

VIEWS FROM THE TOWER.

THE attack upon and killing of Christian missionaries in the interior of China, by the sect known as "Vegetarians," continues to attract attention. Six of the rioting Chinese are reported sentenced and decapitated; but the general opinion is that Chinese antipathy to missionaries continues and is fostered by the magistrates. Five English gunboats are said to be advancing up the river leading to the scene of the disturbance. However, neither England nor any other nation is anxious for a Chinese war, especially an interior war, where China's 300,000,000 population would be difficult to handle.

All intelligent people know that "the opening of China to the gospel" was advocated by many who were much more interested in opening China to European commerce, and who knew that the success of the former would mean the success of the latter. Now that the doors of trade are wide open and only the mission work is attacked, the question of the real value of missions amongst the nations which have a civilization and religion of their own is being much discussed; – especially in view of the fact that the representatives of these religions, Buddhism, Brahminism and Confucianism, were invited to and warmly welcomed at the World's Parliament of Religions in 1893.* Of course, the friends of missions defend their usefulness; as for instance, Ex-Secretary Foster who, at the Mass Missionary Meeting in Minneapolis, Oct. 5, declared that "Practically the whole world is open to the missionary," and that "The various Mission Boards are better equipped than ever for doing effective work." "The various schools and colleges established in heathen lands can turn out all the native workers that the liberality of the churches at home can support, and the great need of the mission cause to-day is not so much men as money, to carry to success the Christianization of the world."

See our issue of Nov., '93.

As the other side of the question has been examined but little, we quote two paragraphs from a very moderate article entitled "Civilization," in *The Spectator* (London, Eng.), a very conservative journal, as follows: –

CIVILIZATION.

"It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of the subject which Mr. Flinders Petrie brought before the British Association last week in his paper on "Civilization," and continued in a speech on Tuesday. Western Europe is expending a great part of its surplus strength, intellectual and physical, in the effort to re-civilize the dark world, Asiatic and African; and Mr. Petrie, who has watched the experiment for years from the inside, believes that its object and its methods are alike mistaken. There would be little gained, he thinks, if it succeeded, for the inferior civilizations are developments as natural, and as fitted for those among whom they arise, as the higher, and it cannot succeed by the means it has adopted. It is impossible to [R1877 : page 235] supersede rapidly a low civilization by a high one, because the indispensable pressure so affects the brain that it either destroys the race subjected to it, or positively lowers instead of raising its intellectual capacity. Savages perish under the burden of European education; while the semi-civilized races when taught to read and write – *i.e.*, we presume, taught the European curriculum – become positive fools. The Arabs of Egypt, for example, become comparatively idiots. The strength which was in them is overtaken, and they lose most of the efficiencies they originally possessed. That is a very serious indictment of Europe, and its methods of improving the races it has conquered or intends to conquer, and as the question concerns the whole future of the world, and as Mr. Flinders Petrie is a man whose opinion on such a subject deservedly carries weight, it is worth while to consider for a moment how far his decision appears to be justified by the facts.

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"There can be no question of a great mass of evidence in Mr. Flinders Petrie's favor. European civilization has undoubtedly killed out or is killing out the Polynesian races, one of which, at least, was possessed originally of remarkable intellectual as well as physical powers. It has failed to impress, though it has not killed out, the wild Indian of America, who, in several places where he was partially civilized, has in his horror of the process recoiled to barbarism, while it must be considered, on the whole, to have lowered rather than raised the civilization of the partially civilized races of America, such as the Mexican, and more especially the Indian of Peru. It has lowered, Mr. Petrie affirms, the settled Arab of the Egyptian Delta, while close observers doubt whether it has made the Hindoo, the Turk, or the Chinese either an abler or a better man. The Frenchified Pasha is a great deal worse than the old Turk, the educated Chinaman is not better than the Chinaman proper, while the cultured Bengalee has lost many beneficial restraints and gained nothing except a power of expressing European ideas upon which he does not seem disposed to act. To attribute the failure to reading and writing is, of course, a mere fashion of speech, Asiatics not being made feeble by knowledge of their own literatures; but it is true that Asiatics learned in the knowledge of Europe are often mere "blotting papers of civilization," – persons who derive from Europe nothing but certain inkstains, which leave them rather more rotten than before. Moreover, it is true that originality seems to die away in the races brought into violent contact with a superior civilization, that their very arts decline, till they cannot even repeat their own artistic triumphs, and that they appear incapable of producing fresh literature of any mark. This has been acknowledged by many among themselves with deep sadness, and has so impressed experienced observers among the superior race, that many of them have doubted if the whole experiment is not a waste of force; and others have discussed plans for carrying on the native philosophies to a higher point, instead of superseding them. It must be added that what Europe rather foolishly considers the machinery of civilization – the railway and telegraph and sanitation – appears to have no effect whatever in raising the people compelled to adopt it, they all remaining barbarians,

as in South Africa, or semi-civilized, as in Spanish America and the provinces of India."

The fact is that all thinking people, friends and foes of missionary effort alike, begin to realize that if God's Kingdom will not come nor his will be done on earth, until present missionary methods shall convert all or even a majority of the heathen into saints, either the standard of saintship must be lowered so as to take into Christ's fold all except the positively black sheep (including with what Bishop Foster calls "the ring-streaked and speckled" masses of Christendom all the similar masses in heathendom), or else there is no hope of God's will ever being done on earth as in heaven.

Seeing this, and not seeing that it is God's Kingdom that is to bless and enlighten the world – "all the families of the earth" – the worldly wise are disposed to say, We must have set our estimates of saving faith and practice too high. These people of China and India are Christianized (by that they mean *civilized*, for with many the word *Christ* has degenerated to mean *civil* or *polite*) as well as we: only heirs is civilization of a different type from ours, taught by different Masters. But the pupils of these different Masters need not oppose each other and seek to convert each other. All are right. All are heathen. All are children of the one Heavenly Father, by whatever names he may be known (or unknown?) to them. And with this class of worldly-wise thinkers stands an ever increasing number of worldly-wise Reverend gentlemen and Doctors of Divinity, as was shown at the World's Parliament of Religions.

Others refuse to lower the standard of faith and holiness and try to hope, against all the evidences of their senses, that they will speedily "capture the world for Christ."

Still others, with greater enlightenment, realize that the hope for the world lies not in the hands of mortal men, but in the power of God, as it will be manifested at our Lord's second advent in the setting up of the Kingdom of God.

But the readers of ZION'S WATCH TOWER and MILLENNIAL DAWN, still further enlightened by the Lord's Word, see that all the preaching done, or designed and commanded to be done, during this Gospel age was, so far as the world is concerned in the present age, only for a witness, a testimony, unto them; its special object being the perfecting of the Church, the "little flock" to whom (with their Head and Bridegroom) God has promised to give the Kingdom, the dominion under the whole heavens, through which all the families of the earth shall be blessed. – Gal. 3:8,16,17,29; Gen. 28:14.

We see, too, that the time for this work of witnessing is nearly ended; and that by the Lord's command the work in this time, the "end" or "harvest" of this age, is *reaping*, rather than *sowing*, – *making ready* a prepared people already justified and called, rather than preparing a people to receive the high calling, which we understand has ceased, so far as the unjustified and heathen world is concerned.

From the vantage ground mentioned by the Apostle when he said, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief" (1 Thes. 5:4), by the Prophet when he said, "None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise [amongst the holy, – the "wise virgins"] shall understand" (Dan. 12:10), and by our Lord when he said, "Blessed are those servants whom their Lord when he cometh [arrives] shall find watching" (Luke 12:37) – from this vantage standpoint we see that all the heathen are graciously provided for in God's great plan of the ages. We see that our dear Redeemer bought "the whole world" as well as the Church with his precious blood; and that this gracious fact is the center and essence of the gospel and must sooner or later be testified to all (1 Tim. 2:6) with full opportunity for all to benefit by it and lay hold on eternal life. And we see that the Gospel age just closing, in which the dim light of faith has been a light to the path of only the few who have been made free from the blinding influences of the god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4) is part of the world's dark night of groaning **[R1877 : page 237]** and weeping (Rom. 8:22; Psa. 30:5), and is about to give place to the Millennial morning of joy, when the Sun of Righteousness

shall arise with "healing [restitution – Acts 3:19-21] in his beams."
– Mal. 4:2.

But this harvest message is going to heathen lands also; it goes, however, to the missionaries and others already "called" and "accepted," to ripen them, and separate them from the "tares," and get them into the Lord's "barn." Yes, the message is being carried by willing messengers, and is gathering together [to the Lord, and into oneness of faith, – not into a new denomination] the elect, from one end of heaven [the nominal church system] to the other. – Matt. 24:31.

From our position, therefore, we can rejoice at every effort to advance the world's intelligence and civilization, and every missionary and reform movement; even while we know from our Lord's Word that they will all fail to accomplish what their chief patrons are hoping and striving for; such results being obtainable only through the channel of God's appointment, for which his Church has long prayed, – "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."
