

can justify a discrimination in rates merely upon the ground that unless it is given the traffic of the kind and in the manner spoken of it would go to a competing carrier. This is about of a piece with the other. If it is unlawful to do such carrying, why not let the other company do it and thus have the latter subjected to the expense and annoyance of a "tussle" with the courts? Judge Wallace says on this point: "A shipper having a choice between competing carriers would only have to refuse to send his goods by one of them unless given exceptional rates to justify that one in making the discrimination in his favor on the ground of the necessity of the situation." He then granted the order prayed for by the Commission.

The government undertook a pretty heavy task when it vicariously essayed the regulation of railway traffic in this country, but it can scarcely be charged that it or its agents have used either their conferred or inherent powers harshly, arbitrarily or in such manner as to all at once overturn long-time conditions and thus precipitate disaster; the power that has been exercised has been in the line of reason and has aimed at securing equity for the roads and their patrons. We are still in need of some little regulation in Utah and the signs of the times point to securing it at no distant day; meantime, or at any time, we have no fight with or opposition to the railways. Let Caesar have all that is his and no more, is the proper arrangement.

A QUESTION OF CHRISTIANITY.

"Can a Chinaman become a Christian?" is the more curious than important question discussed by Rev. Frederick J. Masters in the *Californian Magazine* for October. The discussion is occasioned by an article which previously appeared in a journal on the Pacific coast, in which the author makes the following sweeping statement:

"The Chinese are irredeemably and irretrievably bad and vile, as a rule, and all efforts to Christianize them only make them greater hypocrites than ever. *** It is utterly folly to dream of the Chinese embracing the Christian religion, for it is alien to their disposition."

Mr. Masters admits that among the Chinese are to be found many totally depraved specimens of humanity and that the obstacles in the way of missionary labor among that people are formidable. Notwithstanding this, he claims that about 50,000 Chinamen have made open professions of Christianity and that not a few of these have been steadfast in the midst of persecutions and have even sealed their testimony with their lives. In addition to this, many Chinamen in this country, he says, have joined the churches and given evidence of sincerity. These facts he takes as indisputable proof that even the Chinamen can become Christians.

The question being purely theological can best be answered by reference to the Scriptures. An eminent Apostle declares that the Almighty made of one blood every nation of men, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitations

that they should seek God, if perhaps they might feel after Him and find Him. And the commission given by the Founder of the Christian religion to His messengers was this, to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature; which does not appear to admit of a construction by which the Chinese are excepted. To the believers of the Scriptures, therefore, the question under consideration is uncalled for. If the Chinese belong to the great human family, they are capable of conversion and have some share in the benefits of the atoning work of our Lord. As living on the earth they are within the boundaries of the great sphere—extending in fact to both the heavens and the earth, both visible and invisible worlds—within which life and salvation are freely offered. They must therefore, as a matter of fact, be capable of accepting these benefits.

No one acquainted with the history of missions can very well deny that the efforts of missionaries have had some influence for good among the so-called "celestials." Only recently a missionary at Amoy, China, relates how old idols are gradually discarded in places where the doctrines of Christianity are proclaimed. As an instance of this, he mentions that during a conflagration which destroyed a temple, many images were consumed and nobody made an effort to save them. One remark was made at the time which expressed the sentiment of the multitude: "If these gods cannot help themselves, nor ask for assistance, they are less potent than rats, chickens and dogs." Incidents of this nature must be encouraging to those who labor for the overthrow of idolatry.

On the other hand, no one ought to dispute the fact that the success of the missionaries among the Chinese is hardly in proportion to the labor and means spent on the enterprise. The reasons for this are plain. In the first place, the Chinese are not a religious people. The stagnation which marks their civilization extends to religious ideas and sentiments. The educated classes profess Confucianism, which is hardly a religion at all, but a mere system of philosophy. Buddhism is more of a religious system, but it is evidently going to decay, its temples falling into ruins and its votaries held in contempt by the higher classes of the people. Taoism seems to have degenerated into a species of alchemy and spiritualism combined. And almost everywhere, utter indifference to religious subjects is noticeable. No one cares what religion his neighbor professes or what cultus he practices. And many are found who profess all the three creeds above referred to, while others reject all. No wonder that missionaries cannot make progress among a people who treat so lightly the subjects in which the missionaries are, or should be, chiefly interested.

In the next place, it is a question worthy of serious consideration whether Christianity, as it exists today in the world, can be expected to successfully cope with paganism in its various forms. Certain it is that in arguments with educated pagans the missionaries do not always appear to the best advantage.

When the Gospel of Christ first was

proclaimed to the world its effect was to silence the most profound scholars among the opponents. It created enthusiasm among the converts. The pagan religious systems were shattered and the idols dethroned, while the multitudes turned to worship at the foot of the Crucified One. These effects were produced, not through the eloquence of the messengers, nor through their superior knowledge of the things in which the learned men of the age prided themselves, but by the power of the Divine Spirit with which they were filled, and by the uncompromising proclamation of truth. Similar results have followed the preaching of the Gospel of Christ in this age by His chosen messengers, and in consequence of the presence of the same Divine power. For after all, conversion is not the work of man—except as an instrument—but the work of the Almighty.

Now, the Christianity of today is not what it originally was. This is admitted by all, we believe. Its votaries do not believe in the presence of those gifts of the Divine power, which are its life and soul. Those gifts are disregarded. The form may partly be left, but without that Spirit it is dead. The Christianity of today is the work of man. It is reduced to a system, or to speak correctly, to many systems of semi-religious philosophy. It is artificial. It may have its use in the political and social structures of the world. But it is not identical with that which its Founder left as a sacred inheritance to His devoted followers. It is as different from the prototype as an electric lamp is from the glorious sun, and it is as powerless to promote a luxuriant vegetation as is the former.

Christianity without inspired men; Christianity without the accompanying gifts; Christianity without prophecy, and—equally remarkable—Christianity without many of its fundamental doctrines—that is what the missionaries of today offer the heathen world. How can anybody be expected to accept it? It seems to be an invitation to feast on empty plates. No amount of decorative designs can compensate for the absence of real food.

This is the true condition of Christianity today. Hence its weakness and lack of progress both among the Chinese and other nations. Hence also the reason why it loses its hold among the masses in the civilized world, as well as among many of the most advanced of the age.

There is only one remedy for it and that is the return to the Gospel in its simplicity as restored to the world by revelation. There is some truth in the much contradicted statement of old Augustine, *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*; if rightly understood. The salvation of the human race is offered by the Almighty through the medium of His Church only. Any effort to truly Christianize the world by those who are not connected with the true Church are unauthorized and must be consequently ineffective.

It is claimed that in the death of George William Curtis and James G. Whitlier the female suffragists lost two of their ablest and most conspicuous champions. This does not seem to have been generally understood when those gentlemen were alive.