

"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 Groot¹ 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-

¹*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.

cution, embodied in the Law on Heresy, is, as will always be—as long as China is her own—like the sword of Damocles; the protection granted to the Christians by the Powers is not much more than a hair which prevents the sword from falling.” Accordingly, adds Professor De Groot, “Chinese Christianity cannot exist and thrive without the protection of the foreign powers, and if this protection were withdrawn, wreck and ruin would be its lot. . . . There is, indeed, another reason for Chinese persecution of the Christians than a concocted register of sins of missionaries.”

BOOK REVIEWS.

IN OUR MIDST. *The Letters of Callicrates to Dione, Queen of the Xanthians, Concerning England and the English, Anno Domini 1902. Illustrated. London: Review of Reviews Annual, 1903. Pages, 122. Price, 1 shilling.*

This pamphlet is a satire on the present state of affairs in Great Britain. The plot of the story consists of the experiences of an English missionary, Tressidder by name, who found in the interior of Africa a Greek tribe called the Xanthians. Having left England many years ago, he preaches Christianity and the message of good will of the Prince of Peace, but finds some opposition, for according to the law of the country a man who introduces innovations shall be immolated to the gods. Having, however, cured the queen of the Xanthians of a dangerous disease, his request to be allowed to preach the Gospel is listened to, and the principal councillor of the queen, Callicrates, is sent to England in order to investigate the conditions of the new religion. Callicrates is in love with the queen and has fair prospects of winning her heart. He leaves the country, arrives in England, and the bulk of the pamphlet before us consists in the letters which he wrote to Dione, the queen of the Xanthians. Letter I. is “First Impressions of England”; letter II., “A Human Sacrifice.” This chapter alludes to Christianity of former days, and incorporates an old English print representing the burning of Latimer and Ridley. Letter III. is “The Common Sense of the English”; letter IV., “The Curse of Cybele”; letter V., “The Rule of the Prince of Peace,” with a statement of how the first letters were received in Xanthia; letter VI., “The Religion of the English”; letter VII., “The Twisters of the Tail of the Jumping Cat”; letter VIII., “The Art of the English People”; letter IX., “Music and the Drama in England”; letter X., “The Culture of Temperance”; letter XI., “Wherein the English Most Excel”; letter XII., “The Homeless English”; letter XIII., “The Abasement of Womanhood”; letter XIV., “Some Light in the Darkness.”

Callicrates returns to his own country, and the result of his inquiry is summed up as follows:

“He had come expecting to find a land in which the Golden Rule was the law of life, where every man did to his brother what he wished his brother to do to him. He had found a land of cut-throat competition, of social caste, and one where internecine feuds raged even within the pale of the Church. He expected to find a sober nation—he found a people sodden with strong drink. He had been told that in England he would find religion pure and undefiled, and divine worship in primitive simplicity—he had found Churches like idolatrous Temples, and a proud priesthood arrogating to themselves sacerdotal privileges. He had hoped to find an ideal Commonwealth, a social Utopia—he had discovered a minority wallowing in luxury, and a majority dehumanised by the conditions of their existence. He had looked to find Woman exalted by her abasement, glorified by humiliation