. In the year 1362 another Franciscan, James, the Bishop of Zaitun, was martyred, with many of his followers, and after that event we hear no more of the Mission of the friars to China. The Tartar rulers, who had given free permission for the preaching of Christianity, had been succeeded by the persecuting Ming Emperors. Perhaps, too, the support from home was not what it should have been, for one writer, Friar Jordan, says sadly, as many a missionary has said since, "We, being so few in number, could not occupy or even visit many parts of the land."

THE JESUIT MISSION.

Again, in the sixteenth century, when the Church of England was working out her own Reformation, the sister Church of Rome was stirred to more earnest life and a keener interest in missionary work in the East. The great missionary of those days was the famous Jesuit, S. Francis Xavier, who laboured gallantly in India and Japan, and looked with longing eyes at the great Empire of China. But at that time the evil lives of the Portuguese settlers had set the Chinese more fiercely than ever against visitors from the West. Xavier found the country closed against him, and while he waited for his opportunity in the island Shangch'uan he fell sick of fever and died, gazing longingly to the last towards the distant hills of that promised land into which he was not permitted to enter.

A few years later two other Jesuit missionaries, Michele Ruggieri and Matteo Ricci, succeeded in gaining an entrance, and after many delays and disappointments Ricci made his way in 1601 to the court at Peking. He was a remarkable man, wide-minded and sympathetic, quick to see the good points in the Chinese religion, and to turn them to account in his teaching. He had a good deal of scientific and mechanical knowledge, and used it to good purpose in winning his way among the Eastern people. Never had the clocks and watches of the Imperial Court kept such good time as now that Ricci had the regulating of them, and the scholars were deeply interested in a translation which he made of the first six books of Euclid and in his learned treatise on astronomy. After Ricci's death a great controversy arose between his followers and the stricter Dominicans and Franciscans who had lately arrived from Europe, and who accused the Jesuit Mission of allowing the Chinese to continue the practice of ancestor worship. There is always a temptation to such a man as Ricci, quick to see the truth in other religions and anxious to win souls by being "all things to all men," to sacrifice Christian principles for the sake of gaining converts. It is very difficult for us now to decide whether the customs which he allowed were really unfit for professing Christians or only a right and affectionate commemoration of the departed, but certain it is that the sight of Christians quarrelling among themselves did serious harm to their cause. The Jesuits, too, were inclined to interfere unduly in Chinese politics, and there were many opponents ready to suggest to the Emperor that he would never be able to count upon the loyalty of his Christian subjects, who would take orders from no one but their priests. So that in the seventeenth century Christian teaching was forbidden, and hundreds of Chinese Christians, as well as ten European missionaries, were put to death.

ROBERT MORRISON.

In the beginning of the last century the thoughts of Christian England turned at last to the needs of China. We must confess that the English Church, only just awakening from the slack and sleepy days of the eighteenth century, was late in the field. The first English missionary to China was Robert Morrison, a Presbyterian, the son of a maker of lasts and boot-trees at Morpeth in Northumberland. He had prayed that God would send him to that part of the Mission Field where the difficulties were greatest, and the prayer was answered by his call to China. The difficulties began at once, for the East India Company would give no passage to a missionary lest his presence should interfere with their trade, and Morrison had to go first to America and sail from thence. "And so, Mr. Morrison," said the contemptuous shipowner when the missionary took his passage, "you really expect that you will make an impression upon the idolatry of the great Chinese Empire." "No, sir," was the calm reply. "I expect God will." Morrison had prepared himself for his task by diligent study of the Chinese language, partly from a very ill-tempered Chinese teacher living in London, partly from a manuscript in the British Museum,

a translation of the New Testament, made long before by some Roman missionary. His own great work in China was the translation of the Scriptures. The Government was bitterly opposed to Christianity, and he could do hardly any preaching, except to a few people gathered in his own house. At one time a price was set on the head of anyone who dared to help him in his printing work. Once the printers, in terror of discovery, destroyed the blocks for the whole of the New Testament, and they had all to be cut over again. It was a dreary, depressing, uphill task, with few of the joys of later missionary work, but Morrison stuck to it for twenty-seven years, only coming home once during the time. He made scarcely a dozen converts, but he gave the Bible to China.

THE AMERICAN CHURCH, THE C.M.S., AND S.P.G.

When the Treaty Ports were opened, the Anglican Church found her way at last into China. To the Church of America belongs the honour of consecrating China's first Anglican Bishop, William Jones Boone, in 1845. The C.M.S. began work at Shanghai in the same year. The S.P.G. helped in 1843 to send a chaplain to the English community at Hong-Kong, and later took up the work in North China. But this work will be dealt with in another chapter, for we are concerned now only with the pioneers.

In all the world's great achievements the man who reaches the goal and wins the glory owes his success to the work of—often nameless—pioneers. Each expedition made by our explorers into Arctic or Antarctic regions is better equipped than the last, thanks to the experience of those who have bought their knowledge by suffering, perhaps died in the learning. By their failures and mistakes, as well as by their successes, they teach those who come after. They may die beside the path, but they have opened the way.

At the Battle of Sempach, when the Swiss patriots met the Austrian army in a life and death struggle for freedom, the little body of mountaineers found themselves faced by an impenetrable wall of spears. For a moment they hesitated, then one of their number, Arnold von Winkelried, crying, "I will make a way for you," flung himself upon the Austrian ranks. With arms outstretched he gathered the spear points to his heart, and fell, pierced through and through, under the feet of the enemy. And with an answering cheer his comrades flung themselves into the breach he had made, and over his dead body they rushed into the heart of the Austrian host and won the freedom of their country.

To us, too, comes the call from the pioneers, who, with like high-hearted courage, opened the way into China.

"We wear the cross they wore of old,
Our lips have learn'd like vows to make."

How can we hang back when the same Master bids us go up and occupy the land?

Study Problem.—To find out what Western nations have done for China.

Assignment 1.—Let one member give a brief summary of the Nestorian Mission to China, another one of the Franciscan Mission, a third one of the Jesuit Missions, and discuss together the causes of their failure.

Assignment 2.—Let each member try to think of all the ways in which Christians other than missionaries—e.g., sailors, soldiers, Government servants, traders, etc.—can help or hinder the Church in a non-Christian country.

Assignment 3.—Let each member make a list of the chief difficulties missionaries to China fifty or a hundred years ago had to face, and discuss together what sort of a person a pioneer must be.

Assignment 4.—Let each member think of the good things and of the bad things that China has learnt from the West, and discuss together whether China would be better off to-day if Europeans had never gone there.

CHAPTER VI.

Meeting the Giant's Needs.

(Pictures 14, 15, 16, 17).

We have seen how the pioneers led the way into the great unknown land of China. How by their successes, even by their failures, they have left landmarks along the path for us to follow. Thankfully we realize that Christ is at work in China through those who have heard His call and offered themselves for His tasks. Let us look at the work of the Church in China to-day and see whether it bears upon it the mark of the Master.

Look back to the Gospel story of S. John Baptist, pining in his prison cell after the free, open-air life of his youth, troubled by wondering doubts as to whether the One Whom he had welcomed as the Christ was really the promised Deliverer. For S. John had preached the coming of a kingdom, and here there seemed to be no conquering king after all, no mighty monarch who would break the power of the Romans and of Herod, their vassal king, and save his faithful servant, suffering for the truth's sake. So John sent his disciples with the anxious question, "Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" And as happens so often, our Lord gave no direct answer, only let the messengers wait and watch His ways and so learn to understand. They saw the sick and the unhappy crowding about Him and watched His kindly care for each one who came. They saw how His touch brought sight to the blind and strength to the lame; how the poor and the ignorant heard the good tidings preached to them in simple words. They saw what was to mark the life of Christ on earth, not ease and honour, but service, love showing itself by helpfulness—the badge by which all men are to recognize Christ's disciples (S. John xiii. 35).

And the Christian Church in all places must bear the same mark and must bring to the nations what can make their lives good, happy, and fruitful, as God meant them to be.

THE THREEFOLD NEED.

Man's nature is made up of three parts—body, mind, and spirit. Therefore, if we are to help China in the right way, we must consider the needs of all three; to help one and neglect another is to do our work one-sidedly and not according to God's plan.

A Chinese girl, writing to those in America who had sent missionaries to her country, put in rather quaint fashion the truth we have been trying to show—"Thank God," she writes, "that He gave me very good fortune—to have large feet" (she means that she had been saved from the miseries of foot-binding), "to believe in the true God, and to come to school to study." Here are Christ's workers bringing His help to each side of the girl's nature, making each complete, as God meant it to be. Let us begin, as the Chinese girl begins, with the thought of health and strength for the body.

MEDICAL MISSIONS.

Jesus Christ, it has been truly said, was the first Medical Missionary, and, all through the history of His Church, teaching and healing have gone side by side. Perhaps there is no country in the world where medical missionary work is more needed at this moment than in China. This clever nation, which has found out so many things, is terribly behindhand in medical science. The man who wishes to be a doctor does not trouble himself greatly about training. He can become a practising physician with no knowledge at all of the anatomy of the wonderful bodies which he is going to treat. He is supposed to know the 360 places into which he can safely thrust a skewer "to let out the pain," and as some of these safe places are in the lungs, and as the doctor concerns himself very little about whether his skewer is clean, we can guess what are often the consequences of his treatment. Needles have been thrust into the eye or ear for the same purpose, leaving the patient blind or deaf for the rest of his life. Boys and girls in England, who have been known to complain of their medicine or to shrink from having a tooth out, may well consider how they would care about Chinese surgery, or for some pills recommended by a Chinese doctor made from powdered snakes, wasps and their nests, centipedes, scorpions, and locusts, ground small and mixed with honey. No wonder the patients appreciate the different treatment received in the Mission hospital. The Bishop of Shantung tells how, before he went out twenty years ago to China, he wisely spent nine months in studying medicine, and took some simple drugs with him in case they should be wanted. He settled at Tai-an, where the people were prepared to set themselves against everything foreign and where other missionaries had been trying for two years to get a footing. But it was the medical work which broke down the prejudice. Some of the simple

remedies cured people whom the native doctors had treated in vain. The news soon spread that the foreign doctor, who did wonderful things and gave medicine free, had settled in the place, and before long the people came in such crowds that the missionary had to open a dispensary and to refuse to see patients except on market days—one day in five—or there would have been no time for any other work.

There are few better object lessons in Christianity than the Mission hospitals, where the people who once dreaded the foreigner are now glad to pay a fee for treatment. At the time of the Boxer Rebellion, a raging mob, shouting for the death of the foreigners, surrounded a Mission hospital. The doctor and evangelist faced the rebels, pleading for the lives of their Chinese patients. The leader cried out that he had heard they could work miracles; they should be spared if they could prove the truth of it. The answer came from the Boxer ranks—"It is true. Six years ago I was blind. The doctor there gave me back my sight." The words saved the hospital. The leader drew off his men, and doctor and patients were left unharmed.

In the year 1911 the members of the medical staff had the opportunity of giving a very striking object lesson to the Chinese people. The plague, the terrible Black Death, which 600 years ago carried off about half the people of England, was raging in Manchuria, and the authorities seemed powerless to do anything to stop it, though the death rate in the city of Harbin alone was rising from 200 to 300 a day. At last the Russian authorities took fright and insisted that steps should be taken, or they would themselves interfere. The Chinese Government begged for the help of English doctors, and Dr. Graham Aspland, who had been working at the S.P.G. hospital in Peking, volunteered for the work, with some other members of the Union Medical College there, and went to Harbin with 1,100 soldiers and 800 police to carry out his measures. Very terrible work it was, in the awful cold of the North China winter, when the dead froze stiff as they lay by the roadside. There was no hope of curing the sick; no one stricken with the plague was ever known to recover. All that could be done was to form a cordon of soldiers round the city so that none could go in or out, to search for the sick and dying and isolate them at once so as to check the spread of the disease. It was a hand to hand fight between the deadly sickness and the devoted band of doctors, and, thanks to their untiring work, the plague was stayed instead of spreading, as it had seemed likely to do, throughout North China. One brave young missionary, Dr. Jackson, of the United Free Church of Scotland, laid down his life in the cause and died of the plague at Mukden.

"He went forth to help us in our fight," said the Chinese Viceroy; "daily where the pestilence lay thickest, amidst the groans of the dying, he struggled to ease the stricken, to find medicine to stay the evil. Worn by his efforts the pestilence seized upon him, and took him from us long ere his time." Here was an object lesson that appealed to everyone. The Chinese people saw these strangers going forth with their lives in

their hands into the midst of disease and death, facing the danger for those who were not even their countrymen. How could they help asking from whence this devotion and courage came?

MEDICAL STUDENTS.

One great reason for strengthening the Medical Missions in China at once is that the awakening Giant is beginning to feel his own need of better medical science and is very eager to learn. Chinese students are flocking to the Mission hospitals and are receiving their training from Christian doctors. Out of the first twenty-five students who attended the Union Hospital at Peking twenty-one became Christians themselves. The influence of Christian doctors and nurses, whose work is done for the love of God, and who see their Master in His suffering people, is a very wonderful power. We may spread this influence far and wide if we can strengthen our Medical Missions now, and give the Chinese people the teaching they desire. But if we are to make use of this great opportunity, we must do so at once, or the Chinese will go elsewhere for their training and learn medical science without Christianity, like the Japanese, who have as good doctors as ourselves and need our medical work no longer.

SCHOOLS.

But we have learnt enough by this time about the Chinese Giant to know that he will not be contented with help which only touches the body. From the earliest ages the Chinese have revered learning, and they have been proud to think that, in their country, education is within the reach of the poorest. Only, as we have seen, the education has never gone forward with the times, and the Chinese boys have been getting by heart pages upon pages of the same books that their grandfathers read before them, needing a wonderful effort of memory, but not much thought or interest. There is a story of an Englishman who noticed during a long sea voyage that a Chinese passenger never opened a book, so asked him whether he did not care to pass the time by reading. The passenger replied that he knew by heart all the books worth reading and took no interest in any others.

But the young Chinese student of to-day has discovered that a great many books beside the Chinese classics are worth his attention, and until the Government schools are a great deal better than they are at present he gets his best education in the schools of the various Missions. Thus in the Ch'ung Te School in Peking, besides the Christian boys from the city and the neighbourhood, there are the sons of heathen parents from all parts of the country, who pay full fees for the sake of the Western learning. Scripture is taught throughout the school, and all attend prayers every morning, so that the way is prepared for them to accept Christianity, even if they are not baptized while still at school. All learn English for an hour and a half a day, but, as the aim is to make them good citizens of their own country, they also study Chinese history and classics, as well as mathematics, geography, and science, under both English and Chinese masters. The English master in

a Chinese school has no easy task. He has to teach his boys that they can learn without all shouting together at the top of their voices as they have been accustomed to do. He has to teach them to use their thinking powers as well as their memories, for though the Chinese boy can learn any amount by heart he has never been taught to reason or to ask himself "Why?" or "How?" Then the Chinese has no idea of what it means to be accurate; he will bring up his sum with one figure wrong, and, when the teacher complains, he will answer cheerfully, "But it's nearly right." Another difficulty unknown in an English school is that the Chinese wants to go on being a schoolboy—perhaps to begin being a schoolboy—when he is twenty-eight or thirty years old instead of passing on to the university when he is eighteen. And, as the Chinese marry very young, he sees no reason why he should not get married during the holidays and come back to school, leaving his wife at home.

A story of one of these schoolboys of the Ch'ung Te School, seems to show that the boys there are learning to love and trust their teachers. There was a lad called Simeon, the son of a poor man, coming from a rough home with bad surroundings, who began his education at a ragged school, opened by one of the women workers for the boys who had been baptized. Later on he moved to the boys' school and proved to be a sharp boy, but too idle to do much good—in fact, his work and his manners were so bad that he was dismissed from the school before he was sixteen and for nine months nothing was heard of him. Then he turned up again, very ragged and half-starved. He had been apprenticed to a shoemaker and turned away as useless after six months, then pulled a rickshaw for a few weeks; and now he had nothing to do and nothing to eat and had come back to his best friends. He was a big, well developed lad who had always been good at games and had done well in the school sports, and his English teacher suggested that he should go into the army, and wrote for him to a Chinese officer who was interested in Christianity and belonged to a Bible class. This good major took Simeon in hand, clothed and fed him, and attached him to his company. Six months later Simeon turned up again, very grand in his uniform and with a good report from his officer. He is teaching the soldiers football which they are very keen to learn, and his master has good hope that he will be a credit to his old school.

As in England, so in China, the school games are a very valuable part of the boys' education. The Chinese schoolboy is apt to lose his head, to get excited and spoil the game, and he has to learn in the football field to keep his temper, to play for his side, not for himself, and to stick to a losing game.

And if the new education has brought fresh interest into the life of the Chinese boys, think what it must be for the girls, who in the old days were taught nothing and grew up to be the household drudges, with no prospect but "hard work and hard words." What a contrast between the girls of the old days, with their crippled feet and their empty minds, and the scholars of S. Faith's School, Peking, started first for Christian girls only, but to which nowadays heathen

girls are glad to come for the sake of the Western learning, for the educated Chinese is no longer contented with a wife who knows nothing, and many parents find that the only chance of getting their daughters married is to send them for teaching. As in the boys' school, everyone learns Scripture, so that there is great opportunity for teaching the best of Western learning, the knowledge of the Christian faith. Besides this there is teaching in Chinese history, arithmetic, geography, singing, drill, needlework, and a little drawing. And that girls as well as boys know something about games we can gather from the account of the public festivities on the first anniversary of the beginning of the revolution, when S. Faith's School entered for the sports and ran potato races and thread-needle races with a big crowd looking on.

EVANGELISTIC WORK.

But with healing for the body and teaching for the mind there remains still the spirit of the man, which God has made for Himself and which goes restless and unsatisfied until it finds Him. And in many different ways and places, by methods which have been learnt after patient study and many mistakes and failures, the workers are bringing Christ near to these unsatisfied spirits of the Chinese people. A very hard task it is for the European who has to begin by learning one of the most difficult of all languages, a language where, not only the word itself, but the tone in which it is spoken makes all the difference to the meaning, as, for instance, the same word in a different tone stands for "lord" and for "pig"! Fancy the patient drudgery that must be needed before the student of Chinese dare attempt to teach the truths of the Christian faith. Besides, the uneducated Chinese has no words to express many of the ideas which are familiar to Christian people. It is a hard task to prepare for Confirmation such a candidate as the Bishop of Shantung tells us about—an old woman, very keen and earnest, but only knowing about 300 words, most of them connected with household work. But the difficulties are being overcome, and the teachers are on the watch for their opportunities wherever they can be seized.

In the market place, where once in every five days the country people gather, there is the chance of selling books or getting a chat with those who have come in to buy and sell. In the hospital there is always someone ready to talk to the out-patients who come in for treatment, and the opportunities of teaching both the patients themselves and their friends and relations are made ten times more valuable because of the object lessons of love and compassion always before their eyes. Then there is the "preaching-room," into which the passers-by are invited for a "talk on doctrine." One of the English workers waits at the door on the look out for anyone who has nothing particular to do, and gives the invitation to men on one evening, to women and girls on another. Inside both English and Chinese workers are ready; the elder girls from the Peking School take their turn on the girls' evening to hand on what they themselves have learnt to value. Perhaps there is some hymn singing, and then a Scripture picture-book comes out,

and the visitors gather in groups round the teachers and ask questions and hear the old wonderful stories, and so go away with something to think about, and perhaps come back to hear more. Sometimes there will be an invitation to one of the English women-workers to come and see somebody in her own home. The Chinese woman in Peking who desires to hear more about the new truths has no easy time. If her home is in one of the courts of the city all the neighbours know what is happening, and she dare hardly ask a visitor from the Mission to come to her house in the face of all the watching eyes from the houses round and of the persecution which is sure to follow. But still the chances come. Some member of the family has been in the hospital; there is a child who goes to school and hands on the lessons at home; the husband is interested and asks that someone will visit his wife. Of course, the Chinese themselves are the best of evangelists; the native catechists and Biblewomen can talk to their countrymen as no European can do. Best of all there is the beginning of a native ministry, and in the Dioceses of North China and Shantung there are four Chinese priests and five deacons ordained for work among their own people.

There is a beautiful story of an old Chinese woman who for some time refused baptism because she was too old to go and teach others, and, as she said, where was the use of being a Christian if she could not hand on what she had been taught? She had yet to learn that a Christian life is the most powerful of all preaching, and such lives are doing their work all over China to-day.

So amid many difficulties, but with much cheer and encouragement, the Church is bringing to the Giant the only help that can set him in the right way. We have to own with sorrow and shame that one of the great difficulties has been the lack of workers and of money. From the first beginnings of S.P.G. work in China those who have given themselves for service at the front have been hampered and held back for want of support from home. That is a reproach which we must acknowledge with shame and sorrow and remove if we can in the future.

The Giant stands at the beginning of his new life, doubtful about his path, ready to make big blunders unless he is shown the way. He wants so much and he knows not fully what he wants. So the crowds of old came to our Lord, sad and hungry and suffering, only half understanding their own needs. But they had come to the One Who alone can satisfy all the wants of man. And just as He used His disciples of old to carry the food that He only could provide to the starving multitude, so He says to us to-day as we look at the hungry multitudes of China, "Give ye them to eat."

Study Problem.—To find out how the needs of the Chinese, of body, mind and spirit, are being met to-day.

Assignment 1.—Let each member read S. Luke vii. 17-23, and discuss together the probable effect on S. John the Baptist of his disciples' report.

Assignment 2.—Let members, one each, give reasons for appealing for more missionaries for China—(a) men doctors; (b) women doctors; (c) schoolmasters; (d) schoolmistresses; (e) priests; (f) deaconesses.

Assignment 3.—Let each member bring a list of the advantages and disadvantages which an English priest in China has, compared with a Chinese priest. Discuss together the need for and the dangers of the extension of a Chinese ministry.

CHAPTER VII.

Peace or a Sword.

(Pictures 18, 19).

We have been looking for the mark of Christ on the work of the Church in China, and we have found it, as our Lord told His disciples it would be found, in that love for their fellow men which Christians learn from their Master, love showing itself in service, striving to bring the help of Christ to the whole man—body, mind, and spirit.

But there are other sayings of our Lord which puzzle us at first sight and can only be understood after patient thought and waiting. He warned His disciples that, though He came to earth as the Prince of Peace, His coming would also mean the coming of a sword (S. Matt. x. 34). It is true that the love and the helpfulness of His followers are to win the world, but they must not be surprised at opposition. He warned them beforehand, so that they might not be disappointed or shaken in their faith when it came, as it was sure to do (S. John xvi. 1-5). Every baptized Christian enlists as a soldier in the Master's army; he must not be surprised if he finds himself in conflict not only with the flesh and the Devil, but with the world that slew his Master. He must be careful not to give offence without good cause (I. S. Peter ii. 13-18). It is part of his Christian duty to be a good citizen, to pay due respect to authority, and to obey the laws of his country unless they clash with the laws of God. The missionary who goes to a foreign land tries to help his converts to commend their religion to their rulers by their own steady, happy, and blameless life. But it is nevertheless true of the Christian faith, as the Thessalonian Jews said of S. Paul and his companions, that it *turns the world upside down* (Acts xvii. 6). There are evil old customs that have to go, there are new ways of looking at life, there is sure to be opposition from those who desire to see everything left as it is. In the early days of the Church, Christians were persecuted, not because of what they taught, but because those in authority were afraid of seeing old ways overthrown. And so in China, when that country of ancient customs rose up against all that was new and foreign, it was natural that the Christian Church should be chosen for attack.

In the year 1899 there was a revival in the Province of Shantung of an ancient secret Society, whose object was to get rid of the Manchu rulers of China and to bring back the old Ming dynasty of

250 years earlier. The members called themselves "The Fist of Righteous Harmony," vowing to act together like the fingers of a hand doubled to strike a blow, and from this came the name of Boxers, by which they were afterwards known and dreaded. The Government of the country, where the masterful old Empress was the chief authority, managed to turn the hatred of the Society from themselves to the foreigners. There was a feeling abroad that the European nations were planning to divide China among themselves, and the rulers made use of the fear, and secretly encouraged the Boxers while they pretended to put down their lawless actions. The country people believed the ridiculous stories told them of spells which prevented the Boxers from being wounded, and of poison put into the wells to destroy all those who followed the ancient ways. The rising was actually against all foreigners, not against the Christian faith, but it was the Christians who were specially chosen for attack. The following paragraph appeared in a Chinese newspaper:—"The cause of the present trouble is found in the misconduct of the Christians, led astray by false doctrines, and relying upon missionaries for support in their evil deeds." And so the sword which the Master had foretold came to His Church in China. In the Province of Shansi, where the most terrible massacres occurred, the missionaries and their Christian converts were murdered wholesale, and there are many gallant stories of those who met their death in the spirit of an American woman missionary who wrote home to her friends: "If you never see me again, remember that I am not sorry I have come to China. Whether I have saved anyone or not He knows, but it was for Him, and we go to Him."

THE S.P.G. MARTYRS.

We leave for the present the heroes and heroines of other Missions to think of the two Dioceses of North China and Shantung, specially connected with the S.P.G. That year of great tribulation left the Mission crippled and impoverished, schools and churches destroyed, and workers woefully diminished, but with the mark of the Master's Cross upon the work and the names of three members of the Mission upon the roll of martyrs. The first loss came at the beginning of the troubles, on the last day of December, 1899, and the victim was the youngest member of the Mission, Mr. Sidney Brooks, a young man in deacon's orders, who was working with the Rev. H. Matthews at Ping Yin, in the Diocese of Shantung. He had gone out to China as a layman from the Missionary College of S. Augustine, Canterbury, in the spring of 1897, just 1,300 years after the coming to England of the great missionary from whom the college takes its name.

"He was a bright and happy fellow," says his co-worker, Mr. Matthews, "and a most lovable companion." At Canterbury Sidney Brooks had been known as a great football player, and he carried to his work abroad the same energy and keenness and the same sense of comradeship which had helped to make him so valuable in the football field in earlier days. He had a sister married to Mr. Brown, one of the S.P.G. missionaries, who was

working at Tai-an, about fifty miles from Peking, and he had been spending with them the Christmas of 1899. During his absence a strong force of Boxers gathered in the neighbourhood of Ping Yin, and began to burn and plunder the houses of Christians. For several nights Mr. Matthews and some of his converts kept anxious watch at the Mission station, and it was in the midst of trouble and foreboding that they kept the Christmas festival, trying to make the services as bright as possible. Mr. Matthews wrote to his fellow worker not to return until things were quieter, as the road might be unsafe, and wrote also to Mr. Brown, urging him to keep his brother-in-law at Tai-an for a few days longer. But to the young deacon the idea of danger was just the call to rejoin his friend, alone in the midst of anxiety and trouble. He set out at once for Ping Yin, accomplished the first day's journey in safety, and was only ten miles from the Mission when he fell in with a band of the marauders. They seized him as a Christian and a foreigner, wounded him with the great knives they carried, and after leading him about for some time, exposed to the terrible cold of the North China winter, put him to death. The friend for whose sake he had lost his life had the sad comfort of recovering his body and laying it to rest, robed in cassock, surplice, and stole, in the ground of the Mission station where he had worked so happily. It was on the Festival of the Epiphany when the Chinese Christians who loved him gathered to pay their last tribute to the young deacon who had done his share in the Epiphany work of carrying the light to the Gentiles, and as they sang together the hymn, "For all Thy Saints who from their labours rest," the sorrow was for those left behind, not for him who had won so early "the victor's crown of gold."

So in mingled grief and triumph opened the year 1900, a year of such fiery trial for the Church in China. All through the spring the Boxer movement grew and spread, and from time to time houses were burnt and native Christians ill-treated and murdered. The ambassadors at Peking made complaints to the Chinese Government, and were put off with promises and assurances which meant worse than nothing. Then in June the fury of the storm broke, falling first upon Yung-ch'ing, a station fifty miles south of Peking, where two English priests, the Rev. Harry Norman and the Rev. Charles Robinson, were working together.

Some twelve years before, at a missionary meeting at Weymouth, the speaker had been appealing very earnestly for men to offer for the work abroad. A young man at the back of the hall stood up and held up his hands. "I've nothing but myself to offer," he said. "I offer myself."

That man was Harry Norman, and the offering was like that of the two brothers in the Gospel story pledging him to the cup of suffering and the baptism of blood (S. Matt. xx. 22). He had been educated in an elementary school, therefore he had to begin his preparation with the study of Latin and Greek, and soon showed that he had a natural gift for languages—a great advantage for a missionary in China, who has to learn one of the most difficult of foreign tongues. He spent some time at the Missionary

College of S. Boniface, Warminster, and then had a few months' training at the Salisbury Infirmary and gained a knowledge which stood him in good stead. When he began work at Yung-ch'ing he opened a dispensary there, and won golden opinions from the country folk, who flocked to him for medicine and simple surgery. We get a picture of his work in a private letter from one of the women missionaries: "Mr. Norman is an indefatigable worker; he is always tearing about the country on his donkey, of whose pace, by the way, he is immensely proud, or else visiting nearer home, or teaching in the school, or playing football or cricket with the schoolboys, or listening to the hundred and one wants and difficulties which are always being poured into his ears, and he never allows that he is at all tired."

In his boyhood Norman had been apprenticed to a carpenter, and in the beautiful church at Tai Whang Chuang he and one of his boys were responsible for nearly all the woodwork. The boy had been taught in the school at Peking, but was considered too dull ever to do much good with book learning. He had an elder brother helping his father on their little farm, so that another son was not needed at home, and it was a puzzle to know what to do with him. Mr. Norman gave him carpentering tools, worked with him himself, placed him under a good carpenter, and at last had him at the Mission to work there under his own eye. In the spring of 1900 Bishop Scott had been urging him to take a holiday, since he had been at work for more than eight years without a furlough, but Norman was anxious to put it off for a year longer, pleading that he had ten boys on his hands just now. "Next year you will have twenty," was the Bishop's reply, "so that is no argument." The Boxer movement was then spreading and matters were looking threatening in the neighbourhood of Yung-ch'ing, and the missionary was probably unwilling to leave his people at a time when trouble might be coming.

Mr. Norman's colleague at Yung-ch'ing was Mr. Charles Robinson, another S. Boniface man, who had been ordained the year before. Bishop Scott had visited the station in May, and wrote afterwards of his last interview with Norman: "He packed my cart comfortably for me with all his accustomed skill, got on the shaft for a short distance to have a final chat, when I, no doubt, urged on him, as I had been doing all the way, the importance of his making up his mind to an early furlough, and then he jumped down, and with one hearty clasp of the hand and 'God bless you,' I let the dear fellow go, the last time I was to see him on earth."

On June 1st the Boxer mob attacked Yung-ch'ing. The missionaries had had every opportunity of escaping when the danger approached. A heathen woman, who had been won to admiration of Mr. Norman, offered to hide him in her cart and take him safely to Peking, but he would not leave his post. When the attack was made upon the Mission he and his companion appealed for help to the local magistrates, but they were terrified and helpless. The Boxers were mad for destruction and plunder. They killed Mr. Robinson at once and seized and bound Mr. Norman, dragging

him to see the ruins of the church he had built with such loving care. For thirty hours he was in their hands, and then was put to death. The suffering of that time, the anxiety for his converts, the sight of the work of years ruined in a day we do not like to dwell on. It is all behind now, and the man who in the words of the old proverb reaches "the port pleasant" after "a passage perilous" makes little account of the way thither.

The news, first in disquieting rumours, growing by degrees into sad certainty, was brought by homeless refugees from Yung-ch'ing to the five members of the Mission (two priests, two deaconesses, and a nurse) who were waiting anxiously at Peking.

The Rev. Roland Allen has told the story of its effect upon some Christian boys in the school of which he was in charge, two of whom came from Yung-ch'ing and its neighbourhood: "They could not but be anxious," he says, "about the fate of their parents and friends, when every day brought fresh news of Boxer outrages in their villages; yet they prepared their work and listened to my lectures with at least the outward appearance of quiet attention. . . . They never once came to me with a word of complaint or fear. I marvelled at them. I could not sit quietly down to prepare my lectures as they did to listen to them. . . . I came into school and told them the latest news as it arrived. 'Mr. Robinson is dead, Mr. Norman is a prisoner. Open your books.' They loved Mr. Norman as a father. Yet they moved not a muscle, and read as they had ever done, quietly and diligently, knowing that their parents were in imminent danger of death, and that their homes were probably being wrecked. Until June 5th. Then a story was brought to us that some of the Christians at Yung-ch'ing, led by the father of one of the boys, had been taken to a temple and forced to do sacrifice. . . . I went into school as usual. The boys sat there, dull, speechless, broken-hearted. . . . I gave up the attempt to lecture, spoke a few words of encouragement, said a prayer, and came away. Shu T'ien presently followed me to my room and said, 'I want to go down.' 'Why?' 'They don't know what they are doing; they don't understand; they are only ignorant people. I will go and tell them they must not sacrifice and renounce the faith. They all know me; they will listen to me.' The poor lad was in tears, and I could scarcely restrain mine."

In view of the fearful danger Mr. Allen held the boy back for two days. Then one of the boys, whose village was still quiet, desired to go home, and the other lad came again. If his companion went, why should not he go? "He was anxious to go. He felt it was right to go. I could not resist that argument, and he went. Parting from them was terrible. I prayed with them, commended them to God, and fairly broke down. It was quite open to question whether they would ever reach home, or if they did whether anything but martyrdom awaited them."

It is right, perhaps, to tell the end of this story, though there is a sad part in the tale which we would rather forget. Shu T'ien managed to reach his home and found the whole neighbourhood given over to plunder and destruction, Christians hiding in the fields from the Boxers, panic prevailing everywhere. The Rev. Frank Norris,

the present Bishop in North China, says that he implicitly believes the boy's story that he never failed in his daily prayers, and that, not daring to have a Bible in his possession, he repeated to himself the passages he knew by heart. But the general panic seems to have laid hold of him, and, as he confessed afterwards with tears, he too offered the incense that was the price of life. Surely it is not for us, who know nothing of such a fiery trial, to judge him harshly. As Bishop Scott said in speaking of him, "If he failed, so did S. Peter," and we may believe that, like S. Peter, he was allowed afterwards to strengthen his brethren. He was later on ordained deacon, and died not long ago.

There is no room here to tell the story of the next two months, during which the Europeans in Peking were besieged in the Legations, holding their own with their slender garrison against the horde of Boxers. Two members of the Mission, the Rev. Roland Allen and Deaconess Jessie Ransome, have given us a most vivid and simple account of the siege in diaries written at the time—a fine record of courage, patience, and helpfulness, which Mr. Allen sums up in the words, "Everyone felt they must quit them like men, and they did it."

The women from the different Missions did good service in the hospital under most difficult circumstances, tearing up fine under-linen, sheets, and curtains for dressings, and concocting wonderful dishes out of horseflesh, with no fresh milk and hardly any eggs. A good old Christian Chinese cook was a valuable assistant, and grudged no trouble or danger to himself, running to and fro between the kitchen and the hospital, sometimes with shot and shell flying about him. The two priests, Mr. Allen and Mr. Norris, took their turn on guard and worked hard at the fortifications, Mr. Norris showing himself invaluable at building walls out of loose bricks and earth, and earning from the Marines the name of "the man who fears neither bullets, smells, nor devils."

They were terrible days of hope deferred, with constant rumours of the approach of the allied troops from Tientsin, ending again and again in disappointment, until on the night of August 13th, after a furious attack, when every weapon in the Legation was given out and even the clergy armed for the first time, the joyful sound of guns from the relieving force was heard outside the city wall. Next day General Gaselee and the Sikh troops marched in, and the siege was over. Bishop Scott, who had been waiting in terrible anxiety at Tientsin, was able to telegraph to England—"Peking five all well."

The Mission, of course, suffered severely in the loss of buildings, schools and churches being wantonly destroyed and books and other possessions lost. Humanly speaking, a terrible set-back seemed to have been given to the work.

As regards the native Christians many were killed without any chance of saving their lives by denying their faith; some, probably, by the private malice of enemies who had a grudge against them and used the opportunity to satisfy it. Many, no doubt, were induced by their own fears or by the persuasion of heathen friends to save themselves by paying money

to the Boxers or offering incense to the false gods. We must not judge them harshly. Many were very ignorant, only just at the beginning of their Christian life, and they seem hardly to have realized that what they did was in fact a denial of Christ. On the other hand, there were some who set a glorious example of courage. A blind catechist at Ping Yin, known as Bartimeus, resisted all attempts to make him recant, standing out against commands and persuasions even from his father—the hardest possible duty to a Chinese. At Yung-ch'ing a woman, Mrs. Chang, who had been for some years a rather lukewarm catechumen, was brought to real keenness about her religion by the heroism of her husband and father-in-law, who died without a murmur, quietly giving themselves up to prayer. Even among those who failed there were many who, through their penitence, reached a new understanding of the faith they professed and a new earnestness for the future. Many of them, as Mr. Norris wrote shortly after the troubles, were truer Christians than ever, and he tells of some who were ready to give up the right, which the law of China allows, of insisting on the death of those who had killed their kindred, because they were Christians and therefore bound to forgive.

So the Church in China passed through the fire and we see already something of the strength and purification that was the result of that time of trial. Much more we shall know when the way by which "God is working His purpose out" is made clear to us. At a meeting held in England the year after the troubles the saintly Bishop Wilkinson of St. Andrew's spoke these words, "We thank God for everyone in the Mission that they have just done, as soldiers do or try to do, their duty—done their duty out there, as England teaches her sons to do their duty, as the Church in her Catechism trains her children to do their duty to God and to their neighbours. . . . We thank God for what has happened, for what has come to us through all the agony and misery. We lift our eyes above this earth, and we see by degrees there is a rift in the clouds; and we look through and see Him there, hanging on the Cross with those pierced hands and that crown of thorns, and we know that we have His sympathy because He is the Man of Sorrows Who has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, and we look on, and the rift gets wider and we see that He is a King with a royal crown, going forth conquering and to conquer."

Study Problem.—To find out whether Christians ought to expect to meet opposition and persecution.

Assignment 1.—Let each member bring as many examples as he or she can find of our Lord telling His disciples to expect opposition and any reasons He gave.

Assignment 2.—Let each member make up an answer to those who speak of "lives wasted in the Mission Field," showing from what has happened in China the gain (a) to the Church in England, (b) to the Church in China.

Assignment 3.—Let each member read S. Luke xxii. 54-62 and S. John xxi. 15-19; and discuss together how they would treat a Christian who had not stood firm in persecution.

CHAPTER VIII.

At the Cross Roads.

(Pictures 20, 21, 22, 23).

In our first chapter we saw that, to judge fairly of the beauty of a great building, we must stand back from it and look at it as a whole, so as to understand something of what was in the mind of the architect who planned it.

We have been trying to do this as we thought reverently about God's plan for the world and the part to be played in that plan by the different nations. We have looked at the history of the Jews, trying to think of the story of the nation as a whole, and to see how sorrow and joy, defeat and victory helped to temper the instrument that was to do God's work; how one teacher after another gave his special message, as the truth about God was revealed to the chosen people little by little, for them to teach the world. We saw how the Greeks, with their love of knowledge and their search after truth, and the Romans, with their activity and power of government, helped to prepare the world for Christ's coming.

We recognized that in trusting the British nation with a world-wide dominion God has laid upon our country the solemn responsibility of extending the Kingdom of God—at least, wherever we fly our flag, with its threefold cross. And trying in this way to look at the world's history as a whole, we realize that history is not a finished thing, but that it is being made still day by day, that the Divine plan is not yet worked out to its end. The awakening of the great nation in the East, to take one instance only, must play an important part in helping or hindering its fulfilment. We tried to see signs of God's care of China in the past. We saw how the country in which they live and the events which have happened to them in bygone days have helped to form the character of the people, how their religions, in spite of much that is bad and false, have yet been preparing the hearts and minds of the Chinese to accept the true faith.

The Giant just awake, stands bewildered and hesitating at the cross roads, uncertain yet what he shall do with his great strength. We have seen that the Christian Church alone can give him the guidance that he needs. Our Lord said, "I am the Light of the World" (S. John viii. 12). He said also to His disciples, "Ye are the light of the world" (S. Matt. v. 14)—such wonderful words that it is only because it is the Son of God Who speaks them that we dare to believe in this great responsibility committed to the members of His Church.

We have been trying to see how the Church has faced that responsibility. Sorrowfully we have had to admit that Christian nations have done harm to China by their greed and selfishness, and that the spread of Christ's Kingdom has been, and is being, checked and hindered by the failure of the Church to give to China the

needful men and means. And on the other hand we are thrilled as we give thanks for the gallant example of the pioneers and those who followed them; for the good work by which the power of Christ is being brought to the help of the Chinese—body, mind, and soul; for the blood of the martyrs and the fire of tribulation, setting the seal of the Cross upon the growing Church of China.

It is a wonderful story which we have been studying—the story of the gradual and steady working out of God's purpose, from the dim, far away days when the great tribe moved eastward to make themselves a home beside the Yellow River, down to this present time of change and uncertainty, about which we can read in the daily papers. But the most wonderful thing of all is still to come, and it is this—

In this wonderful story, the carrying out of the plan, each one of us has a part to play. We talk about God's purpose for the English nation, but the nation is made up of its citizens—English men and women, boys and girls. The work of Christ's Church is the work of all its faithful members in union with and obedience to its Divine Head. If one fails to do his or her part the work is hindered. Here is a thought so startling that it almost takes our breath away. *We* are helping to make history. God's plan for China and the world needs for its fulfilment that we shall do our part towards it.

But, after all, is not this always God's way of working? Only the Holy Spirit in us can make us what God desires us to be, but the Holy Spirit cannot do His work in our souls unless we work too. God made us responsible human beings, not machines; He gave us wills that must be brought into line with His will. Just as He means men to use their intelligence to find out the best way of sowing and reaping, spinning and weaving, instead of giving them ready made food and clothes, so He must say of many of His best gifts, "Ye have not, because ye ask not" (S. James iv. 2).

"Once in a day-dream I stood in one of the great storehouses of Heaven. My angel guide showed me endless corridors opening off one another, and on either side great shelves piled with packages, some large and some small, and every one of them addressed and all ready to be sent off. . . . This is what I read upon the labels, 'A good temper for John —,' 'Diligence, so as to win the first prize, for Mary —,' 'Patience, with which to help her sister, for Dorothy —,' and so on. . . . But suddenly the thought struck me, 'Why have they not received these packages?' and I turned to the angel and asked this question. 'Ah!' he said, 'they have not got them because *they have not asked for them*. The parcels are waiting there—some of them have been waiting for years. We are always listening, hoping that the message will come so that they may be sent off. But sometimes the message never comes. There is nothing sadder than when we have to take a parcel off the shelf because it will never be needed.'"

* "The Fascinated Child," B. Mathews, page 69.

Can it be that the great gifts which China needs to-day are waiting in God's treasury until Christian people ask for them more earnestly?

Here is another picture, suggested by a speech made at the Pan-Anglican Congress. A mighty vessel has been built and lies ready in the yard, and crowds have gathered to see her launched. Every arrangement has been made to let her go free into the water which is to be her home, but it is the will of the head of the firm that his little son should have a part in the ceremony. By some wonderful mechanism the little boy can put his hand upon the hidden spring which will set free the mighty ship, a floating town, able to carry thousands across the ocean. His little strength could not move one heavy coil of rope on the deck. He does not understand—how should he?—by what means the thing that he is going to do will complete his father's work, but he knows that he is to be allowed to help. He looks up gladly and proudly into his father's face, and with all his might he does his little share—the waiting power is set free, and the monster ship glides down into the water, ready for her work.

Now think of one of the Gospel stories of the putting forth of Christ's power for the good of men and of the way in which He willed to do it (S. Matt. xiv. 15-21; S. John vi. 1-14). Picture the evening by the Sea of Galilee—the sun low in the west, the weary, hungry multitude (many of them pilgrims on their way to the Passover at Jerusalem), who had paused on their journey to listen to the words of the great Teacher. Their homes were far away, the short twilight of the East would soon darken into night, there were tired women among them and little, crying children. The Apostles felt the pitifulness of it as they prayed their Master to dismiss the crowd and let them go to the villages and buy food before it grew later and darker. And then came the startling answer, "Give ye them to eat."

No wonder they were astonished and helplessly asked where they should find food for such a multitude. And still the Lord, Who could have created with a word all that was wanted, waited for the help; offered shyly through S. Andrew, of the lad who brought his little store, just a fisherman's dinner—the few coarse brown loaves and the two fishes. What courage it needed to offer such a scanty little provision, and yet the Lord waited for that gift to work His miracle.

People sometimes tell us that the days of miracles are over, that God no longer meets men's faith and prayer by working wonders. We may thankfully say that in the story of China we can point to cases in which our Father has helped the weakness of His children by showing them "signs and wonders."

The S.P.G. work in the Dioceses of North China and Shantung was the direct result of intercessions in England.

In the Cathedral of S. Ninian, in the ancient city of Perth, there is a new monument which every visitor will desire to see. It is the figure of a man, in the robes of a bishop, kneeling in prayer, and it commemorates the late Primus of Scotland, George Howard

Wilkinson, Bishop of St. Andrew's, who passed away suddenly in the very act of recommending the members of the Representative Church Council to turn to prayer in the difficulties and needs of their work for the Church. "His life was prayer," says the inscription.

"Take the trouble to God," he would say—"take the money worry, take the needs of the parish, of the Church, and spread them out before God and the need will surely be met."

In the year 1872, when Mr. Wilkinson was Vicar of S. Peter's, Eaton Square, there was a strong feeling among earnest Church people that England sorely needed a fresh awakening to her duty in helping the work of the Church abroad. It was then that he suggested in the Board Room of S.P.G. House that a day should be set apart every year for united intercession for Foreign Missions, the day chosen being on or near the Festival of S. Andrew, the Apostle whose first thought when he himself had been called by our Lord was to share his new-found happiness with his brother. The result of that first day of united intercession was that one of the clergy of S. Peter's, the Rev. Charles Perry Scott, offered himself for foreign service, and that a layman, who had in the past made money by the opium trade, made the best reparation by promising a sum sufficient for the support of two missionaries in China. These offers gave the S.P.G. the opportunity of beginning that work of which we have been reading in the last two chapters. Mr. Scott became the first Bishop in North China, and has only just retired after forty years of strenuous work, during which he has seen his diocese divided into three, churches, schools, and hospitals built, and the beginning made of a native ministry. And to crown all, there is to-day the newly but firmly organized Holy Catholic Church of China, or to give it its Chinese name, Chung Hua Sheng Kung Hui.

Another striking story comes from the China Inland Mission, which numbers both Churchmen and members of other religious bodies among its ranks. In the year 1887 an appeal was made for a hundred workers, and the friends of the Mission in England joined in united prayer for volunteers. With splendid faith they made every preparation for sending out the recruits who they felt sure would come, and by the beginning of the next year the last of the hundred had sailed for China.

In the April of last year (1913) an event happened which, to quote the words of Archdeacon Moule, "has shaken all Christendom." The Chinese Government sent an appeal to all Christian communities in China to pray unitedly on Sunday, April 27th, for the Government, the National Assembly, and its President, that peace might reign within the country, that sober and virtuous men might be elected to office and the Government be established upon a strong foundation. No one who was present will ever forget the announcement of that message to the great concourse of people gathered in the Albert Hall on April 18th during the Anniversary Week of the S.P.G., when the thousands present replied at once to the appeal by rising in the middle of the meeting to join in prayer for China. And on April 27th, Rogation Sunday, set apart in ancient days for

prayer for the fruits of the earth, there was prayer going up in churches throughout Christendom for the great nation where God's harvest is growing ripe and needing His labourers to gather it in. Fifty years ago, when the Chinese Giant was still asleep with his doors shut to keep out the nations of the West and the Christian faith was looked upon as the religion of "foreign devils," men would have said that, without a miracle, such a thing could never have come to pass. Yet it has come to pass, and God has worked the miracle in answer to the prayers and work of Christians at home and in China.

We must remember, too, that people often miss the answer to their petitions because it comes in a way they do not expect. We forget that—

"God grants prayer, but in His love
Makes times and ways His own."

The sisters of Lazarus sent hurried word to the Master of the sickness of the brother whom He and they both loved (S. John xi.). Christ received the message, and left them to bear the agony of anxiety and loss, while He "abode two days still in the same place where He was." Yet the answer to their appeal came in one of the most wonderful and convincing miracles that He ever worked.

It seems strange that we should ever have any doubt about the power of prayer, since, in one promise after another (S. Matt. vii. 7-11; S. Mark xi. 24; S. John xvi. 23, 24), our Lord puts into our hands the key of His treasure house, that we may win for ourselves and for others the blessings that our King desires to give us.

And then, on the other hand, think of those terrible words spoken of the people of Nazareth, our Lord's own home, "He could do there no mighty work . . . and He marvelled because of their unbelief" (S. Mark vi. 5, 6). There might have been miracles at Nazareth as great as the miracle by the Sea of Galilee, but the Lord waited for man's faith and man failed Him, and so the village went without His blessings. We notice that the word in the Gospel story is "could," not "would." We must never fall into the mistake of thinking that God needs to be pressed and persuaded into helping. Our Lord was ready and willing to work His miracles of compassion in Nazareth as in other places, but He was hindered by the want of faith in those around Him. He could not work because they did not care for Him enough to help Him. It seems to us very startling and mysterious that man should be allowed to hinder God. It shows us what a very high value God sets upon man's will, that He lets us help Him by caring very earnestly that His will may be done.

We all know something about the helpfulness of sympathy, how it strengthens us to feel that a great many people are caring for the same thing that we care about ourselves. Think of a great gathering in some vast cathedral, like the King's Messengers' service at S. Paul's—we feel we can take up our work with new courage and enthusiasm because of the thousands of hearts that are beating with ours, the thousands of voices joining in the hymns and prayers. The air seems to be full of keenness and hope, we feel like soldiers

charging together, each catching fire from the rest. It is the same in times of sorrow and difficulty. Our friend is in trouble, or he has some hard task to do, and we can do hardly anything to help—we feel we have nothing to say. We can only, as they say at sea, “stand by,” waiting for a chance to do something, letting the friend know that we care; and our sympathy helps, though we know not how. We know that our Lord when He was on earth wanted just the same help from His friends. When He raised to life the little daughter of Jairus (S. Mark v. 37-42), He turned out of the house the hired mourners, who neither cared for the little girl nor believed in His power. He kept with Him the child’s nearest and dearest—the father and mother who cared so deeply and who had had faith enough to send for Him. And He specially took with Him the three of His Apostles who were nearest to Himself, whose love and faith were real although they were not perfect. He wanted the presence and sympathy of friends for the great work that He was going to do, just as He wanted them afterwards in the hour of His agony at Gethsemane. They failed to watch with Him there, and their failure made the struggle harder.

So God waits for the sympathy and faith of those who care, to work His miracles in the world to-day, and our prayers show our sympathy and faith and our longing to help.

There are some people who tell us that, in dwelling so much upon the power of prayer for the fulfilment of God’s plan for the world, we are neglecting the duties of active work and generous giving. They remind us of the old Latin saying, “*Laborare est orare*” (“To work is to pray”), teaching that loving, strenuous labour for other people is an offering acceptable to God. But for an active nation like ours, and in these days of bustle and hurry, we are more apt to forget the opposite proverb, “*Orare est laborare*,” that prayer is itself the truest and most powerful work. And we must remember, too, that the people whose work and gifts are of real value are the praying people. It is only those who have learnt to speak to God and to listen for His voice who can hear and understand His call to service. It is the praying people who are prepared to answer promptly when that call comes, whether it be to work and sacrifice at home or to the offer of themselves for labour in the foreign field. We must begin by S. Paul’s prayer, “Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?” if we are to offer acceptable service. For the real secret of prayer is that we should learn to want what God wants, to desire so earnestly that His will may be done that we are helping to bring it about.

We remember how man at the first thwarted God’s plan for the world by his self-will. The Son of God by the perfect sacrifice of Himself brought men back on to the right road. He gathers up every little prayer we offer, every sacrifice of our own will—

“All the gifts we bring and all the vows we make
And every act of love we plan for His dear sake”—

and presents them, as our great High Priest, before the Throne of God. We begin to learn the joy of giving. As our wills become

more and more one with God's will, we cease to talk about self-denial and sacrifice—like the workman who gives himself, all he is and all he can do, to work out the plan of the architect, desiring only to see his master's mind fulfilled in the best way.

We have seen something of God's purpose of love for the world, and so of what the Chinese Giant may do, what gifts he may lay at the feet of the Crucified One. Is anything too great or too hard that can help to enlist him and the other nations of the world in the service of our King?

Study Problem.—To find out what we can do to help the Giant to choose the path that will lead to happiness for China and the world.

Assignment 1.—Let each member think what answer they would have given to what was said to the great Baptist missionary, Carey, after preaching a missionary sermon—"Young man, if God wants to convert the world, He will do it without your help or mine."

Assignment 2.—The Bishop of London has lately announced that certain charities are refusing money taken at "picture-palaces" on Sundays, because of those who are thus compelled to work on Sundays. Let each member criticise the charities' refusal and discuss together whether it matters, if money is needed for a good object, how it is obtained or given.

Assignment 3.—Let all the members state what they think is most needed for China to-day, and discuss together whether in God's plan for China there is any place for them or not.