

which arrangements were made for another, beginning in the afternoon.

Meantime the people of the neighborhood took up the matter, and objected to the debate going on, even threatening to stop it by force. Eventually both parties agreed to accede to their wishes, and Messrs. Goforth and McKenzie left for home on Monday morning. My cart not having arrived, I waited three days longer to try to still further impress Gospel truths.

The advisability of a public debate between Roman Catholics and Protestants in China, is very problematical. But I think that in Little Fort, where the priest has been carrying on his work for two years, this visit of the pastors is not without avail, even though the report has spread to other places that they ran away as before.

At Easter Sunday Mass, the Roman Catholics had 250 present, as a result of two years work in that neighborhood, but one gets some inkling into the kind of work by hearing the remarks of the heathen. A common saying is that the Protestants are the "wen" (literary), and the Roman Catholics the "ure" (military) preachers. Wherever the Roman Catholics have gone, the words commonly associated with their name are "open a school with free food," and "carry on a lawsuit." Some men are kept in employ whose sole duty is to attend to lawsuits. To be a member of the Roman Catholic Church assures protection from all outsiders, and in some cases those who have to come into conflict with church members have been fined by the priest without any reference to the Chinese officials. The country-side is afraid of the priest, as even the magistrate has had to apologise for offending him. For this authority he depends on the prestige of the French name, though he is an Italian. When charged with it in debate, he retorted that we were not English, (the name for the British Empire is Ying, taken from the word England), but Canadians.

Such means of conversion cannot assure a high state of morality, and one village is reported where there are a large number of converts nearly all dealers in salt, (an illicit traffic, as salt is a government monopoly). One man who was last year suspended from our membership for unchristian behaviour is now in their employ as a proselytiser. Another man whom we have for two years refused to record as a catechumen, though he has studied considerable doctrine, is now trying to arrange that the Roman Catholics rent a house in his village. It may be said that we should not grudge them such men. But such are the means of bringing in the enemy where he might not otherwise be, and, moreover, they are themselves in less hope of coming to the truth than the Roman Catholic Church than from the heathen, because of the monstrous claims of that Church to easily forgive sin, etc.

Yet we are hopeful that at the very centre

of this influence there may still be a work to the glory of God. Large numbers heard the Gospel during our seven days visit, two or three men spent nearly the whole time listening. One of these said, "you have told me a great deal about Jesus, now please tell me about His resurrection." Again he said, "I am an ignorant old man who cannot read, and have never prayed, but perhaps Jesus loves me, I love Jesus, will be enough to pray with." Another man declared his faith and asked that we continually pray for him.

It is perhaps not strange that numbers who have but lately professed faith in Jesus, and whose knowledge is not great, should be induced to enter a church which claims to have all that we can give of the blessed truth of the Gospel, and besides, assures to its converts free schooling, (with food) for their children, and protection from all persecution and reviling. It behooves us all to be more earnest and constant in prayer, that the arm of the Lord may be about the new converts, and may protect them from injury while establishing them in the pure faith, which was once delivered to the saints. Though many disappointments come from those of whom we hoped great things, yet we rest assured that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth and that eventually his truth will prevail.

Yours sincerely,

Robert. A. Mitchell.

### "ENLIGHTENED" CHINA.

Letter from Rev. J. Griffiths.

Chang Te Fu, Honan,  
March 21st, '98.

Last week when the students and graduates now up for examination in this city, were visiting our compound by hundreds, someone took opportunity to drop an anonymous letter for our edification and warning. The letter is in Wen-li, the classical language of China, and is beautifully written. It must, therefore, have been prepared by one of the literati—apparently by a man familiar in some measure with the work here. Through Mr. Wang, one of our native preachers, who is a graduate, and Mr. Goforth, this translation is secured. Some months ago there was dropped in our compound another anonymous letter, evidently in the same hand-writing, and containing violent threats against the mission. As a comment upon the virulent attack of this critic it is sufficient to state that the literary men have never before been here in such numbers. Nor have they ever before been so friendly, well-behaved, and evidently anxious for Western knowledge. Indeed the chief examiner has, upon command of the Emperor, informed the 4,000 students now here that in the future they will be expected to pay attention to Western learning.

The envelope of the above-mentioned letter is addressed:—"The Jesus Hall."

"Open and you will find the contents to your profit."