

not always readily discerned, but God knows where it is all planted and the time of the harvest He knows as well.

The times are growing late, the Prince of Peace may be at the gate. To them whom He has called has He the Water of Life throughout the world everywhere. We must wait and believe and not lose heart.

“Behold, I am with you always even unto the consummation of all things.”

In this manner I would explain to our gifted editor, whose pen is far mightier than mine in the wisdom of learning, the simple story of the martyrs of China and the shrouded faith in the Water of Life.

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NORTHAMPTON, MASS.

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[The porcelain group to which Dr. Parker refers represents a sage seated by the wayside addressing a smaller person carrying a water bottle, and the sage is supposed to say, “I will give thee Water of Life.” The idea of an elixir of life is an old and indigenous notion in China, which may date back to a prehistorical notion which in ancient Babylon gained currency as the water of life. But of course the moot group may have been made under the influence of Christian thought. Dr. Parker's theory is not positively impossible, but all things considered it seems very improbable. P. C.]

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#### THE FIRE-WALK CEREMONY IN TAHITI.

Mr. Andrew Lang described a fire-walk ceremony which he had witnessed in Tahiti, and Dr. Hocken wrote a like account of the Fiji fire ceremony. Both were so interesting that they found their way into the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research* in February, 1900, and also in Mr. Fraser's well-known book *The Golden Bough*. Thus it has aroused uncommon interest, and being verified by good authority it is apt to produce in the unsophisticated reader the idea that there are many things in heaven and earth undreamt of in our philosophy. Mr. S. P. Langley happened to be in Tahiti, and was glad to have an opportunity to witness the fire-dance under the guidance of the self-same priest, Papa-Ita, who had performed it in Mr. Andrew Lang's presence. Mr. Langley describes the ceremony in a pamphlet issued from the Government Printing Office at Washington, the contents being taken from the Smithsonian Report for 1901; he also publishes instantaneous photographs taken of the dance. He personally met the priest, Papa-Ita, “the finest-looking native that I had seen, tall, dignified in bearing, with unusually intelligent features.” The *mise en scène*, says Mr. Langley, was certainly noteworthy. Everything was so arranged as to heighten the expectation of the spectators as to the heat of the fiery stones over which the priest was to walk. The poles of the men who stirred the fire and turned the stones over it were three times longer than necessary, but it seemed as if the latent heat of the fire extended three times farther than it actually did. Papa-Ita claimed that he could walk over the hot stones because he was protected by a goddess and by virtue of spells. He himself and other natives walked over the hot stones with naked feet, but we must consider that “native feet are not like European ones, and Mr. Richardson, the chief engineer of the ship, mentioned that he had himself seen elsewhere natives standing unconcerned with naked feet on the cover of pipes conveying steam at about 300° F., where no European foot could even lightly rest for a minute.” Omitting further details, we quote the result as Mr. Langley gives it :

"I witnessed substantially the scenes described by the gentlemen cited, and I have reason to believe that I saw a very favorable specimen of a fire-walk. It was a sight well worth seeing. It was a most clever and interesting piece of savage magic, but from the evidence I have just given I am obliged to say (almost regretfully) that it was not a miracle."

P. C.

### RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE IN CHINA.

Prof. J. J. M. De Groot<sup>1</sup> discusses the subject of religious liberty in China in a most elaborate style, publishing the documents of Chinese legislation in the original, together with an English translation; and the obvious conclusion is that Confucianism, the official State religion of China, in spite of its lack of definitely religious features, is as intolerant as any other extremely dogmatic faith. The heterodox systems have no standing before the law; the main documents being three articles on the eradication of sects and heresy which are contained in the sixteenth chapter of the Civil and Penal Code, *Ta Ts'ing luh li* of the Ts'ing Dynasty. They read as follows:

#### ARTICLE I.

"Religious leaders or instructors, and priests, who, pretending thereby to call down heretical gods, write charms or pronounce them over water, or carry round palanquins (with idols), or invoke saints, calling themselves orthodox leaders, chief patrons, or female leaders; further, all societies calling themselves at random White Lotus communities of the Buddha Maitreya, or the *Ming-tsun* religion, or the school of the White Cloud, etc.; together with all that answers to practices of *tso tao* or *i twan*; finally, they who in secret places have prints and images, and offer incense to them, or hold meetings which take place at night and break up by day, whereby the people are stirred up and misled under the pretext of cultivating virtue—shall be sentenced, the principal perpetrators to strangulation, and the accomplices each to a hundred blows with the long stick, and after that, the latter shall be banished for ever to the distance of three thousand miles."

#### ARTICLE II.

"If any one in the army or among the people dress or ornament the image of a god, and receive that god with the clang of cymbals and the beating of drums, and hold sacrificial meetings in his honor, one hundred blows with the long stick shall be administered, but only to the principals."

#### ARTICLE III.

"If village-chiefs, when privy to such things (as detailed in art. I. and II.), do not inform the authorities, they shall receive each forty blows with the short bamboo lath. Services of prayer and thanksgiving (for the harvest) in honor of the common local gods of the Ground, performed in spring and autumn respectively, do not fall under these restrictions.

This severe law was not framed especially against Christianity, but against Buddhism and Taoism, and the Buddhist and Taoist clergy are specially named in many applications of this same law. In the face of this condition, which is illustrated in many instances referred to by Professor De Groot, who is no mean authority on the subject, our author says that "The Confucian instinct for perse-

<sup>1</sup>*Is There Religious Liberty in China?* Separate reprint from the "Mittheilungen des Seminars für orientalische Sprachen zu Berlin," V., Abteilung I., ostasiatische Studien. Berlin: Reichsdruckerei. 1902. Pages, 49.