

ADDRESS.

Delivered at the Congregational Church, Washington, D. C.,
January 26, 1902.

No. 13, Vol. 9.

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A Plea for the Chinese; Against the Exclusion Law.

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A Plea for the Chinese; Against the Exclusion Law.

1. As soon as the Chinese have come to any city ^{of ours} of considerable size, Christian Missions have been established among them. Nearly every denomination has had a hand in this work. When I was stationed in Portland, Or. , I had hardly reached the city before I was invited to become a trustee of an important Mission. I accepted the trust, and became a member of the Board, giving such time to the work as I could, consistent with my duties proper, for a period of about four years. Many of the Chinamen were very solicitous to come under our guidance. It was sometimes charged that their sole object was to learn our language and customs, so they could benefit themselves in their business; this however would not be a fair judgement any more than it would be to say that our fathers and mothers went to church and sent their children to Sunday School for the sole purpose of advancing themselves and their children in business.

2. The usual process.

The method of proceeding in ^{our} Mission, and I believe it was the same in most others, was to shape the meetings after the manner of the ordinary Sunday School, the Superintendent and teachers were all volunteers without pay. They were Christians, trying to carry out their Master's bidding, to wit, "Go and teach". With the Chinese, of course, the primary teaching was very simple, the classes had in them from three to five Chinamen; they were mostly adults, but some were as young as fifteen years, and probably none over thirty. I never saw more faithful work than that done by those Christian teachers in Portland, Or.; they would spend, besides a couple of hours Sunday afternoon in the schoolroom, ~~two~~ and three nights in the week in teaching the very elements of our language to these people. Their pupils soon learned to

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read; and ^{they} studied much outside of their classes. The Superintendent usually had many of our best hymns, Christian and patriotic, on large charts, hung in frame work in front of the school. They ^{hymns & songs} were printed in clear letters in English and in Chinese; they were sung in Chinese first, and in English as soon as that was practicable. In every school I visited there was a good interpreter, ^{usually or thro him} so that the pupils were thoroughly instructed as to the meaning of English sentences, of passages of Scripture, and of the hymns used.

3. The results.

All the Chinamen who desired it were invited, as soon as they could read the Scriptures in Chinese or in English or in both, to meet for the purposes of conference and prayer. I have been in a Chinese prayer meeting where I have heard as simple, modest and apparently sincere statements, voluntarily made by one or another, often in good English, sometimes in broken English, and sometimes through a Christian interpreter, as I have ever heard in any Methodist, Presbyterian or Congregational meeting of a like kind. John Wesley's method pursued in what is known ^{as} the Methodist Class-meeting ^{as} has been the prevailing rule in most Missions. Those who have accepted our Gospel and our Master and have purposed to follow his precepts and example have been encouraged to make among their companions, in the meetings to which I have referred, a public and frank declaration. Certainly the results have been remunerative in the extreme. The way I account for this is that as a rule the Chinese boy of good family has been taught to do right according to a code of morals known and recognized by all intelligent Chinamen, and that when he made comparison between his own earlier teaching and

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ours, he might have to lay aside certain superstitions and practices, based upon them, but in the main to become a Christian was ~~but~~ one step in advance, for example, if he had been taught, not to do an injury, lest he be injured, it was but a step to pass from the negative side to the positive side which our Saviour demands, namely do unto another man what you would have him do to you.

4.

"Religious experience."

A religious experience with the Chinese soul is of course precisely the same as a religious experience with any other soul. The Scripture tells us, and illustrates it, from Moses to Revelation, that the spirit of the commandments of our Heavenly Father is first, to love God, and second, to ~~to~~ love our neighbor. A religious experience, as I understand it, enables an individual of any name or nation by God's help to lift up his heart in sincere love. This sincere love strengthens him to keep the commandments, not as a slave, but as a son of God and a brother of man. Men sneer and say that the Chinese all deceive, and that there is no truth or sincerity in them. My experience of twenty five years is ~~quite~~ *quite* exactly the opposite; it is this: that some men deceive and there appears to be no truth in them, but that in Christian experience the Chinamen rather excel in their exhibition of the power to love God and their fellow men; and it is only the very few that are hypocritical. Some men, of course, are frightened into denials and some like Judas sell themselves for money to betray, degrade, and injure those with whom they come in contact, their reward is naturally a temporary gain, but in reality a loss which no man can measure. I have noticed that the Chinese Christians have

ours, he might have to lay aside certain superstitions and practices, based upon them, but in the main to become a Christian was ~~not~~ one step in advance, for example, if he had been taught, not to do an injury, lest he be injured, it was but a step to pass from the negative side to the positive side which our Saviour demands, namely to injure another man what you would have him do to you.

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made more gifts, freely offered, for charity and for Christian
of benevolent purposes than any others, I mean judging by what their churches and Missions in this country and elsewhere have given.

5. *As Illustrations of goodness.*

As I sat at the table, the other day, at the Ebbitt House a distinguished friend gave me the case of a hightoned Chinaman, who settled some years ago in Woodbury, Conn.. He was so exemplary in his life, and so constant in his payment of rent, and in discharging other obligations, that his landlord reduced his rental one third. The Chinaman rejoiced at this unexpected gain, and took every whit of it and distributed it to the needy churches in the town. Nobody was mean enough to impute to him a bad motive ^{simply} because he was born in China.

A few years ago I had on my staff a worthy captain of infantry. He had a delightful family, consisting of a wife and three children, the children being quite small at the time he was with me. When stationed in Vancouver, Wash. this family employed a Chinaman whose name was Thal, his compensation was twenty-five dollars per month; no man could be more skilful or more thorough in his work than he. All the family became very fond of him, and he evidently reciprocated the affection. On account of the hardness of service during the war and subsequent exposures our good captain, little by little, lost his strength and became almost a nervous wreck, yet he had in him an unconquerable courage, and an unswerving devotion to duty. Owing to his skill and enterprise his immediate commander sent him away from home upon an expedition through the wilderness of the Northern border. Just as he was about to depart ~~and~~ ~~and~~ Thal came to the captain's wife, wringing his hands in a plaintive way

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and with hot tears running down his cheeks said: "~~Don't~~^{No} let him go, ~~don't~~^{No} let him go." He sick, bery sick!" - In the simplest way he pled^{ed} also with the captain, who smiled at his ardor as he was saying; "You no go, you stay here; you ~~very~~ sick; you no come back" The captain's last words to him as he held his hands were that he must be good to his wife and children[/] especially to one who then needed more care and tenderness than the rest. Thal promised in his strange way: "me be good; me no leave them". Our captain went on his journey and did his great work, but died as so many of our boys have died on the front line of duty.

His family had gone during his absence, as he wanted them to do, to Fort Stevens, near the mouth of the Columbia; there the terrible news came and as usual the widow had very little means. By permission she came back to Fort Vancouver. Thal met her upon her arrival, and reminded her of his promise, and said "~~I~~^{me} cook for you" "No, Thal, I must cook for myself, and for my family now." "Oh no, no, no, M, he ~~s~~ said, "me cook for you. "But, Thal, I can not pay you twenty five dollars per month, I haven't the money any more".

"What you pay me?" "Well, I could not pay more than ten dollars to anybody, and you can easily get twenty-five or thirty dollars, for you are an excellent cook, and servant."

"No, no," he answered, "I cook for you for fifteen diollar; for ten dollar~~s~~; for five dollar~~s~~; or for no dollar~~s~~. No makee difference. I work for you" And he remained with the widow and the children and did all their work cheerfully faithfully for many weeks until the family was able to get sufficient together to bring them to their Eastern home. A near neighbor was ready and glad to pay him thirty-dollar~~s~~ per month.

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6. Personal recollections - 6 -

per month. If that is not the essence of our Bible religion for Jew, or Christian, or Gentile I do not understand the matter, and do not know where to find it. My own experience with Chinese servants was for nine years much according to this pattern. When a holiday came, like Christmas or New Year the Chinese servant or servants would come into our house that day loaded with precious gifts for the children. One, Moy - You - Ling, who was with us a long while studied the Scriptures in his own tongue. He became a Christian about 1875, ~~about~~ twenty-six years ago. He is now a merchant with a wife and five children. It is a beautiful family who live as we live, and dress as we dress. They send their children to our schools. Moy was very proud to bring the little ones to visit my wife when ^{she was last fall} at her daughter's residence in East Portland. In addition to his work as a merchant, he is the interpreter and leader for our Prespyterian brethren, called, I think, the United Brethren. If anybody can find a more thorough and exemplary Christian man, according to the testimony of those who know him best, let him produce him. ^{Personally} I know many others ~~by name~~, but I will not venture to give their names, especially of those in San Francisco, for fear that some hostile spirits might seek to serve his Satanic Majesty, by doing them injury.

We had in our Howard University, on yonder hill, of which I was President for about five years, three Chinamen, Fung Ah Foo, Leong Sing, and Choy Awah. During that term in the University no Offi-cer or instructor had any fault to find with either of them. Fung Ah Foo was a Coolie, and came from Cuba before it was a crime to cross the border. His hair had been cut short, a reformation, as I understand lately proposed for some others of our humble people.

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He did not mind that; but soon led every body around him in scholarship. He rose into that love of God, and of his fellows which we called becoming a Christian. After he left us he went to the Pacific Coast. On one visit ^{there} Mrs. Howard found him ~~there~~ in Oakland, Cal. in charge of one of the Chinese Missions, that appeared to have more than a hundred members. His profession was that of a teacher. He had learned seven dialects, besides his own, and would have made a capital interpreter, ^{because} ~~for~~ his English was pure, simple and strong, like that of our Chinese Minister Wu Tyng Fahg. He did all his work nobly. Having married he took his little family to Hong Kong and has remained there ever since, a successful teacher and minister of a true Gospel, namely the Gospel of love and good works. It would be a great joy for me to see him again, for I know that he loved me.

7. *A word of Conclusion.*

With such examples in your mind, are you wholly willing to discriminate against men, because they are born in China? Fortunately for us we can make an immigration law aimed against contagious diseases, improper tenements, low dens of vice, Anarchists, whose profession is murder, and pauperism which belongs to other ~~States~~ ^{States} it being their burden to carry and not ours. We can do this, because it can be done without favoritism, without unjust partiality, and without rank injustice, and to tell you the truth, it would be a wonderfully good thing if we could pull out some of the beams in our own eyes. I do not know any other way, however than to persistently educate in a proper manner from generation to generation our children, and do all we can to lift up the minds and hearts of grown men and women.

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7. A word of instruction. With such examples in your mind, are you wholly willing

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