

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE MISSIONARY QUESTION IN CHINA.

“I venerate the man whose heart is warm,
Whose hands are pure, whose doctrine and whose life,
Coincident, exhibit lucid proof
That he is honest in the sacred cause.”

COWPER.

BEFORE recording the general impressions formed in my mind in the course of my travels, I am anxious to say something on the subject of missionary enterprise in China, because I have thought that a few words on this question from one who has seen missionaries at work in the remotest corners of the Chinese Empire may be of interest to readers in England at the present time, when the recent massacres in China have directed marked attention to the matter. I do not think that a mere casual traveller like myself ought to presume to judge in too assured a way the many really earnest men who, taking their lives in their hands, have gone out to impart to the Chinese a religion which they believe would help to elevate and rouse those ignorant of its blessings. Many of these men have devoted years to the study of the question, and they have had practical experience in dealing with the Chinese. It would ill befit a passing traveller, therefore, to undertake to say whether this or that method of proselytizing was good or the reverse, or to judge whether the missionaries have been successful or not.

But it is part of the duty of a traveller to observe and