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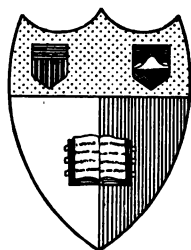


WASON  
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ASIA

THE ORIGIN  
OF THE  
FIRST PROTESTANT  
MISSION TO CHINA.

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**CHARLES WILLIAM WASON  
COLLECTION  
CHINA AND THE CHINESE**

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**THE GIFT OF  
CHARLES WILLIAM WASON  
CLASS OF 1876  
1918**



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The origin of the first Protestant missi



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**THE ORIGIN  
OF THE  
FIRST PROTESTANT MISSION TO CHINA,  
AND  
HISTORY OF THE EVENTS**

**Which induced the attempt, and succeeded in the accomplishment of a Translation of the  
HOLY SCRIPTURES**

**INTO  
THE CHINESE LANGUAGE,  
(At the expense of the East India Company), and of the casualties which assigned to the late  
DR. MORRISON**

**The carrying out of this Plan, with copies of the Correspondence between the**

**Archbishop of Canterbury,  
Bishop of London,  
Bishop of Durham,  
Bishop of Sarum,  
Earl of Spencer,  
Sir George Staunton, Bart.  
Sir Charles Grant,**

**Dr. Gaskin,  
Dr. Erskine,  
Dr. Hunter,  
Dr. Bogue,  
Rev. John Owen,  
Rev. Josiah Pratt,  
&c. &c.**

**AND THE  
REV. W. W. MOSELEY, A.M., L.L.D., &c.**

**TO WHICH IS APPENDED**

**A NEW ACCOUNT OF THE ORIGIN OF THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE  
SOCIETY, AND A COPY OF THE MEMOIR WHICH ORIGINATED  
THE CHINESE MISSION, &c.**

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**LONDON:  
SIMPKIN AND MARSHALL, STATIONERS' HALL COURT.  
1842.**

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## P R E F A C E.

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THIS little work was thought necessary by an intelligent member of the Royal Asiatic Society, and has been composed in consequence of the following remark made by him to the writer, "The public know nothing of the origin of the Chinese translation of the Holy Scriptures. A few years ago it was supposed to be impracticable ; most of our high men were of this opinion, and among others, the Bishop of Durham, Sir Charles Grant, Dr. Waugh, &c. The facts, therefore, that led to its accomplishment must be interesting, and as you are the only person who know them, it appears to me to be your duty to give the particulars to the public."

Young and inexperienced, but anxious to do good, a thought rose in the author's mind that a society for translating the Holy Scriptures into the Oriental languages was practicable. The circular that follows was the result of this thought, and the reasons which induced him to fix his attention upon, and devote himself to the Chinese translation in preference to all others, were the following :

1stly. Because this language is spoken by one third of the human race.

2ndly. Because this translation presented greater difficulties than any other.\*

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\* As an apology for indulging this propensity the writer with diffidence states the fact, that he had from his youth been naturally inclined to devote his attention to the accomplishment of supposed impossibilities,—not the weight of the elementary particles of matter, not the perpetual motion, not the philosopher's stone. But after originating this translation, he attempted to find out the physical agency which produces atmospheric variation of temperature, a new and real cause why heat diminishes as we rise nearer the sun: the elementary principles of the prosaic quantity of the Greek and Latin languages: the rule or rules by which every chorus in *ÆSCHYLUS*, *EURIPIDES*, *SOPHOCLES*, &c., can be scanned without a deficient or redundant syllable: whether the agency (gravity) by which the Almighty governs astronomical



3rdly. Because great as the difficulties were and general as the opinion was that no translation could be made into the Chinese language, he felt himself able to demonstrate the practicability of its accomplishment.

4thly. Because though sensible of the proficiency in the language necessary, the long toil of translation required, and the vast expense it would incur, he felt a humble consciousness that under Divine aid he should be able to originate the translation and printing of the whole Sacred Volume, and if his life were spared, arrange means for their diffusion in that vast empire.

Under this impression he entered upon his task, the sequel of which is detailed in the following pages.

But little did he expect, however sanguine in his hopes of final success, to see the work accomplished so soon and so well, and (at the expense chiefly of the East India Company); still less did he expect to behold so wide a door opened for the diffusion of the Scriptures, and preaching the Gospel among the four hundred millions of long neglected Chinese.

The reader cannot participate in the pleasure the writer feels in retracing the circumstances which raised the idea in his mind and disposed him to desire to live for this great object, still less can he conceive the gratification its speedy accomplishment has inspired. But every christian reader will no doubt heartily unite with him in praying, "Give the heathen to thy Son for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth to him for his possession. O, that the set time to favour the land of Sinim may soon come.

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movements, &c., is not material: whether credit is not to be given to the report that a providential discovery has been made for the absolute and unequivocal cure of Consumption; and the Seat, Causes and Cure of Nervous and Mental diseases, &c. Some of these he has publicly demonstrated, and the rest he is prepared to develop, and will do so, if his life should be spared to publish his manuscripts.

THE  
ORIGIN AND HISTORY  
OF THE FIRST  
PROTESTANT MISSION TO CHINA,  
&c., &c.

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THE first Protestant Mission for translating the Holy Scriptures into the Chinese Language, and for distributing printed copies in that country, originated in the circular of which the following is a copy.

**Circular.**

SIR. — The establishment of a Society for translating the Holy Scriptures into the languages of the most populous Oriental Nations, has long appeared to me very desirable. Much

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has been done, I admit, to promote the cause of Christianity; but we are bound to do more;—and an Institution of this kind is likely to be of most extensive utility. Many arguments might be brought forward in favour of the undertaking, but at present I shall mention only a few.

1st.—Every society being necessarily limited in its operations, no single society will ever be able to accomplish the great work of sending the Gospel to all the nations of the earth.

2nd.—How ever great the exertions of other societies may be, many nations are still “perishing for lack of knowledge,” and are likely to remain for ages ignorant of God, unless much greater exertions are made, and some very different from those which have yet been originated.

3rd.—However proper it may be to send Missionaries to other Heathen Countries, it is certain that in the populous empire of China, they could not gain admittance, but with diffi-

culty.\* And even in Hindostan, from local circumstances, they would meet with great obstacles.

4th.—If the Holy Scriptures were translated into the Chinese, Hindostan, and Sanscrit languages, they might be extensively circulated without much difficulty, hazard, or extraordinary annual expence.

5th.—Persons of all sects and denominations who regard the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God, could unite in this society, both by employing their talents of knowledge and wealth, in a way agreeable to their own peculiar views; for the object is—the translation and dispersion of the Holy Scriptures without note or comment. In a society thus constituted, the elements of union exist, and no peculiarity of sentiment, would prevent any individual from coming forward to support the design.

6th.—As we are indebted, principally to the

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\* Du Hald's History of China.

translation of the Holy Scriptures, into our own language, for the chief, if not all the religion that is among us, we may expect that God will honour his word wherever it is sent. What success could attend the wild tales of the Koran, or the superstitious details of the Vedas, if, while these books were in the one hand, the Bible was in the other?—Surely the “**SELF EVIDENCING LIGHT AND POWER**” of the Word of God, if widely dispersed, would ere long remove the darkness of the eastern world. Till the Scriptures are translated into their native languages, and circulated among them, the three hundred and thirty millions of China, the hundreds of thousands in Hindostan, Tartary, &c., will continue to sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to perish for want of knowledge; evils which to a great extent might have been prevented, if the Holy Scriptures had been distributed in their languages years ago. And this might have been done had we exerted ourselves as we should

have done, and as the Roman Catholics have actually done. These sentiments, and these feelings have long been at work in my mind, and I was not a little surprised, when I found that Sir William Jones was of the same opinion. And his extensive knowledge, deep rooted piety, and situation qualified him to form an accurate judgment. “We may,” says Sir William Jones, “assure ourselves that neither Musselmans, nor Hindoos, will ever be converted by any Mission from the Church of Rome, or from *any other Church*; and the only human mode, perhaps, of causing so great a revolution, will be to translate into Sanscrit and Persian such chapters of the Prophets, particularly of Isaiah, as are indisputably evangelical, together with one of the Gospels, and a plain prefatory discourse, containing full evidences of the very distant ages, in which the predictions themselves, and the history of the Divine Person predicted, were severally made public, and then quietly to disperse the work, among the well-

educated natives, with whom, if in due time it failed of producing fruit, by its natural influence, we could only lament more than ever the strength of prejudice and the weakness of unassisted reason.”\*

“ But such is the character especially of the Chinese Language, as to render such a society useless, for this language does not admit of any traslation to be made into it, and in our present situation, it would be almost impossible from the want of talented men and money to make translations into either of the others.”

To this objection I am happy to oppose facts. Sir George Staunton’s account of Lord Macartney’s Embassy to China, contains the particulars of several works translated into that language. The memorial of his Britannic Majesty to the

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\* Asiatic Researches, Article 9th.—On the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India, Dr. Hardy has suggested the propriety and expediency of the same plan, in a Sermon before the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge.—Vide the Sermon, p. 52, 53.

Emperor of China was translated into the Chinese Language in this country, by Dr. Montucci, assisted by native Roman Catholic Priests, who had been engaged by Sir George Staunton at the Propaganda Fide, in Naples, to accompany the embassy as interpreters. And, I am not certain, but the whole or part of the New Testament is already translated into the Chinese Language; such a report has reached my ears. A Roman Catholic Priest, who spent six years in China, has named this;—but, at present, I have no means of ascertaining its correctness.

That persons may be procured, who are qualified to make translations of the Holy Scriptures, into some of these languages, I have no doubt.

If Sir George Staunton could engage two natives of China in the Propaganda Fide to come to England, and serve the embassy, on condition of only a free passage home, may we not hope that now, or very soon, one or more, might be found able and willing to assist in the great work proposed by this intended society?



In the Propaganda Fide thirty living languages were taught, and twenty-eight were spoken daily, and one of these twenty-eight languages was the Chinese. Are not some of the many teachers of this society to be procured by the ordinary *remunerations* of England? These no doubt would be powerful inducements with the linguists of the Propaganda to "come over and help us," if they were personally visited, as they were by Sir George Staunton, and the facts were properly laid before them. Some of the Chinese scholars of the Propaganda, have been brought nearer to us than Naples.

When the French army took Naples, the Emperor Napoleon ordered the Chinese scholars to remove to Paris, to assist in translating certain Chinese manuscripts, in the Royal library. As these linguists in Paris, would be more at liberty to make subsequent engagements than at Naples, a visit to that capital would probably be successful in making appropriate arrangements. In our own country, there are not a few Oriental scholars. Lord Moira, Sir George

Staunton's son, Mr. Shakespear, Dr. Montucci, Professor Kidd, Professor Bentley, Rev. Mr. Girrons, and N. E. Kinnersley, Esq., are known to the writer to be a few, among many Oriental scholars, England and Scotland could supply. And, from the interviews I have had with Professors Kidd and Bentley, at Aberdeen, and Dr. Montucci, and Rev. Messrs. Girrons and Maurice, in London, I have no doubt of their readiness to employ their best endeavours to promote the objects of the proposed institution. And, from their assurances, I judge it to be highly probable that many others who are able, would come forward in aid of such a society. The same difficulty would not attend all the translations mentioned, which would attend the Chinese and Sanscrit.

A translation into Arabic, has been accomplished by Saades and Espinus, of the whole of the Sacred Scriptures. This translation would require a careful examination, and perhaps revisions. Tarrosus has translated the five books

of Moses into the Persian Language, as well as the four Evangelists. And part of the Holy Scriptures, in the Ethiopic Language, is printed in Whalton's Polyglott.

This society would produce many valuable collateral effects, by familiarizing various Eastern Languages in our country, and the Holy Scriptures might not only be prepared here for circulation in the East, but those holy men, whom God might raise up for the work of Missions, could here learn to speak the Oriental languages as they do in the Propaganda Fide, at Naples, where as before said, twenty-eight languages are spoken daily of nations, who extend their hands *to us*, saying "*Come over, and help us.*" By which means, as in the day of Penticost, the Ministers of the Gospel might be qualified to go forth to Elam, Media, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Arabia, China, &c. &c. to declare the wonderful works of God.

WILLIAM MOSELEY.

Near Daventry, Northamptonshire.

*March 7th, 1798.*

Copies of this Circular were sent to several gentlemen known to the writer as zealous and wealthy Christians. And among others, copies were put into the hands of the gentlemen, with whom the British and Foreign Bible Society originated.\*

This Circular having excited some christian sympathy for China, the writer soon found himself engaged in a large correspondence, and was brought into contact with various gentlemen, who were solicitous to encourage every right method of extending the knowledge of Christianity; among others, he was introduced by Joseph Hardcastle, Esq. to Charles Grant, Esq., one of the Directors of the East India Company, possessing great influence in that establishment, and who, from his personal acquaintance with Asia, was thought to be the best counsellor he could consult. But, what was the writer's surprise, when this wise and good

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\* It is more than probable that the British and Foreign Bible Society, originated from this circular.—See note *a*.

man, though rich in Oriental knowledge, and devoted to every good work, assured him, "That although the undertaking was a *practical impossibility*, yet, it did a young man much credit, to employ his talents in such a desirable undertaking. But that no translation of the Holy Scriptures could be made into the Chinese Language, for he knew the nature of the language would not allow of any translations whatever to be made into it." This bold assertion of *impossibility*, did not diminish the deep interest the writer felt for the accomplishment of this particular translation ; and in a few months, he gave up every other part of his plan, and devoted himself to the accomplishment of a translation supposed by others to be impossible. The Bishop of Durham was of the same opinion with Mr. C. Grant. To this object, therefore, exclusively, the writer from this time gave the full force of his mind, and commenced a course of reading, with a view to prepare himself, to effect whatever he might feel necessary, to mature his undertaking.

The Right Honorable Earl Spencer, to whom he wrote for the loan of books, answered his letter as follows.

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*Letter from Earl Spencer to Rev. W. Moseley.*

SIR,

I cannot lend any books out of my library at Althorpe, but if you will specify what books you wish to consult, I shall have no objection to your consulting them at Althorpe or in London.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

SPENCER.

Admiralty, June 18th, 1800.

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*Mr. Moseley's reply to Earl Spencer.*

Near Daventry, June 24th, 1800.

MY LORD,

I beg to express my acknowledgments for

your Lordship's permission to consult such books as I want, and which may be found in your Lordship's library at Althorpe and in Town.

This will promote the design I have named to your Lordship, and which I hope, will ultimately prove advantageous to the civil and religious interests of the East. As your Lordship requests me to name the books I wish to consult, I take leave to name the following, and should others occur to me as I proceed in my inquiries, I flatter myself, that if they are in your Lordship's libraries, I may avail myself also of their use.

I am, my Lord,  
Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,  
W. MOSELEY.

1. *Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses.*
2. Du Hald's *Hist. China.*
3. Magellan's *Hist. China.*
4. Grossier's *Hist. China.*
5. *Histoire des Huns.*

6. *Memoires de Chine.*
7. *Monde Primitif.*
8. *Tratados de la Monarchia de China*, per Domingo Fernandez Navarette.
9. *Nouvelles des Missions Orientales.* Four volumes of this work have been published. The last of which was presented to me lately by M. Chaumont, one of the Directors of the Oriental Missions.
10. *Racci's Life*, by Father Orleans.
11. *Xavier's Life.*
12. *Observat. de rebus Sinicis*, per Mullinus.
13. *Ogilby on China.*
14. *Webb on the Chinese Language.*
15. *Mémoires Historiques sur les Missions des Pères Jesuites aux Indes Orientales*, par M. Parisot, corrigée par le R. P. Norbert.
16. *Hydes' Works.*
17. *Churchill's Collection of Travels*, &c.
18. *Boyer's Chinese Grammar.*
19. *Museum Sinicum*, par Fourmont.
20. *Hook on the Chinese Language.*

In Earl Spencer's library at Althorpe,\* the

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\* The Author resided about four miles from Althorpe for seven years, and was allowed free access to the books at all times.



writer met with a large variety of works on Chinese history, literature, and language in French and English. From Charles Grant, Esq. he received the loan of other works, and in his frequent visits to the metropolis, in search of information on this subject, he was introduced to various native and foreign Orientalists, whose conversations were of no small service. And, among others, he became acquainted with Mr. Chaumont, a very devout and amiable Ecclesiastic of the Church of Rome, who had spent six years in China, and read the language fluently. Dr. Montucci was also frequently visited, who, had assisted in translating the memorial of his Britannic Majesty to the Emperor of China, and which had been taken out, and presented by Lord Macartney to the Emperor of China, in person. Soon after this the writer had the unspeakable pleasure of finding in the British Museum, a manuscript in the Chinese Language, totally unknown to the public. This though lettered “ *Quatuor Evangelia Sinicè;*”

proved to be on examination a Harmony of the Evangelists, the Acts, and all St. Paul's Epistles, except that to the Hebrews. Being now in possession of all necessary information, the writer resolved to compose and print a memoir,\* that he might embody and bring these facts, and the various information he had obtained by reading and intercourse with enlightened men, &c., before an extensive private circle. And then to wait and see what could be achieved, in favour of the long neglected, but most populous country of China. One hundred copies of this memoir were handsomely printed in quarto, and privately and gratuitously circulated at the author's sole expence. A copy was presented, at the writers request, by the Rev. John Owen, of Fulham, (afterwards secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society) to Dr. Porteus, Bishop of London, from whom the writer immediately received a letter,

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\* See note *b*.

recommending him to send copies of the Memoir to every Bishop in the kingdom, and to the two Archbishops, and at the same time promised to bring the subject before the Bishops collectively, the first convenient opportunity.

The Rev. Dr. Erskine and Dr. Hunter, of Edinburgh University, having received through James Haldane, Esq., a copy of the Memoir, returned the following note :—

Lower Town. 12th November, 1806.

Dr. Erskine's best complements to Mr. Haldane, is easier, but still weak ; returns Mr. Moseley's letter, and, as desired, has imparted it and the Memoir to Dr. Hunter and other ministers in Edinburgh and neighbourhood, and others occasionally here, who take an interest in these matters. In general they approve our society, giving some assistance for the translating, or rather publishing the translation of the Bible in the Chinese,—and see the force of all the arguments, except that from the civil-

ized state of that empire. The Gospel is certainly equally designed to be as much a salvation to the rude and barbarous, as the polished and civil. See Romans, xv. It is remarkable that this very argument was used against missions to the Oteheite Islands, by Mr. Hamilton, of Glasmoir in the General Assembly.

Our society's funds and other demands will not permit giving what could be wished, and it is the opinion of those consulted, that private collections, on account of the many present demands should be delayed. They all think it best that some society formed in England, should take the management of the matter, and apply to the different societies in Scotland.

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Princes Street, Edinburgh, November 25th, 1800.

MY DEAR SIR,

I received your letter of the 1st and sent it, as I had your Memoir before, to Dr. Erskine, from whom I have had the above answer, which

you can consider. You will observe, it contains his own opinion, and that of the clergy here. I am of opinion with Mr. Dale,\* that money will not be wanting for the publication you are busy about. I think it a great object, and likely to be attended with very beneficial effects. I trust the Lord will prosper it.

I remain, dear Sir,

Yours sincerely,

ROBERT HALDANE.

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*Letter from Earl Spencer to Rev. W. Moseley.*

SIR,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, enclosing a Memoir on the possibility of sending the Gospel to China, and am much obliged for the communication of it. As far as translating the Gospel into the Chinese Lan-

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\* David Dale, Esq., of Glasgow, sent the writer word by a clerical friend, that he would subscribe £500 towards the undertaking whenever it commenced.

guage, and printing the version of it, for the purpose of circulating it, if possible, through the empire, I do not see any other objection to the plan, but the difficulty of its execution. And, if means can be suggested likely to carry it into effect, I would with pleasure contribute towards its completion.

The question of sending missionaries into that country, involves other considerations, which may be of so doubtful a nature, that I do not feel prepared to give an opinion upon it. If any person wishes to undertake to transcribe the manuscript\* which you mention in the British Museum, I think I can, as one of the trustees, answer for it, that every facility will be afforded for the purpose, consistently with the regulations of that establishment.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

SPENCER.

Admiralty, January 11, 1801.

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\* See note *c*.

*Letter from Rev. David Bogue (afterwards Dr. B.) of Gosport to the Rev. W. Moseley.*

Gosport, December 2, 1800.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Your Memoir remained some months in London, and found its way to me but lately. I return you many thanks for it; I have read it with much pleasure, and most cordially unite with you, in considering China as the *first field* of missions in the *world*.

The religious public is very much indebted to you, for the great pains you have taken on the subject, and for the perspicuous abstract you have given of the attempts made, to introduce the Romish Religion into that empire. The quarrels among the different orders in the Romish Church were scandalous. I am not inclined to ascribe, as much as you, to their political interference. It was not in their power to do so, nearly the whole of the last century. Besides it has been the Devil's common catscall

against the missionaries of Christ. The charge was brought against the master himself. I have read several of the latter volumes of *Lettres Edifiantes*, with much pleasure, and admire the temper and conduct of the missionaries in China, and their patience under the continual hardships belonging to their situation in that country, and their fortitude under the bitterness of persecution. Their success from year to year, in spite of their difficulties is wonderful. But the great evil is, they are sadly deficient as to their views of the Gospel of Christ. They introduce all the silly superstitions and useless ceremonies of Rome, and, what is worst of all, they never gave the people the Sacred Scriptures in their own language, — *where they are wanted, no lasting benefit is conferred.* — I hope your zeal in directing the attention of the disciples of Jesus, to this subject, will be attended with the happiest effects. It will give me pleasure to do any thing in my power to second your views. I agree with you as to the necessity and impor-



tance of printing a part or the whole of the New Testament in the Chinese language;—but, I think, something more than what you propose, is needful to be done, in order to circulate it with effect.

It is certain that if such a man, as you speak of, can be found in the whole empire, we should have a missionary, indeed, suitable for the purpose. If I were as young as you are, I know of no station in England, I should consider a bar to my setting out for Macao or Canton, as a missionary for our society, to devote the rest of my days to the propagation of the Gospel in China. I recommend this subject, my dear sir, to your serious consideration. Is it with a good grace you can call on others to do that which it is in your power to do yourself? May the Great Head of the Church direct you,—I should rather say—strengthen you, for this glorious service. If you say, you cannot go yourself, you should do your best to find a suitable person, and send him to the Missionary Semi-

nary, to study with a view to his preparation for this great work ; or, rather get *two*, if you can possibly search them out. Let me entreat you to give yourself no rest, my dear sir, till you have found one or two, to go for you. I have very confidential expectations of considerable success, if a person, properly qualified, could go there, and carry the New Testament with him in the Chinese Language.

I have lately been reading Syme's account of the Embassy to Ava, and rejoice to find, that it is one of the fairest fields, next to China, for missions ; in some things it is preferable to it. But, alas ! men are wanted of talent and piety, to offer themselves for the work. Alas ! is the missionary spirit only in words ?—or, do men offer only when they are to go, to what they imagine—*charming countries* ?

I wish you the Lord's blessing ! and remain,

Dear Sir,

Very affectionately yours, &c.

DAVID BOGUE.

Having heard nothing from the Bishop of London, on the probability of the Archbishops or Bishops, to whom Dr. Porteus advised the writer, to send copies of his Memoir, taking the subject up, he expressed a wish in conversation with a clergyman of Bristol, that the Society for Missions to Africa and the East, would execute his plan. This society had been newly formed by ministers of the Church of England, and soon after its formation a correspondence was opened with the writer; and one of its most useful members, Rev. Josiah Pratt, made him a visit.

The object of Mr. Pratt's visit was to converse on the Memoir, generally, and to learn if the writer had any objections to an abridgment of his Memoir, being added as an appendix to the Annual Report and sermon about to be preached\* before the above society. This was instantly conceded, and at a meeting

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\* The sermon was preached by the Rev. J. Scott, then of the Lock Chapel, May, 1801.

of the General Committee of this society, held May 10, 1801, the following resolutions were passed, and a copy transmitted to the writer ; Rev. John Venn in the chair, &c.

The Committee of Correspondence having made a report concerning the Rev. Mr. Moseley's plan of translating the Scriptures into the Chinese Language, and it appearing to the Committee to be a very desirable work, if it could be accomplished, and to coincide with the designs of this society ;

“ RESOLVED :—That this society will undertake to print the Scriptures and religious tracts in the Chinese Language, provided that a sufficient fund shall be raised for this purpose.

Resolved :—That a separate fund be raised and account be opened in the books of the society, for this particular purpose.

Resolved :—That the thanks of this society be given to the Rev. William Moseley, for his communications, and that he be requested to

give his assistance, and to communicate with the society in executing this design; and to attend the meetings of the committee as often as he can make it convenient.

Resolved :—That the Committee of Correspondence be requested, in conjunction with Mr. Moseley, to take measures, in order to determine whether a Chinese manuscript in the British Museum, mentioned in his Memoir on this subject, be a faithful translation.

Resolved :—That all expences incurred already, or, which shall be in future incurred, by this measure, which the Committee of Correspondence shall judge reasonable, be defrayed by this society.”

The annual sermon of this society was preached this year by the Rev. J. Scott, of the Lock, secretary to the society, and in the report of the society's proceedings and prospects, the subject of the Chinese translation is introduced, as follows.

“The extensive empire of China, which is stated to contain three hundred millions of inhabitants, has hitherto enjoyed no share of the missionary labours of the Protestant Churches. The Rev. Mr. Moseley has, however, of himself conceived the design of printing part of the Scriptures in the Chinese Language, and circulating the work in that populous country. Extracts from the valuable Memoir he has printed upon this subject, are subjoined to this report. To carry his design into execution, is, however, a work, more adequate to the united efforts of a society, than to the exertions of an individual. He has, therefore, expressed a wish, that this society should undertake the important work he had proposed; and has promised to give into its hands a considerable pecuniary aid, which had been promised to him. The Committee is fully impressed with a sense of the importance of the proposed work; but they are aware of its difficulties. The want of a sufficient fund; the natural difficulty of the

Chinese language ; the little acquaintance with it Europeans possess ; and, from other obstacles not easily to be surmounted. The Committee, however, have determined to open a separate fund for this purpose ; and should that fund be adequate to the necessary expence, and should they also obtain sufficient evidence of the fidelity and elegance of the manuscript Chinese version of part of the New Testament, now in the British Museum, or should the Committee find the means of obtaining a faithful and elegant translation, they will direct their attention to this important subject. At the same time, they earnestly beg it to be understood, that a work of this magnitude and importance cannot hastily be executed ; and they deprecate the idea of holding out sanguine or arrogant expectations of speedy success in it.”—Page 84 to 86.

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*To the Second Appendix of this Report the following Introduction is attached.*

“To illustrate what has been stated in the Report (page 85), concerning the plan in contemplation for printing the Scriptures or part of them in the language of China, and circulating them in that vast empire, the following extracts have been made from a Memoir, by the Rev. William Moseley, on that interesting subject.”\*

Soon after the appearance of the Report of this Society for Missions to Africa and the East, Mr. Moseley received letters from some of the Bishops and from the Archbishop of Canterbury.

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*The Bishop of Sarum to the Rev. W. Moseley.*

Windsor Castle, January 7, 1801.

SIR,

I trouble you with my thanks for favoring me with a copy of your Memoir, which I have

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\* These extracts will be found in the Report as above, and in note *b* at the end of this work.



perused with care, and most heartily wish, that so benevolent a design may be carried into execution.

You are not aware that letters weighing above one ounce are charged with postage :— mine cost me seven shillings and eleven pence.

I am, Sir,

Your faithful humble servant,

T. SARUM.

P.S.—If I have not addressed my letter to you properly, you must excuse my ignorance.

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*Letter from Rev. John Brown, (son of the Rev. John Brown, author of the Self-interpreting Bible.)*

Whitburn, N.B., July 24, 1801.

REV. AND DEAR BROTHER,

My brother Ebenezer received your kind letter, and would have answered it immediately, but, was just setting out on a mission to the

North, to preach in some dark parts of that corner of our island, and desired me to send you a few lines. Were he at home, he, and Thomas, and I would write fully.

We rejoice much at the success of your well-written and elegant Memoir on the Mission to China. Grace has begun it, and I hope will maintain and finish it. Oh! how pleasant, if the many millions of the polite Chinese, heard the fame, and saw the glory of our dear Lord Jesus, by means of His Word! As to our late dear father's catechism, it gives us much pleasure, that you have made it known in England, and that you have sent it to the literary Journals of our friends there. We feel ourselves much obliged to you for this "labour of love," and wish to give you all encouragement in it.

When we meet, September 11th, the first opportunity we have of seeing one another, we will send you a mutual letter, and the form of recommendation of the catechism, as improved by you. I have long thought it a desideratum

in the religious world, to have a collection of the lives (so far as can be known) and of the most eminent works of the writers of England of the eighteenth century. Mr. Palmer has, with pains and care, given us the lives of a set of eminent divines of the sixteenth century. Might not you, or some of your friends, give us an account of these of the last century. Biography is pleasant and very useful. And, while we get lives of painters, musicians, &c., in abundance, what a pity it is that the dear and useful servants of Christ should be neglected.

Wishing you all success and comfort in the work of our Lord Jesus,

I am most affectionately and sincerely yours,

JOHN BROWN.

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*Letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury to the  
Rev. W. Moseley.*

Lambeth Palace, June 29th, 1801.

REVEREND SIR,

Having been very unwell for some time in the country, is the reason why I have not before acknowledged the receipt of your Memoir and note.

I have read the Memoir with much pleasure and deep interest, and am happy to find, that there is a prospect of any christian service being rendered to the populous nation of China. Till I read your Memoir, it did not appear to me practicable, to do any thing for China.

I will take the first convenient opportunity to ascertain, how far it may be in my way and power, to advance this work, by bringing it before the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, &c., and if there is any work of

christian charity, in which I can be of service to you, it will afford me pleasure.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient and humble servant,

CANTAB.

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*The Bishop of Worcester's Note to the Rev. W.  
Moseley.*

Hartlebury, July 6th, 1801.

The Bishop of Worcester has received the printed Memoir which Mr. W. Moseley did him the favor to send him. It is on a subject very interesting: and, if upon due examination, the scheme be found practicable, and the version of the New Testament, faithful to the sacred text, it may be presumed, that encouragement will not be wanting to so good and pious a design.

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*Letter from Earl Spencer to Rev. W. Moseley.*

SIR,

I am much obliged to you, for the letter you sent me ; and am glad to find that there is any prospect of advancing the work which you have suggested, and which you have now put into the most proper train, which the nature of the case would, I think, permit.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

SPENCER.

Althorp, August 9, 1801.

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*Letter from the Bishop of London to Rev. W. Moseley.*

Tunbridge, near Seven Oaks.

Oct. 6th, 1801.

REVEREND SIR,

Your letter of the first of this month was forwarded to me here, where I usually spend a month or two, at this season of the year.

With respect to your Memoir, I retain the same favourable sentiments of it, that I have already expressed to you : and, as you are still desirous that it should be proposed to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, I will take as early an opportunity, as I can, of obtaining some knowledge of the reception which such a proposal will be likely to meet with from that body. At present, I am resident at this retired place ; but, on the 29th, I propose being in town, at the meeting of Parliament, when I shall probably meet with some of the leading and most active members of the society, and will endeavour to find out how they stand affected towards your plan. From thence I shall be able to form some conjecture, concerning the success of such an application to the society at large, after which, you shall hear again from me.

Your faithful and obedient servant,

B. LONDON.

*Letter from the Rev. W. Moseley to the Archbishop  
of Canterbury.*

Near Daventry, Oct 23rd, 1801.

MY LORD ARCHBISHOP,

The pleasure of reading your Grace's letter, of the 29th of June, was fully equal to the satisfaction your Grace felt in reading my Memoir on sending the Gospel to China; and, I beg to apologize to your Grace for the long delay of my reply to your Grace's most christian and very kind communication.

During the interval of laying my Memoir before your Grace and receiving your Grace's letter in June, the Society for Missions to Africa and the East, applied to me on the subject of executing my design,—that is, of printing a part or the whole of the Sacred Scriptures in the Chinese Language; and, of dispersing them in that kingdom. I therefore went to town as soon as convenient, to meet the Committee on the



subject; and, from the circumstances of this interview, I was induced to leave the important undertaking with them to execute, as there appeared at that time no other means of carrying my purpose into effect.

Soon after I received your Grace's letter, and also letters from several of the Bishops, each of which, as well as your Grace's, either directly or indirectly, encouraged me to hope that the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, would probably take the subject into consideration, I wrote to the Committee of the Society for Missions to Africa and the East, which had taken the work in hand, to know their views. In reply, they expressed their readiness to give up the printing of the manuscript translation of the Scriptures in the Chinese Language in the British Museum, and their subsequent dispersion in that country, to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge; but with the full

understanding that, if this society does not resolve to do so, they will resume their engagement in the work.

The business being brought to this issue, may I solicit your Grace's interest in bringing it before the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, at your Grace's earliest convenience. Your Grace's letter too well convinces me of the interest your Grace feels in the accomplishment of this design, to suppose your Grace will allow any favourable opportunity to advance the subject, to pass unimproved.

I was sorry to hear of your Grace's illness, and am thankful to the Father of Mercies for your Grace's recovery.

May your Grace's useful life be long spared.

I am,

My Lord Archbishop,

Your Grace's most obedient humble servant,

W. MOSELEY.

*Letter from the Bishop of Durham to the Rev.  
W. Moseley.*

Cavendish Square, November 3rd, 1801.

REVEREND SIR,

I have barely a vacant moment to acquaint you, that I attended a meeting of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, held this morning, for the purpose of taking your Memoir into consideration. The general idea was much approved, and it was agreed to refer the whole business to the East India Mission Committee, of which I have the honour to be Chairman.

It occurred to me as a matter of becoming caution, and so it appeared to the Bishop of London, who was present, and the other members, that the Chinese manuscript in the British Museum should be examined by a competent judge of that language, how far it is conformable to the original. It is not improbable, that the translation was made by a Catholic Mis-

sionary in China, and therefore may have a popish turn given to it in certain parts. The East India Company may perhaps furnish a Supercargo from Canton, equal to this task; but if it does not, the son of the late Sir George Staunton is expected home in the spring, and on him we may depend.

I congratulate you and myself, and every well-wisher to Christianity, on the probable good which is likely to result from the idea which you have suggested.

I am, reverend Sir, with much regard,

Your humble servant,

S. DUNCLEM.

The Rev. W. Moseley.

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*Letter from Bishop of Durham to the Rev. W.  
Moseley.*

Mongwell, December 15, 1802.

REVEREND SIR,

My absence from London, and my conti-

nuance in the country, till near the meeting of Parliament, after the recess, precludes me from all intercourse with Sir George Staunton.

Till he has formed his opinion of the Chinese manuscript in the British Museum, no measures, I apprehend, can be taken respecting it.

I am, with much regard,

Your humble servant,

S. DUNCLEM.

Rev. W. Moseley.

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*Letter from the Rev. Dr. Gaskin to the Rev. W.  
Moseley.*

SIR,

I am directed by the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury to inform you, that his Grace received your letter of the 17th inst., but that under a great pressure of very important business, he cannot at present write to you himself on the subject of it.

Your Memoir respecting the Chinese manu-

script was duly brought under the consideration of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, and the matter underwent deliberate discussion and inquiry; but the society have not yet come to a determination of adopting the measure, but have referred it to the East India Mission Committee.

I am Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

GEO. GASKIN,

Secretary to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.

Bartlett's Buildings.

London, May 24, 1803.

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*Letter from the Bishop of Durham to the Rev. W.  
Moseley.*

Cavendish Square, February 6th, 1804.

REVEREND SIR,

I wish I could give you more flattering hopes that the Chinese manuscript in the British Museum, was likely to see the light. But the

report made by Sir George Staunton, one of the very few Europeans and Protestants, who understand the original, is by no means favourable to the publication.

I am, with much regard,

Your humble servant,

S. DUNCLEM.

Rev. W. Moseley.

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As Sir George Staunton's report of the manuscript, in the British Museum, had not been received by Mr. Moseley, he wrote to Sir George for the particulars; and in reply, received the following letter, and a copy of the report of the manuscript sent to the Bishop of Durham.

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*Letter from Sir George Staunton, Bart., to the  
Rev. W. Moseley.*

Devonshire Street, March 13th, 1804.

SIR,

I had the honour to receive your letter yes-

terday, and should feel extremely glad to have it in my power to communicate any information that might promote the very desirable end you have in view ; but I am not aware that I can, at present, say any thing in addition to what I wrote last year in a note on the subject, I wrote to the Bishop of Durham ; and of which, therefore, I now enclose a copy.

If you will, however, favour me with one or two marked passages in any of the Gospels, in which the variation in the reading is most considerable, I shall readily pay another visit to the British Museum, in order to endeavour to ascertain with which of them they appear to correspond.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

GEORGE THOS. STAUNTON.

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*Copy of Sir George Staunton's Note to the  
Bishop of Durham.*

Sir George Staunton presents his complements to the Bishop of Durham, and according to his Lordship's request, has taken the first opportunity of looking over the Chinese manuscript, in the British Museum, by comparing several passages in the Chinese translation of the Gospel according to St. Luke and St. Matthew, with the Vulgate and the English translation of the Scriptures: *it appeared to him to agree very correctly*, or, at least not to deviate more than the extreme peculiarity of the Chinese idiom rendered unavoidable. He was not however so successful as to meet a passage in which a marked difference between the Protestant and Catholic reading, might enable him to infer from which of them the Chinese version had been taken, though other circumstances can scarcely leave a doubt to which it ought to be attributed. Sir G. S. particularly sought

for the Lord's Prayer, as it is contained in two of the Gospels, as he happened himself to have a translation of it in a Chinese printed missal, but was somewhat surprised to find, that it did not appear to have a place in the manuscript at the Museum.

Sir G. S. will be very happy to make any further enquiries that the Bishop of Durham may desire, and his own limited knowledge of the Chinese Language enable him.

Devonshire Street, February 12th, 1803.

N. B. Since writing the above to the Bishop of Durham, I am informed that one of the passages containing the Lord's Prayer is to be found in the Chinese manuscript, although it had escaped my search.

*Letter from the Rev. W. Moseley to Sir George  
Staunton, Bart.*

Hanley. March 16, 1804.

SIR GEORGE,

I feel much obliged by your handsome reply to my troublesome letter, and should be extremely unwilling to intrude again upon your time and attention, if the nature and importance of the subject did not form a humble apology.

The Vulgate translation is the authorized version of the Church of Rome. The difference between the Vulgate and English translation is not considerable, though very distinguishable from each other in some particulars: as in the four passages below, by examining which you will be able to determine, whether it was made from the authorized English or the Vulgate translation. The passages below, on the *left hand*, are as they stand in the *Vulgate*. And, it is worthy of remark, that whatever difference exists in either of the passages, Beza, himself,

translated two of them, as in the Vulgate version. Those on the right hand, are from the authorized English version.

Excuse the trouble I give you.

I am, Sir George,

Your most humble obedient servant,

W. MOSELEY.

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*Vulgate Translation.*

1. To lead about a *woman* a sister.—1 Cor. ix. 5.

2. *Ye search* the Scriptures.—John v. 39.

3. Eat of this bread, *or* drink, &c.—1 Cor. xi. 27.

4. *Do penance* for the Kingdom, &c.

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*English Translation.*

1. To lead about a *wife*, a sister.

2. *Search* the Scriptures.

3. Eat of this bread, *and* drink, &c.

4. *Repent*, for the Kingdom, &c.

*Letter from the Rev. John Owen to the Rev.  
W. Moseley.*

Fulham, Middlesex, April 17th, 1804.

SIR,

I am desired by the Committee of a Society, now forming, for the purpose of circulating the Scriptures, to trouble you with a line on the subject of the Chinese manuscript of the New Testament in the British Museum, to which you refer in your Memoir.

The object of my application to you, will be obtained by your reply to the following questions :—

1st. Have you reason to believe that the manuscript is sufficiently faithful to deserve publication ?

2nd. Is there any design on the part of any society or individual, within your knowledge, of printing this manuscript ?

3rd. What is the opinion entertained by the best judges, of Dr. Antonio Montucci's qualifi-

cations as editor, if this manuscript should be printed ?

Should any thing further occur to you, in connexion with this object, I shall be obliged to you to communicate it.

And have the honour to be with great respect,

Sir,

Your faithful servant,

JOHN OWEN, Sec.

To Rev. W. Moseley.

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*Sir George Staunton's reply to the Rev. W.  
Moseley.*

Devonshire Street, April 25th, 1804.

SIR,

I have many apologies to make for the very long time which your last letter has remained unanswered ; but the preparations for my approaching departure for China, have so totally engrossed my time, that I really had not a lei-

sure opportunity of visiting the British Museum until last Saturday.

I easily met with three of the passages out of the four, to which you directed my attention in the Chinese manuscript, and it appears to me, that in the second instance (John v. 39) the word "*ye*," is expressed in the translation. In the third instance, (1 Cor. xi. 27) neither "*or*" nor "*and*," is inserted by the Chinese translator. The passage therefore reads, "*Eat this bread, drink this cup*," &c.

Although the translation of the above passages may leave the question undecided, I must confess, that a general survey of the manuscript strongly inclines me to regard it, as a translation from the Vulgate, probably under the direction of the Jesuits:—for the Deity of the Divine Attributes are denoted by Chinese expressions, which are universally rejected by the present missionaries of the Church of Rome in China.

The manuscript appears to me to be free from

extraneous matter, and to comprehend the greater part of the New Testament, rendered into the Chinese tongue, with great apparent neatness and accuracy. And, being probably unique in this country, is on that as well as on other accounts extremely valuable.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

GEORGE THOMAS STAUNTON.

Rev. W. Moseley.

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*The Rev. W. Moseley's letter to the Bishop of  
Durham.*

Hanley, April 29th, 1804.

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's last discouraged my hopes: it informed me that Sir George Staunton's report of the Chinese manuscript was by no means favourable. This induced me to reconsider his communication to me, and to make further enquiry.



I am happy to inform your Lordship, that since Sir George wrote to your Lordship, the Lord's Prayer, which he then had not been able to find in the MS., has been discovered in its proper connexion.

Admitting that the translation was made from the *Vulgate*, as Sir George Staunton supposes it to have been, the points of difference between the Chinese manuscript in question, and the English authorized version, must necessarily be small and few; and may be corrected before the manuscript is printed.

The difficulties in the way of accomplishing this may be surmounted: and certainly they ought to be, for the important purpose of sending the Scriptures to three hundred millions of our fellow-immortals. Your Lordship will excuse my writing so freely upon a subject that involves the happiness of so many human beings. I do not, my Lord, press the execution of the design of my Memoir on your Lordship's attention, as the Chairman of the Com-

mittee. to which the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge has referred the subject, from an idea that it will be neglected by all other societies, if abandoned by the Society to which your Lordship has the honour to belong; but from a desire that as it has been under the consideration of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge nearly four years, it should not now be said, “The idea of sending the Scriptures to China has, after four years consideration of Mr. Moseley’s Memoir, been abandoned by the Clergy of the Church of England, belonging to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.” As I hope this is not the case, may I beg the favour of an early reply.

I am, my Lord,  
Your Lordships most obedient  
and humble servant,

W. MOSELEY.

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*Letter from the Bishop of Durham to the Rev. W.  
Moseley.*

Cavendish Square, April 30th, 1804.

REVEREND SIR,

Sir George Staunton informs me that he intends stating to you his opinion respecting the language of the Chinese manuscript in the British Museum. As a friend to the plan proposed by you, I feel a reluctance at being compelled to abandon it, on the ground of the two following insurmountable difficulties.

1st. The expence which exceeds all means of supplying.

2nd. The utter impossibility of introducing and dispersing the books in China, but through the popish Bishops, who will never countenance a religious work that comes from a Protestant recommendation.

I am, reverend Sir, with much regard,

Your humble servant,

S. DUNCLEM.

Rev. W. Moseley.

*Letter from Rev. W. Moseley to Sir George  
Staunton, Bart.*

Hanley. May 3rd, 1804.

SIR GEORGE,

I beg to acknowledge the favour of your last, and am extremely unwilling again to trouble you, amidst your various engagements in preparing for your departure from Europe.

As it is not certain but the Chinese manuscript in the British Museum will be printed, if a few verbal alterations can be made, I am anxious before you leave England, to know your opinion of the capabilities of Dr. Antonio Montucci, to superintend the cutting of Chinese types, or engraving the necessary plates for printing the manuscript in the British Museum.

I am, Sir George, with much respect,

Your most obedient humble servant,

W. MOSELEY,

Sir George Staunton, Bart.

*Letter from Sir George Staunton, Bart., in reply to the Rev. W. Moseley's inquiries, on the subject of Dr. Montucci's Chinese attainments.*

Devonshire Street, May 5th, 1804.

SIR,

Although I should in most cases feel diffident in offering an opinion on the abilities of another person, I shall, I trust, be able to do so in the present instance, without impropriety, in reply to the favour of your communication.

Dr. Montucci was introduced to me by my friend Mr. Raper, and had previously sent me various specimens of his ability, in executing and superintending the engraving of Chinese characters, all of which appeared to be neat and accurate, and indeed to excel, any other attempts of the kind, which I had seen in Europe. When I consider, at the same time, the knowledge Dr. Montucci possesses of the theory and principles of the Chinese Language, I have

no doubt of his being fully equal to the task of publishing the manuscript in its present form.

It is difficult for me to say, how far he might be able to make the alterations that might be required. But, diligence and attention, I imagine, would not be wanting on his part; and, under any difficulties, he might consult Mr. Chaumont, a worthy ecclesiastic, now resident, No. 40, Albemarle-street, London, who formerly belonged to the Catholic Mission in China, and still retains a considerable recollection of the language of that country.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

GEORGE THOMAS STAUNTON.

To Rev. W. Moseley.

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*Rev. Josiah Pratt's letter in reply to the Rev. W. Moseley when the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge abandoned his plan for want of Funds, and the British and Foreign Bible Society's desire to take it up.*

London, Doughty Street, 23rd May, 1804.

DEAR SIR,

Your favour of the 7th instant, addressed to the Committee of the Society for Missions to Africa and the East, would have received a more early answer, had any committee meeting occurred sooner. I laid it before the Committee yesterday morning, who in consequence adopted the following resolution, which I am instructed to transmit to you.

“ This Committee having learnt by a letter from the Rev. W. W. Moseley, that the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge had given up the object of a Chinese translation of the Scriptures, and it being considered by this

Committee, as more within the province of the British and Foreign Bible Society, who are understood to be willing to consider upon the practicability of effecting it : ”

“ RESOLVED :—That this Committee is disposed to devolve the business wholly upon the said Society, if it should be advised to adopt it.”

I am afraid, my dear Sir, we cannot rely much upon Dr. Montucci. I have been present at all the committee meetings of the Bible Society, and have heard several letters from him, which were addressed to one of the secretaries, in which he appeared to wish to drive a bargain for himself, and displayed not a little of a rhodomontade spirit. I confess, however, that I was agreeably surprised to hear at one of our last meetings, Sir George Staunton’s testimony to his ability.

Whatever be the issue of the present matter under deliberation, I trust the Bible Society will never lose sight of the great object of a



complete translation into the Chinese Language  
of the Word of God.

Wishing you every blessing and success,

I remain, reverend and dear Sir,

Yours very faithfully,

JOSIAH PRATT.

To Rev. W. Moseley, Staffordshire.

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The Rev. W. Moseley wrote to the British and Foreign Bible Society in reply to the letter of the Rev. John Owen, April 17th, stating the painful result of the four years' consideration of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge; and, also that the Society for Missions to Africa and the East, had in Committee, resolved to devolve the execution of the object of the Memoir, wholly upon the British and Foreign Bible Society, if it should be advised to adopt it; soon after which the writer received the following communication.

*Letter from the Rev. John Owen to the Rev. W. W. Moseley, on a special meeting of a Subcommittee of the British and Foreign Bible Society being called to consider the subject of the Rev. W. W. Moseley's last letter.*

Fulham, June 25th, 1804.

DEAR SIR,

I have procured a meeting of a Subcommittee of the British and Foreign Bible Society to be called for to-morrow, Tuesday, at eleven o'clock. The place of meeting is to be at Mr. Reyners's house. I should be very happy to have the pleasure of seeing you there, as an opportunity might then be offered of forming a more correct judgment of the practicability of that undertaking, in which you wish to interest the Society.

I am, dear Sir,

Your faithful servant,

JOHN OWEN.

Rev. W. Moseley.

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*Letter from Joseph Reyner, Esq. to the Rev. W.  
W. Moseley.*

Old Swan Stairs, June 25th, 1804.

DEAR SIR,

I have been informed this morning of your being in town and with our friend Newman.

To-morrow, at eleven o'clock, there will be a meeting of a Committee, of the British and Foreign Bible Society, at Old Swan Stairs, to consider what further information can be obtained respecting the Chinese manuscript, when it would be desirable that you should be present, as I am sure it would be gratifying to you to know that this subject has the attention of the Society.

I am, dear Sir, with much regard,

Yours, &c.

JOSEPH REYNER.

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At a subsequent Committee meeting, held at the City of London Tavern, it was agreed that a Sub-committee, then named, should meet the Rev. W. W. Moseley, (who attended and was chosen a member of this Committee) at the British Museum to inspect the manuscript in question.

The Sub-committee accordingly met at the time and place named ; when the writer introduced the Rev. Mr. Chaumont to the Sub-committee, a gentleman before named by Sir George Staunton as a competent judge, and the manuscript was carefully inspected, different parts were read, and numerous questions proposed by the members of the Committee, which were answered by Mr. Chaumont, and the writer. The result, however, was not satisfactory to the writer, as will appear by the following letter from the Rev. Joseph Hughes, one of the secretaries of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

*To the Rev. W. W. Moseley.*

Battersea, July 23rd, 1804.

DEAR SIR,

The Sub-committee appointed to inspect the Chinese manuscript of the New Testament in the British Museum, and to report their discussions relative to it, presented the result this day to the general Committee: and, I am directed, in consequence to inform you, that the idea of editing this manuscript is for the present given up; it being judged that however respectable the evidence of its authenticity, already before this Committee, may be, further evidence may, and ought to be obtained. That the expence also, though unknown, must inevitably be great; and that it appears eligible to have in readiness persons of character acquainted with the Chinese Language, and resident in the country, who will be zealous in the disseminating of the Scriptures, and punctual in the communicating proper intelligence. This communication was unanimous.

If a missionary society should fix missionaries in China, a rational method would suggest itself of conducting the business of the manuscript. This suggestion will, I think, meet with your approbation.

May the Divine Blessing accompany this and every other good object.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours respectfully,

J. HUGHES, Sec.

To Rev. W. W. Moseley, Staffordshire.

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*Letter from Joseph Reyner, Esq. in reply to a letter written by the Rev. W. Moseley to him on the reports of the London Missionary Society taking the subject of a mission to China under their consideration.*

London, September 13th, 1804.

DEAR SIR,

You are right:—The points the Missionary Society are looking to, for placing two or three

missionaries to learn the Chinese Language are Canton and Macao, probably the latter. They have also in view the Prince of Wales' Island. And, probably this may be a separate station for a missionary or two;—but it is not ascertained whether the knowledge of the language, and the means of printing it, can be as completely obtained there. I see considerable difficulties in the way of the accomplishment of a plan,—so grand, so extensive,—to supply one third of the human race, all of whom speak the same language, with the Holy Scriptures, in their native tongue. But should they only prepare materials for this spiritual building, I have no doubt they will have the approval David had, “It is well it was in thine heart.”

With much regard, I am, dear Sir,

Yours truly,

JOSEPH REYNER.

Rev. W. Moseley, Staffordshire.

The first great object the writer had long kept in view was, to print in Chinese such parts of the New Testament, as existing circumstances would allow, and to disseminate the work in China; by the different means he had pointed out in his Memoir. \* This design, though highly approved by all, failed of its accomplishment by each of the three chief Societies in London, which had eagerly taken it up. The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, of which the King is Patron, the two Archbishops Presidents, the Bishops Vice Presidents, and the Nobility and Clergy, generally, Subscribers, gave it up after a tardy discussion of near four years, for the following reasons (as by the Bishop of Durham's letter), page 66.

1st. Because of the expence of executing the plan.

2nd. Because the Bishops of the Romish

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\* See the Memoir.



Church would oppose the dispersion of the New Testament in China.

The Society for Missions to Africa and the East, originated among the clergy and men of wealth of Evangelical principles, though anxious to carry the object of the Memoir into effect, gave it up at the writer's request, because the Archbishop of Canterbury, Bishop of London, Bishop of Durham, &c., encouraged him to expect, that the immense resources of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge would be brought into action for its execution. From the British and Foreign Bible Society much was expected. This Society voluntarily selected this, as its first undertaking, but how was the writer disappointed, when it was discarded by this institution, on the grounds before named in Mr. Hughes' letter, or rather because the manuscript did not contain the whole of the New Testament.

There now remained but one society in this country likely to carry the plan into effect, that

is, of translating and dispersing the Holy Scriptures among the long neglected inhabitants of China. This was the London Missionary Society. And, without any application on the writer's part, this Society resolved to do so, and has fully realized his most anxious wishes. This Society took a very enlightened and enlarged view of the subject. The Committee determined immediately to look for suitable persons to go out to China, to study the language in that country, with a view to a complete translation of the Old and New Testaments, and religious tracts, and to print them and disperse them as widely as possible. Not insensible to the vast expence these objects would impose on their funds, they trusted in God to provide, and unhesitatingly went forward.

Having been informed of this auspicious commencement of the London Missionary Society, the writer anxiously watched its progress: and very soon was induced to go to London to advance the undertaking, and by some very un-

expected, but as it will appear in the sequel, providential occurrences, he was enabled to do so in a very effective way, as will appear by the following.

In looking over a recent number of the Monthly Magazine, the writer read the following communication.

“ We shall be obliged if any of your readers will inform us, by what means a native of China, a young man, can be instructed in the language and sciences of England.”

Convinced by this enquiry, that a Chinese man was in London, for whose improvement the public solicitude was expressed, and hoping that if he could be found, he might probably render some service to the great work just begun, I made preparations immediately to go London, with a view to find him, if by any means, this could be accomplished :—My hopes were faint, for I was without a clue.—But the reader may judge of the writer’s astonishment,

when he tells him, that on the second day\* of his arrival, he became acquainted with the name, circumstances, and residence of this young Chinese ; and on the fourth day made him a visit. The reader is probably solicitous to hear the incidents.

In my way to dine with a small party in the Minories, as I walked down Leadenhall-street, I met an elderly native of China of great apparent respectability. I could not let him pass. My heart was full of China. Having introduced myself to him, I told him in a few words what had hurried me to London ; and, in reply, he immediately said “ Yes, there is a young man here from Canton, his name is Saam Tack, I got a free passage for him, I have known him a good while. He asked me, when at Canton, to take him myself, for he wished, he said, to go to London, to learn the language. But I

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\* He is not positive on this point. It might be the third, but the impression on his mind is that it was on the second day.

was then uncertain, whether I should go to England, and asked my friend Captain Wilson, then at Canton, to give him a passage. He did so, but when the captain had brought Saam Tack here, as he had not the means of supporting himself, the captain knew not what to do with him. The situation of Saam Tack was then made known to Mr. Thornton, Mr. Wilberforce, and their friends, who instantly relieved Captain Wilson from all further expence of supporting him, and placed him in a boarding school at Clapham, Surry, kept by Mr. Grieves. There he is now, you may see him whenever you please." Delighted with this information, and pleased with the openness and manner of my new Chinese acquaintance, I pressed him to accompany me to dinner. He did so :—and never was a party more delighted with the polished, the elegant manners of a casual visitor, than they were with my Chinese associate.

The next morning these particulars were detailed to the treasurer of the London Missionary

Society, Joseph Hardcastle, Esq. and Joseph Reyner, Esq., his partner, who advised, that I should visit Saam Tack as soon as possible, and report the result: and, at the same time, mentioned a young man in Hoxton College of the name of Morrison, who had devoted himself to the Chinese Mission, and was preparing to go for the accomplishment of the object of my Memoir. This was the first time I had heard of Mr. afterward Dr. Morrison. Mr. Hardcastle requested that Mr. Morrison might be allowed to accompany me to visit Saam Tack, and for this purpose joined me the next morning at the house of my relation, John Robins, Esq. On our arrival at Mr. Grieve's, at Clapham, we were shewn into Saam Tack's room, where we found him alone; unembarrassed, open, communicative, polite, and very elegant in his manners. A strong impression in his favour being produced, I instantly judged it to be highly probable, that he might ultimately render much service to the mission. Apparently anxious to please

his visitors, he opened his chest, and displayed his elegant national costume ; wrote or rather stampd a note of politeness, and presented it to the writer, after the manner, he said, of his country, &c.

The report of this interview with Saam Tack having been laid before the Committee of the London Missionary Society, it was resolved that enquiries should be made, whether the services of Saam Tack could be obtained ? the result of the proceedings of the Committee on this subject was,—that Saam Tack and Mr. Morrison were placed in private lodgings, in London, for the convenience of Mr. Morrison studying the Chinese Language with Saam Tack's assistance, and to acquire, by attending lectures, &c., a knowledge of those subjects, which it was thought necessary he should understand to qualify him to go out as missionary to China.

During the time of the residence of Saam Tack with Mr. Morrison, the manuscript in the British Museum of the New Testament was

transcribed by their united industry. This copy of the manuscript was taken out to Canton by Mr. Morrison, and proved to be of eminent service to him. Probably the whole, with the exception of a very few passages, was incorporated with the translations he made, which shortened his labour completing the original work. Saam Tack, as a matter of prudence, did not return to China accompanied by Mr. Morrison, but preceded him a short time.

Here Dr. W. Moseley's personal knowledge of this mission terminates. Mrs. Morrison has given the public an account of the future labours of her late husband; but, on the whole of the above she has, in her letters to Dr. Moseley, professed her entire ignorance, and at the same time her unwillingness to give this detail of the origin, a place in her work; saying:—

February 8th, 1837.

DEAR SIR,

It is not my object to enter into the history



of the origin of the Chinese Mission, but the immediate labours of the principal agent, who carried into effect the great objects contemplated in the origin of that measure. Nothing more would be desirable for my use, than any leading facts relative to Rev. Dr. Morrison's connexion with the mission, which, if you can furnish me with,

Will oblige, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

E. MORRISON.

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Deeply impressed with a sense of my own unworthiness and unfitness to be employed as an instrument for any great and good work by "The High and Mighty One, who inhabits Eternity ; I cannot close this History of the Origin of a Mission, which has put *three hundred millions* in possession of the Inspired Volume, without publicly making my acknowledgments to Almighty God, for raising the thought in my

mind, to project the translation, and for sparing my life, to see its grand completion.—Oh ! that the millions of China may “*read, mark, and inwardly digest*” the *Word of God*, and realize that great truth, that “it is able to build them up, and give them an Inheritance, among them who are sanctified.” May the Word of God, be in them as a “Well of Water, springing up into Everlasting Life.”

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## THE MOST PROBABLE ORIGIN OF THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

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THAT the Circular at the beginning of this work, was the only cause of inducing the founders of the British and Foreign Bible Society to originate that establishment is *not asserted*;—but it is highly probable that the first *idea* of the *peculiarly distinguishing principles* of this Society, originated in this Circular (page 9). And that the idea which this Circular first originated, was kept alive and nourished for six years by the persevering efforts of the writer, and the encouragement and success which, from year to year, he met with among persons of the highest rank in the Church and among the Nobility and men of wealth and piety in England and Scotland. The facts that have rendered it probable that this Circular gave the first idea of the importance, necessity, practicability, and principles of this Society are the following :

1st. This Circular was finished on, and bears the date of March 7th, 1798, exactly (to a day) six years before the British and Foreign Bible Society was founded :—an event that will for ever cause the 7th of March, 1804, to be remembered with pleasure and gratitude by the friends of the distribution of the Holy Scriptures among all nations without the imperfect appendages of man, in notes and comments.

The original manuscript copy of this circular is still in the possession of the writer ;—and the fact of its date can be verified, by reference to the copies that were circulated, some of which are no doubt still to be found among the papers of the gentlemen into whose hands they were put.

The objects of this Circular were, 1st, To convince the reader, that a society ought to be formed for the purpose of translating the Sacred Scriptures into the most generally spoken languages of the Eastern world.

2ndly. That it would be possible to form such a Society.

3rdly. That the Holy Scriptures should be disseminated without *note or comment*.

4thly. That a society formed on these principles could and would be supported by Christians of all sects and denominations. These are principles on which the British and Foreign Bible Society was based six years afterwards. It does not appear that a society on these principles, had ever been before advocated in any periodical or other work. Nor, does it appear that the originators of the Bible Society had formed the most distant idea of commencing such an undertaking, for at least four years after this Circular had excited some Christian sympathies in favour of a wider distribution of the Holy Scriptures.

5thly. This Circular was put into the hands of several, members of the Committee of the Religious Tract Society.

This Committee met from its commencement to breakfast at the counting-house of Messrs. Hardcastle and Reyner, and continued to do so for many years afterwards. This Committee from the first generally included Joseph Hardcastle, Esq., Z. Macauley, Esq., Joseph Reyner, Esq., George Cowie, Esq., Thomas Wilson, Esq., Rev. Geo. Burder, Rev. Dr. Bogue, Dr. Waugh, Rev. Rowland Hill, Rev. G. Townsend, Rev. Joseph Hughes, &c. Copies of the Circular in question, were put into the hands of each of the above laymen immediately after it was written; and, being myself a member of the Committee of the Tract Society, the Circular was very generally the subject of conversation, with both the lay and clerical members of the Committee when we met. But so little was such a society then thought of by them, that one of

the best educated and most enlightened clerical members of the Committee (Dr. Waugh), declared to the writer, "It could never be formed, for the nature of the Chinese language, especially would not admit of any translation to be made into it." For the honour of the Doctor it ought, however, not to be concealed, that the Bishop of Durham and Charles Grant, Esq. both entertained the same erroneous opinions, until convinced of their error, by the Memoir, which subsequent to this was published by the writer.

It, was, however, by this very Committee of the Religious Tract Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society was formed. I am happy in the selection of my evidence in proof of this. The Rev. George Burder's Memoirs, supply the satisfactory proof — "MEMORABLE DAY! *March 7th, 1804,*" — the British and Foreign Bible Society founded. I and others, belonging to the Tract Society, had long had it in view, and after much preparation, in which we did not publicly appear, a meeting was called, at the London Tavern, and that Society began with very few, which afterwards filled the earth with its fruits. Nations unborn will have cause to bless God for the meeting this day."—Page 234, Memoirs of Rev. George Burder, by Henry Foster Burder.

Lastly. It should not be forgotten, that the first translation of the Holy Scriptures, to which the British and Foreign Bible Society directed its attention, was a translation of the New Testament into the Chinese language. This Society was formed on the 7th of March, 1804; and on the 17th of the next month (April), the Secretary of the Society, the Rev. John Owen, wrote the following letter to the writer.

Fulham, Middlesex, April 17th, 1804.

SIR,

I am directed by the Committee of a Society forming, for the purpose of circulating the Scriptures, to trouble you with a

line on the subject of the Chinese manuscript of the New Testament in the British Museum, to which you refer in your Memoir. The object of my application to you will be obtained, by your reply to the following questions.

1st. Have you reason to believe that this manuscript is sufficiently faithful to deserve publication?

2nd. Is there any design on the part of any society or individual (within your knowledge) of printing this manuscript?

3rd. What is the opinion entertained by the best judges of Antonio Montucci's qualifications as editor, if this manuscript should be printed?

Should anything further occur to you in connexion with this object, I should be obliged to you to communicate it.

And, have the honour to be with great respect,

Sir,

Your faithful servant,

JOHN OWEN, Sec.

Rev. W. Moseley.

**A MEMOIR**  
**ON THE**  
**IMPORTANCE AND PRACTICABILITY**  
**OF TRANSLATING AND PRINTING THE**  
**HOLY SCRIPTURES**  
**IN THE CHINESE LANGUAGE ;**  
**AND OF**  
**CIRCULATING THEM IN THAT VAST EMPIRE :**

**Including an Account of the Introduction, Progress, and present State of Catholic Missions in that Country.**

**By WILLIAM MOSELEY, A.M., L.L.D., &c.**

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**PREFACE.**

THE former Edition of this Memoir, has raised in the minds of some noble and several wealthy individuals, a strong desire to see the great object of it accomplished. Generous contributions have been promised. But it is deemed advisable, not to enter upon the work till the object itself is better known, and has excited more general interest.

Whenever the plan is taken up, the author devoutly wishes that it may be under the management of gentlemen equally respected by the friends of religion in the establishment and out of it ; and that as a translation of the Scriptures, without exposition, is the object proposed, he flatters himself, that every sect among us will contribute their aid.



## A MEMOIR, &amp;c.

THE Gospel is Jehovah's best gift to man. Without it the endowments of the mind, the enjoyments of Providence, indeed existence itself would have been a curse. Being favored, however, with the unspeakable blessing of a Divine Revelation, benevolence prompts us to communicate it to others. "Send forth thy light, and thy truth," is the fervent prayer of every believing heart.

Well-meant endeavours are not always well-directed. The noblest efforts have failed when they have not been made at a proper point. While, therefore, the Christian sighs for the conversion of the heathen, it is of the first importance that he should examine with care, what spot is most likely to yield the earliest and finest harvest. This, perhaps, may be best determined by a comparative view of the improvement and population of the heathen world. The more refined any heathen nation is, the greater is the probability of its conversion; and the more extensive its population, the brighter the prospect of an abundant harvest.<sup>1</sup> Nations that are most civilized, and contain the

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<sup>1</sup> From persons into whose hands copies of the former edition have fallen, (Dr. Erskine, &c.) letters have been received, calling in question the truth of this remark. The sentiment was maturely studied before it was advanced; it has been reconsidered since, and additional evidence has deepened the conviction of its truth. Common sense contributes some aid to its support. Every man will admit that an heathen, whose untutored mind is incapable of admitting the self-evident principle,—that a state of civilization is preferable to barbarity; is far less likely to understand the sublime truths of revelation than the heathen, who is equally refined with the natives of Europe.

An appeal in support of this sentiment, may be made to the nature of things. Are the ignorant, indocile, cruel, sons of Africa and America, and the South Seas, equally prepared to listen to the melodious sounds.

greatest number of inhabitants, are, therefore, the most eligible fields for a Christian mission.

On taking a survey of the heathen world, we see the nations in different stages of cultivation. Some are in a state of actual degradation; others just emerging from barbarity; a few have attained to high civil improvements. Of these China is the principal. No nation in the heathen world has risen so high in the civil and polite arts.

Its territory is greater than Rome could boast in the zenith of her power.<sup>2</sup> In population it far exceeds all Eu-

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of salvation, with the refined and temperate inhabitants of Siam, Ava, Corea, and China? We might as well aver, that an infant is equally qualified with an adult to discharge the duties of active life: or that an idiot is as able to solve a problem in Euclid, as a mathematician.

In support of the same point an appeal is made to facts. The ill success that has attended missions to the uncivilized heathen, compared with the prosperity of Moravian, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, and Catholic missions among the enlightened heathen, will demonstrate to an unprejudiced mind, if facts can demonstrate the truth of any proposition, that this sentiment is corroborated by experience.

And lastly, an appeal is made to Divine precedents. Revelation is a system of truths suited to a civil, and not to a barbarous state of society. Jehovah has never established his cause in any country, where civilization had not previously prepared the way. The Apostles did not visit the wilds of Africa or the uncultivated nations of other parts, but invariably fixed upon spots, which civilization had prepared for their labours.

So far from considering the barbarous heathen in a state to listen to the sounds of mercy. The Apostle Paul and his apostolic coadjutors embraced the first opportunity of leaving such districts, and directed their course to the most civilized within their reach. Their judgment in the choice of a proper field for missionary exertions, was certainly equal to ours; nor can we conceive their compassion for the souls of men less than that which we feel. John the Baptist went before to prepare the way for our Lord, and civilization must go before to prepare the way for the Gospel.

<sup>2</sup> England itself was in the course of Providence civilized by the Roman armies. Rome at her height occupied 1,610,000 square miles: China occupies now no less than 1,749,000.

rope; and its government and police, yield to none in the world.<sup>3</sup>

The conversion of this Empire to Christianity, is in a religious and civil view, of the first importance. In a religious view as the conversion of its inhabitants, is the only possible means of their salvation: in a civil view, as it is the only method of effectually securing the advantages of a free trade. The earliest rays of the sun enrich the fertile lands of the East. For centuries they have poured their choicest treasures upon Europe. China jealous, however, of the whole earth, has refused to allow us the privilege freely granted by other nations. No country is capable of affording us larger or more valuable cargoes; or of sooner enriching our merchants, and filling our treasury. But local prejudices deny us the favours; and the evil is never likely to be removed, till a change takes place in their religious sentiments.

Religious principles, immediately or remotely influence every nation in the whole of their political movements. Only in the same proportion, therefore, as this change takes place, will the evil die away, and Britain share the advantages of an unshackled commerce.<sup>4</sup>

The scene that China now exhibits is too painful to behold. Exclusive of the crimes common to other polished nations, the whole empire of China is devoted to an "Unknown God,"—to

<sup>3</sup> "Un peuple que nous n'osons nommer qu'avec respect, dont on ne cite les loix qu'avec éloge, et les mœurs qu'avec admiration, mérite plus qu'aucun autre l'attention d'observateur et l'examen des philosophes"—Voyage aux Indes orientales et à la Chine, par M. Sonnerat Tom 2, p. 1, 2.

<sup>4</sup> The many fruitless embassies from Holland, France, Russia and England, demonstrate the inutility of flattery, presents, and intreaty. These have for centuries past been tried in vain. And their laws and customs are such, that unless Christianity illuminate their minds, they may be tried for as many centuries more, with no better effect.

idolatry, and to murder (infanticide). The court, &c. worship Jehovah, under the name of *Tien* or *Chang-Ti*. Crowds of the populace sacrifice to their idol *Foe*; and the poor add to their idolatry, the bloody crime of exposing their infants. Harmless babes! my heart bleeds over your starved, tormented, devoured, sensitive little bodies! Thousands are annually destroyed! Yes, the country is deluged with their blood.<sup>5</sup> At such a sight, what heart is not grieved? Who can refrain a tear? or, refuse to raise his voice to heaven in fervent prayer, and say, "Give the heathen to thy Son for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession."

There are two ways by which the Gospel may be carried to the heathen. The one by sending missionaries: the other by circulating the Scriptures. The former of these methods has been tried in China for many years, but hitherto the attempt has been almost in vain. To review the introduction of Christianity into this vast empire, and its progress to the present period, are necessary to our design; but the actual time of this introduction is involved in much obscurity. An opinion, though noticed only by a few writers, has obtained, that the Gospel was introduced into China at a very early period of the Christian era. St. Thomas, whose labours were confined to the East, visited, it is supposed, this populous country. That the Indians, in his time, carried on a great trade with China is certain; and, "It is very probable that this apostle, to whom the care of the new world was committed, did not neglect the best part of it." This conjecture, which carries its own evidence, receives additional confirmation "from the Chinese history, and a passage in an ancient breviary of the church of Malabar." The former says, when speaking of the events of the empire, about the time of St. Thomas, "That a man came into China and preached heavenly doctrine. He

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<sup>5</sup> *Lettres Edifiantes*, etc., tome 15, 84, et suiv. 16—303. 20—48.

was not an ordinary man ; his life, his miracles, and his virtues made him admired by all the world." The testimony of the breviary is an evidence of great respectability ; and as such, has been appealed to by authors of great credit. The circumstance is mentioned in the breviary more than once. In one part it is said, " It was by St Thomas' means that the Chinese and Ethiopians were converted, and came to the knowledge of the truth." In another, " It was by the preaching of St. Thomas that the kingdom of Heaven went into the empire of China."<sup>6</sup>

We have also very satisfactory evidence that it was published there in the seventh century. This event is recorded in the annals of the empire, and confirmed by the monument that was discovered and dug out of the earth in 1625, near Sigan, the capital of the province of Xensi. The monument is ten feet long, and six broad. The figure of a cross is engraved at the top ; and underneath is a long account in Chinese and Syriac, of the fundamental truths of Christianity ; and of the arrival of a person from Judea in the seventh century to preach it.<sup>7</sup> The notice of the curious being attracted by this discovery,

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<sup>6</sup> Le Comte's Mémoires, page 342.—" Deux respectables monumens font connoître qu'au commencement L'Evangile a été annoncé à ces peuples. Le premier, est un très ancien Breviaire de l'Eglise de Malabar écrit en langue Chaldaïque, où dans une leçon du second volume de l'office de St. Thomas, on lit ces paroles :—C'est par le moyen de St. Thomas que les Chinois se sont convertis à la foy," etc.—Description de la Chine, par Du Halde, tome 3, p. 65, 66.

L'an 65 la religion de Foë est introduite à la Chine. Cette religion étoit établie dans la partie de l'Inde où est aujourd'hui le Mogul. Je pense que c'est le Christianisme. — Histoire Générale des Huns, etc. par M. Deguignes, tome 1, part prem. p. 30.

This author supposed that the religion of Christ was confounded with that of Foe, tome 1, part 1, p. 30, 50 ; tome 2, 234.

<sup>7</sup> Le second monument, prouve que long-temps après, c'est-à-dire vers le septième siècle, un Patriarche des Indes envoya des missionnaires à la Chine ; que ces ouvriers Evangéliques y prêchèrent les vérités de la

the emperor sent for a copy of the inscription to Peking, and ordered the monument itself to be carefully preserved in a pagoda, about a mile from Sigan, where it may still be seen. The inscription has been frequently transcribed : a copy in Chinese may be seen in Kercherer's *Illustration of China* ; and a translation has been given by Le Comte and others.

Whatever attempts were made to establish Christianity in China in the first or seventh century, it is a lamentable fact that no vestige of it was left, except the monument, when Xavier arrived. The conversion of this vast empire, had long been the subject of this holy man's most ardent desire ; and, after labouring with success for several years in different parts of the East, he left Goa in the year 1552, and soon after arrived in the island Sancian, in the province of Canton. But before he had accomplished his mission, or even entered the country, the Lord was pleased to remove him by death.<sup>8</sup> None, except Xavier, had judged the plan practicable. But he was no sooner dead, than the spirit which actuated him burned in the bosoms of Ricci of Mazarata, in the Marquisate of Ancona ; Pasio, of Bologna ; and Roger, a Neapolitan. After making themselves acquainted with the language, customs, and laws of the country, they entered the empire. Difficulties presented themselves ; these they surmounted ; and by patient perseverance, in five years, established themselves at Peking.<sup>9</sup> Roger and Pasio were soon called home. Ricci,

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foy avec succès ; et que leur ministère y fût respecté et autorisé.— Ce fût en 1625, que ce monument fût découvert de la manière suivante, etc. *Description de la Chine*, par Du Hald, tome 3, p. 66.

*Lettres Edifiantes*, etc. vol. 19, 419, et suiv. *Histoire Générale des Huns*, tome 1, p. 1, p. 55.

<sup>8</sup> Du Hald, tome 3, 96 ; Le Comte 347.

<sup>9</sup> L'établissement du P. Ricci à Peking fût le fruit de vingt années de travaux mêlés de traverses et de persécutions. *Description de la Chine* par Du Hald, tome 3, p. 75.

who had distinguished himself by his acquaintance with the religion, laws, ceremonies, and language of the country, continuing still to exert himself, had the pleasure, after labouring many years almost in vain, to see mandarins embrace the faith of the Gospel, and vast multitudes of the populace follow their example. The Emperor Vanli received him with respect, and granted him permission to purchase a house in the capital. Fresh missionaries were introduced by his influence, who spreading themselves into the different provinces, conveyed the sound of salvation to the most remote parts of the empire. While the church in China was thus enlarging itself, and could boast of converts from every rank, its peace was disturbed by the Dominicans and Franciscans, who arrived in 1630. These new missionaries, disapproving of the methods adopted by their predecessors to convert the Chinese, commenced a dispute, which offended every succeeding emperor, excited several persecutions, and more than once nearly brought that very church to ruin, which otherwise might have become the established church of the country. These disputes after rending the church above a hundred years, at length, happily subsided. The great object of their mission united them, and they acted in general, as having but one common interest.<sup>10</sup>

Near 200,000 Christians are scattered in the different provinces of the empire ; and the number is increasing.

In the province of Sutchén only, from the year 1791 to 1795, six thousand two hundred and thirty-four adults received baptism. And in about the same time, 11,000 infants of infidel parents, (à l'article de la mort,) received the same ordinance.<sup>11</sup>

In the year 1796, one thousand seven hundred and two adults were baptized, and 2464 Pagans converted ; and from

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<sup>10</sup> Embassy by Sir George Staunton, vol. 2, 339.

<sup>11</sup> *Nouvelles des Missions Orientales*, etc.—Pref. ix. *Mission de Chine* 201, 231, 254, 287.

the year 1797 to 1799, four thousand one hundred and eighty-four fresh converts embraced the same privilege.<sup>12</sup>

Flattering however, as these successes may appear, it is notorious, that the priests of Portugal, Italy, and France,<sup>13</sup> have lost their original influence in China, and the great object of their mission has failed. Nor is it likely, from the situation of their respective countries, that they will receive the assistance necessary to continue their present exertions ; much less to enlarge them.

The failure of this mission, has not risen from hindrances which the country itself presented, but from evils which the missionaries either carried with them, or created upon their arrival.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> The state of religion in China, Cochin-China, and Tonquin since the year 1796.

<sup>13</sup> L'évangile est prêché dans l'immense empire de Chine, par des missionnaires de toutes les nations Catholiques d'Europe. Peking, la capitale, a quatre églises où des prêtres et religieux François, Italiens, Portugais, etc., font publiquement les exercices de leur religion. *Nouvelles des Missions Orientales*, pref. 8.

<sup>14</sup> However good the motive was, by which Ricci, the founder of the modern Christian Church in China, was influenced, it is clear that his conformity was unscriptural. To dress, to write, to converse like a Chinese philosopher, was a species of conformity, in itself perfectly innocent. To allow his converts to worship Jehovah under the name of *Tien*, or *Chang-Ti*, providing the Chinese understood by these names the Supreme Being was, in fact, no more than allowing a just translation of a proper term : And his persuading them that he had come only to restore, and by the addition of some new doctrines, to improve the ancient religion of the empire, was but truth, if by *Tien* or *Chang-Ti*, who had been worshipped from the earliest ages of the nation, was meant Jehovah. But when he tolerated among his converts, the idolatrous practices of bowing before the tables on which their ancestors' names were written ; of killing beasts and burning gilt paper to their honour, &c., he exceeded the bounds of Paulonian charity, and brought a blast from heaven on his designs. And at the very time he tolerated these



The unjustifiable conformity of the first missionaries, laid the foundation of its overthrow. The genius of the people, the laws and customs of the country, required an address, which may easily be dispensed with in the most polished courts of Europe ; but a criminal conformity was not absolutely necessary, either to their safety or success!<sup>15</sup> A mistaken idea, however, that this would facilitate the conversion of the empire, induced them to make sacrifices which the spirit of the Gospel would not justify. This conformity was opposed by the Dominicans and Franciscans ; and the tumult that it raised, has blasted the plant that each designed to mature.<sup>16</sup>

*The share which the Missionaries, at different times, have taken in the political concerns of the empire, has no less injured their cause than their conformity.* XUNG-CHI, the first emperor of the Tartar race, admitted them to court ; made Father Adam Saal, who at that time was head of the mission, principal in the mathematical department ; placed in him a confidence,

superstitions, he appears to have been sensible of the impropriety ; for he gave strict orders, that while they engaged in these services, they were to lift up their hearts to God. See an abstract of the Legation of Charles Ambrogio Mezzabarba, from the Pope to Emperor Cham-hi, in 1720, published in the Bibliothèque Raisonnée des Savans de l'Europe, entitled, " Istoria della cose operate nella China da M. Gio. Ambrogio Mezzabarba, patriarca d'Alessandria, legato apostolico in quell' Impero, et di presente Vescovo di Lodi." Scritta dal Padre Vian, &c.

<sup>15</sup> This is manifest from a single circumstance. The Dominicans and Franciscans, who never conformed either in the use of the disputed names Tien or Chang-Ti, nor in any of the idolatrous customs, were never expelled, or even punished, but when the Jesuits, who did conform, suffered with them. This fully proves, that non-conformity was not the occasion of the persecutions they endured ; as in this case, the non-conformists would have escaped.

<sup>16</sup> Istoria delle cose operate nella China da M. Gio. Ambrogio Mezzabarba, etc. — Du Hald's China ; Mosheim's memoir of the Christian Church in China ; and Astley's collection of Voyages, vol. 4—228—234.

which had no bounds ; allowed the Jesuits a place to bury in ; and permitted them to build two churches in the capital. Thus countenanced, they aspired to a share in the administration. This, however, they were not able to attain, till CHAM-HI came to the throne ; but he was disposed to favour them still more than he had done, and made them his friends, his physicians, and his counsellors ; placed them at the head of the most important offices of state, and engaged in nothing of consequence without their advice. Father Verbiest was made master of the ordinance ; Father Grimaldi was sent to Muscovy with letters and seals of the high court to conclude a treaty ; and Fathers Gerbillon and Percira went on an embassy to the remotest part of Tartary. Encouraged by these distinguished marks of favour and confidence, they exerted all their powers to engross the Emperor's heart ; crush the influence of the Mandarins ; change the customs of the country ; and establish Christianity. The Mandarins were not unacquainted with their designs ; and jealousy induced them to embrace the first opportunity of taking revenge. During CHAM-HI's minority they had deprived the Jesuits of the influence they possessed under XUNG-CHI, and persecuted them with fury. And now finding that under CHAM-HI their power was still greater than before, their malice, hatred, and subtilty laid the deepest schemes for their overthrow ; and till lately, they availed themselves of every favorable opportunity to rob them of their little influence, render their exertions suspicious, and their labours unfruitful.<sup>17</sup>

What conformity and political intrusion began, their own dissensions have completed. Ecclesiastical disputation has in no place exposed religion to greater contempt than in China. When the first missionaries and the Dominicans and Franciscans became antagonists, the storm began to rise, and neither party being disposed to submit, it grew daily more violent. At length it was referred to Rome ; and CHAM-HI approving

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<sup>17</sup> Le Comte's Mémoires, 352 to 452. *Lettres Edifiantes*, vol. xvi. et suiv.

the conduct of the Jesuits, justified them in a letter to the Pope, written and signed by himself and attested by a thousand Chinese of every rank and character. After six years consideration, the Emperor's testimony in favour of the Jesuits was rejected as false ; and Charles Thomas de Tournon being dispatched by the Holy Office with the news to China, told the Emperor to his face the contempt with which his letter had been treated.

The insolence of his conduct exceedingly exasperated the Emperor, and he immediately published strict orders, that Catholic priests should not teach any thing in his empire contrary to the customs and laws established. Under the shadow of this decree, the Jesuits prosecuted their plans in opposition to the Pope. Irritated, however, by their disobedience, the Holy Office determined to humble their pride. To accomplish which, Clement the Eleventh, issued on the 19th of March, 1715, the celebrated bull, "*Ex illa die.*" This bull being carried over to China, the Vicar General of the Bishop of Peking, Charles Castorani, a Franciscan Monk, read it the 5th of November, 1716, in the three churches of the capital. The contempt and entire neglect of the national customs in dispute were by this bull enjoined, on pain of the most dreadful consequences. The Emperor, again openly opposed in his own dominions, by the very men he permitted, as an indulgence to continue in his empire, was so provoked, that, three days after the bull was read, he ordered Castorani to be bound in fetters and thrown into prison. The Pope and his bull became the subjects of his contempt, and the romish faith his sport and ridicule.

YONG-TCHING, his successor, finding the disputes between the Jesuits and these opponents were carried so high, that there was no prospect of an amicable termination, judged it necessary to prohibit Christianity, in order to bring the controversy to a close. KIEN-LONG, one of the sons of YONG-TCHING, took the reins of Government in 1737. His reign began with a display of toleration ; he shewed particular friendship to

Christians: But in a very short time after the scene was changed; persecution again disturbed their repose; and during the whole of his long reign, which did not close till 1798, was suffered at intervals to imbitter their lives, blast the fruit of past labour, and prohibit great exertion.<sup>18</sup>

These facts demonstrate two things: first, that the failure of this mission, has been occasioned by the improprieties of those very men who were engaged in establishing it, and not by insurmountable local difficulties.

And secondly, that in no heathen nation are missionaries likely to meet with more civilities; or a mission well-directed with better success than in China.

Allowing, however, that the time is not yet come to send missionaries; it will be confessed, that it is always come to circulate the word of God! Is there a place in the universe where sinners are perishing for lack of knowledge, which it is not our privilege and duty, if possible, to illuminate by the light of revelation?

The times which Jehovah has fixed for the accomplishment of his designs are not revealed, and therefore cannot be the rule of our duty. Neither is the time of our duty past—nor to come. It is *now*. “To-day, if you will hear his voice; now is the accepted time.” And though it may be supposed, that circumstances render a mission to China ineligible; nothing can render it improper. *Now* it is therefore our duty, if possible, to put into their hands, the pure and unadulterated word of God; the divine seed which liveth and abideth for ever. Whatever attempts have been made to convert the Chinese, this method has never been tried. With this best of blessings, they have never been enriched. And as the progress of religion, from the time of Moses, has regularly kept pace with the spread of divine revelation; it is highly probable, Christianity neither in China nor any other country will ever strike its

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<sup>18</sup> Istoria della cose operate nella China da M. Gio. Ambrogio Mezzabarba, etc.—Lettres Edifiantes.—Mosheim's Memoirs.—Nouvelles des Missions Orientales.

roots deep, or extend its branches far, till the Sacred Oracles are deposited in the hands of the people.

The practicability of translating the Scriptures into the Chinese language, has been very generally disputed ; and notwithstanding the body of evidence that was brought forward in the former edition, some still doubt its possibility. Nothing, however, that is capable of demonstration, admits it more fully than this. Father Ricci wrote several books in Chinese. Father Verbiest, wrote and printed an abridgment of the fundamental truths of the Christian Religion.<sup>19</sup> Expositions of detached parts of the Scriptures ; the Catechism of Bellarmin ;<sup>20</sup> the life of Aquinas ; the exercises of Ignatious ; and various other works in divinity, astronomy, mathematics, music, and morals have been published in China, by Europeans, within the last hundred and fifty years.<sup>21</sup>

Can any proof of the practicability of this design, more convincing than this, be required ? most assuredly, if the life of Aquinas, and the exercises of Ignatius have been translated, the life and actions of Christ may be translated with equal ease. If, however, the judgment be convinced of the possibility of this undertaking, it may nevertheless be doubted whether it can be accomplished in Europe. A few observations will demonstrate it : Nay, on the continent there are several natives of China, who, having embraced Christianity, and learnt the Latin language, are qualified to accomplish the work.<sup>22</sup> In

<sup>19</sup> *Lettres Edifiantes*, vol. xxiv. 480—482.—*Kircheri China Illustrata*, 117, etc.

<sup>20</sup> A copy of a catechism in the Chinese language, may be seen in the British Museum.

<sup>21</sup> *Vide Catalogus Librorum a Patribus nostris in Chinensis Ecclesiæ incrementum conscriptorum. Sino-Latinum Divinæ Legis compendium. Et Dei decem Præcepta, &c.* — *Kircheri China Illustrata*, 117—127.—*Le Comte*, 384.

<sup>22</sup> The Propaganda of Naples, has imported at different times, vast numbers of Chinese converts, to be educated in the Latin language and divinity, preparatory to their becoming priests among their countrymen. Not less than forty were at Naples when Sir G. Staunton engaged two, to

England and on the continent there are several Europeans, who have either learnt the language in China, or following the example of Bayer and Foulmont, have made great progress in it at home.<sup>23</sup> By the separate or united labours of an appropriate number of these gentlemen, any part, or the whole of the Divine Word may be translated. Possible, however, as it would have been to complete this work, the writer has been so happy as to find a large part of it finished. The Gospel of St. Luke, the Acts of the Apostles, and all St. Paul's Epistles, except that to the Hebrews have been translated for above sixty years. The manuscript translation is now in the British Museum,<sup>1</sup> and the copy has been collated and found very correct. *Digitus Dei est hic!*

The subject of the New Testament, being comprehended in these detached parts, it is not necessary to translate more for the first attempt. Nothing, therefore, remains for us to do, but to print and circulate a sufficient number of copies.<sup>2</sup> Some

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accompany the late embassy as interpreters, on condition of giving them a free passage to two more.

<sup>23</sup> The author has the pleasure of knowing several gentlemen who have studied it in Europe.

<sup>1</sup> It is not easy to conceive what the author felt, when he first discovered this translation. Nothing but a sense of decency prevented the most extravagant marks of joy. This manuscript, which I believe, is the only one in Europe, perhaps in the world, was made at Canton in 1737 and 1738, by the order of Mr. Hodson, who presented it to Sir Hans Sloane, in September 1738, and it was, with his other books, given to the Museum. The manuscript is in folio, and by mistake is lettered, "Evangolica Quatuor Sinci."

<sup>2</sup> Before this work can be printed, a copy must be taken. The privilege of transcribing it, would doubtless be granted. A nobleman of high respectability for moral and intellectual endowments, to whom a copy of the Memoir has been presented, has signified not only his approbation of the design, but has promised, that if it be necessary, he will use his interest to procure this indulgence. Another gentleman who has been in the habit of transcribing Chinese characters, is willing to take this, as well as the superintendence of the press, upon himself. There are different methods of printing Chinese characters. The ordinary way in China is, to cut them on flat blocks, the size of the page.

difficulties may attend their distribution, but the whole will give way to the methods of circulation I have to propose. It has been suggested, "that for what we know, the whole edition, if sent to Canton, might be lodged in some warehouse, and there sleep for ever."

Fully aware of the possibility of this, and of other difficulties, the subject has been reconsidered, and additional evidence clearly proves that we may circulate as many copies as we think proper to send. Chinese merchants, officers of the revenue, the army and navy; Chinese sailors, soldiers, and labourers have free intercourse with Europeans of every descrip-

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In some few instances they use moveable wooden types.—*Le Compte*, 185. The editor has been at much trouble to collect information on the best method of executing this design. He finds it may be done in different ways. It may be set up with metal types, and printed as the Arabic and Persian usually are. Chinese characters composed of types, may be seen among the specimens published by the celebrated letter-founder of Leipsic. In the *Pantographia* of the laborious Mr. Fry, and in Kircherer's *Illustration of China*, there are characters printed from copper-plates. As the Chinese characters are, however, composed, according to Bayer, *Gram. Sin.* 103, of nine or ten primitive strokes; or according to Du Hald, of six or seven, (*de ces six ou sept traites*, tome ii, p. 224), they may certainly be set up with types; and Mr. Fry, who is exactly of the same opinion, will engage to cast any number adapted to the composition of the most accurate characters. But, notwithstanding the practicability of his plan, a close investigation has fully convinced the editor, that no method is equal either to copper-plate engraving, or printing from wooden or metal characters. The former of these certainly claims a preference, from the accuracy and elegance with which it would enable us to execute the design, and for the facility with which we might print a second or third edition, at any future time. The expense, however, of this mode, would be far greater than either of the others; and the opinion of those best able to judge, having been taken on the business, the writer conceives that wooden or metal characters may be executed in a good style," at a reduction of a considerable part of the expense. An estimate of the probable charge of a given number of copies has been made, and the editor is happy in saying, that a large edition would be within the limits of that cheerful liberality which has long distinguished the Christian world.

tion at Macao, Canton, and at the parts of the different dependant nations of Cochin-China, Tonquin, Ava, and Siam.

The nature of things justifies the supposition, that few vessels sail from any port in Europe or America, without one or more of the crew feeling a veneration of the Scriptures, and would feel disposed to distribute copies among the ignorant, if freely put into their hands. By engaging individuals in the work, who sail in British, American, and other vessels, some thousands of copies may soon be very widely diffused in China. It is notorious, that the Chinese are fond of reading. They have long heard of Christ and of the Scriptures, as we have of Foe and the works of Confucius; and it is highly probable, that if a copy of this manuscript translation, elegantly printed and bound, were put into the hands of a Chinese, he would be induced from curiosity to peruse it, and from the same motive, would circulate it among his friends.

If 10,000 copies of the works of Confucius, translated into English, elegantly printed and bound, were sent over to this country to be given away, would there be no persons found to accept them? The greatest bigot would grasp at the present. The whole ten thousand would be distributed in a day. If this would be the case here with respect to that work, is it not fair to suppose, that it would equally be the case in China with regard to the Scriptures? Past experience confirms this sentiment.

The Jesuits have never found any difficulty in circulating the books which they have printed in Chinese; but on the contrary, to answer the demands of the people, they have been obliged, after circulating a large impression, to print a second edition.

A particular instance of this kind is related by Kircherer, with respect to a Christian catechism.<sup>3</sup> Should these methods,

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<sup>3</sup> Sed quod maximo animarum fructu universum sinicum imperium illustravit, fuit catechismus qui quantos in cordibus sinensium sanctæ compunctionis de præterita perside transacta vita motus concitaverit; non dico apud plebem, sed cui tantoperi interest, apud Maximos Monarchiæ Literatos, Mandarinos, Colaos, &c. Regii Palatii Eunochos, cater-



however, be thought precarious, there is one still more certain, and no less at our command. In the factories at Macao and Canton, there are gentlemen, some of whom are known to the author, who feel a great veneration for the Sacred Oracles. To these gentlemen, let a given number of copies be sent for distribution. Conscientious Chinese and Europeans, in different parts of the empire, may be sought out, and made depositories for the interior; and as much as possible, let each person employed to distribute them, introduce the work as an article of barter.

Merchants who come from every part of the empire to Canton may thus be employed as the instruments of scattering the divine seed through the whole kingdom; and it will considerably facilitate the circulation, to request each depository to introduce the work among booksellers; who, by being allowed a large profit, will promote the sale of it with peculiar industry. But, if after every exertion has been made, the circulation should not fully equal our wishes, let some person, hearty in the cause of God, and willing to spend and be spent for his glory, travel through the country, and distribute them in every town and village through which he may pass.

The various ways by which the Catholics have entered and travelled through the empire, demonstrate the practicability of this undertaking. And if the person thus employed, excelled in his knowledge of astronomy, or carried with him a transparent orrery on the plan of Mr. Walker's, the curiosity he would excite would not only secure his protection, but procure his admission into families of the first consequence, and perhaps into the palace itself. There are no laws to prevent the circulation of the Divine Word, nor any to prohibit this study. A disposition to read is general; and if a catechism was read with so much avidity in every corner of the kingdom, it is very

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*osque vix explicari potest; siquidem fama libri vulgata, cum exemplaria non suppeterent, in omnibus pai Provinciis novis impressionibus liber ita longè lateque diffusus fuit, ut non esset angulus, quo lux evulgata veritatis Christianæ non pervaderet.*—Kirchiri China Illustrata, 118.

reasonable to conclude that the New Testament, a book of which they have heard so much, sent to them from a nation of whose skill and knowledge they have the highest opinion, would meet with a reception as candid and a perusal no less careful. Besides, God has ever honoured his own word, when providence has in any country provided for its translation ; and should he send it to China, we may hope he will not send it in vain. His own promise justifies the expectation. "As the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, so shall his word be, that goeth forth out of his mouth ; it shall not return unto him void, but it shall accomplish that which he pleases, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto he sent it."

The sacred seed being widely scattered in China, would prepare the way for missionaries to go over at some future time, with the prospect of great success. It is difficult to conceive whether much advantage can attend any mission where the people are without the divine testimony in their hands. But let the Sacred Volume be put into the hands of the Chinese or any other civilized heathen, and allow them a few years to examine the purity of its morals ; the sublimity of its doctrines, and the benevolence of its design ; and we may hope to hear them say, "Come over and help us," for "How can we understand these things, except some man guide us ?" A wide field would then open for cultivation. Its language is easily learnt,<sup>4</sup> and is the same through the whole

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<sup>4</sup> This fact has been generally disputed ; but Magaillans, who resided in the country for many years, must be allowed a far better judge than those who never left their native isle ; and his words are, "I cannot forbear to assert, the Chinese language is more easy than the Greek, the Latin, or any other of the European languages. At least, it cannot be denied that it is much more easy than the language of other countries, where our society is employed in missions, which is an advantage of no small consideration. Nor is this a thing to be questioned, as my senti-

empire. The characters of it are understood by the neighbouring states of Tonquin, Cochin-China, and the islands of Lieu, Kien, and Formosa. And the religious toleration of this empire is exceeded only by that of Great Britain and America. For while the emperor and nobles worship *Tien* or *Chang-ti*, the populace in general worship *Foe*. Mahometanism has long

ments are conformable to reason and experience. For, in the first place, it is most certain that there is nothing more conducive to the acquiring a language than the memory, and that the language must be the most easy, that has fewest words ; as a small number of words is more easily retained than a larger number. Now the Chinese language is the most concise of all others, not being composed of much more than 320 monosyllables ; whereas the Greek and Latin contain an infinite number of words, of tenses, of moods, numbers, persons, &c. But the Chinese language requires only a memory to retain the accents, which are, as it were, the form which distinguishes the signification of words, and to learn how to pronounce three hundred monosyllables.

In the second place, it is most certain, that he who will industriously and by a good method, apply himself to the study of the Chinese language, may be able, in a year's time, to understand and speak it well.

And we find by experience, that our fathers, who are at present employed in the mission, at the end of two years, became so perfect in the language, that they were able to confess, catechise, preach, and compose with as much ease as in their own native tongue ; though there is not the least resemblance between their language and ours ; and that the fathers are generally persons far advanced in years.—*Nouvelle Relation de la Chine*, par le R. P. Gabriel Magrillans, p. 96.—See the translation p. 73.—See also *Lettres Edifiantes*, vol. 22, 387.—Astley's collection of *Voyages*, &c., vol. iii, 503.

That this representation is correct, I have no doubt, for my very respectable friend, Monsieur Chaumont, who spent seven years in the country, learnt it sufficiently well in twelve months, to catechise, preach, &c., &c.

Les caractères ou lettres des Coréens sont les mêmes que ceux des Chinois ; mais la prononciation en est différent ; en sorte que les missionnaires et tous les Chinois qui connoissent les caractères Chinois peuvent communiquer par écrit avec les Coréens qui se servent de ces mêmes caractères ; les Coréens sont aussi en état de lire et de comprendre les livres de religion écrits en lettres Chinoises par les missionnaires.—*Relation de l'établissement du Christianisme dans le Royaume de Corée*.

established itself, and continues to spread in the heart of the empire without opposition. Jews have for many centuries subsisted in the centre of the kingdom, and have exercised in peace their peculiar rites ; and however different the creed of Christians and their mode of worship have been from those peculiar to the natives, they have never been persecuted on the ground of their non-conformity in religious ceremonies ; but only in consequence of their disobedience to established laws.

Since the days of CHAM-HI there has never been so favorable an opportunity of introducing the Scriptures and establishing Christianity in China as now. KA-KING, the fifteenth son of KIEN-LONG has succeeded his father in the government. He is learned and generous ; and immediately after taking the reins of government, gave full liberty to the missionaries to open their churches and exercise the functions of their religion without restraint. And when the Bishop of Peking and two missionaries who held the rank of mandarins in the tribunal of mathematics, were accused of not offering sacrifices before the body of the deceased Emperor, he declared, that " The Europeans of Peking, are sincere, upright men, and attached to their religion, and must not therefore be disturbed on account of our ceremonies ; but be permitted to observe all the rules of their religion." <sup>5</sup>

Two missionaries have also been recalled to the palace, who had been driven from it before the death of KIEN-LONG, and he declared, that " they had been unjustly expelled." <sup>6</sup> And the Mandarins themselves are now friendly towards the Christians, and pronounce their religion good." <sup>7</sup> Was there ever a wider door open, or a more evident call in Providence to send the Gospel to an heathen nation ? Shall we not be inexcusable before God, if we allow this extraordinary opportunity to pass unimproved ?

From China a door would be opened to all the dependant

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<sup>5</sup> State of religion in China, &c. since 1796, p. 29.

<sup>6</sup> Idem 30.

<sup>7</sup> Idem 27.

and surrounding kingdoms. To the trackless country of the Tartars on the north ; to the extensive kingdom of Tibet on the west ; to the populous states of Cochin-China, Tonquin, Laos, Ava, Pegu, Siam, and Malacca, on the south ; and to Corea, and the islands of Japan, Formosa, and the Phillipines, on the east. This vast field comprehends nearly one half of the human race. How much is it to be deplored that it has been so long neglected. The beast and the false prophet have strained every nerve to subjugate it ; while we have viewed its situation with indifference, and never made one effort for its salvation. " The fields are already white." But the beast and the false prophet are not to reap the Lord's harvest. Their cause is bad ; their disciples are washed to fouler crimes ; the cause of truth is in other hands.

It is for us to disseminate the precious seed among that much neglected people : It is for us to guide their wandering feet into the narrow path that leads to life ; to enrich them with heaven's choicest treasure ; to enlighten that vast empire which has so long sat in darkness and in the region and shadow of death. Come, then brethren, to the help of the Lord ; and be workers together with him.

Very soon the privilege of doing good will be no more ; the honour of spreading the Saviour's name will be in other hands. In heaven, if there it be possible to shed a tear, we shall weep because we have done so little for him, who has done and suffered so much for us. " Life is the time to serve the Lord ; the dead cannot praise him." This may be the last effort you may ever be solicited to make to promote the salvation of sinners. O, let it be entered upon with spirit, and carried forward with an energy proportionable to the magnitude of the design.





