

smaller. The people are therefore more scattered, and the country being thickly wooded with the cacao and shade trees, the roads and by-paths are often exceedingly bad. But the people are permanent settlers, most of whom have been long in the Island, and many of whom have been taught the truth before they moved back into the woods. They are therefore an interesting and hopeful class.

There is a cart road through the place, and a railway is under construction that will come within two miles of it. It is only fitting that a teacher of the truth should be there before the railway.

The catechist teaches Hindi in the morning to the children, and devotes the afternoon and evenings to the adults. He has found Christians, miles away in the woods, cutting down the forests and planting cacao and coffee.

Such a life has its temptations, but it is a harder, manlier, and more hopeful one than that of hanging about the town.

Last year we began work in Port of Spain, in a tentative way. We have now located a catechist and his wife in that city.

Our East Indian Immigrants come chiefly to the sugar estates, thence many remove to the villages and later on out into the new settlements. But a number, and apparently an increasing number, drift into the city. They are to be found in Government offices, stores, and shops, and as porters, traders, and lodging-house keepers. The sick are to be found in the hospital, and the aged poor and incurable in the asylum.

To this asylum our catechist's wife, who is one of the girls trained in the Home, has free access, to show her Bible pictures and tell her story to about 50 East Indians, feeble and some of them blind, whose prospect for the present life is narrow and gloomy.

In the lodging-houses, commonly called "coolie hotels," we meet with many who live from hand to mouth by their wits. About 20 children come in for Hindi and religious instruction every morning. Christians coming in from the country are looked up and gathered in. Already it is apparent that there is a very needy field in our capital.

In the asylum it is work near the mouth of the grave, so indeed a margin of all our work is. The fruit of such work will not be apparent here, not certainly in yearly contributions. But souls are precious and it is for them we are labouring.

Yesterday a man came here asking for baptism who had walked ten miles. He has been suffering from asthma, and was advised by a Hindu who knows us, to come and be baptized. He knew about Jesus and his work, but had not lost a subordinate faith in subordinate gods. After instruction I decided that his knowledge

and faith were unripe, gave him a letter to the nearest catechist, and a bottle of medicine, and sent him away for a time. The most hopeful cases acquiesce in delay, for the Indians have a proverb about "unripe fruit."

JOHN MORTON.

LETTER FROM HONAN.

HONAN, CHINA, May, 1896.

DEAR RECORD,—Honan must surely have received the title of "The Garden of China," from some traveller who was passing through it in the months of April and May; for it really seems to deserve the name during these two months. It would be difficult to imagine a fairer scene than that of the country through which I have been travelling for the past few weeks. The fields are covered with the growing crops of wheat and barley and looks like a great green sea, as the billowing grain bows in graceful obeisance to the breeze.

Every two or three miles there is a clump of trees—marking the site of a village, and adding not only variety, but new beauty to the scenes; for the early flowering trees, apricot, peach, pear and apple, are one mass of blossoms, which fill the air with their perfume; while other trees, mulberry, willow, ash, plane etc., are bursting with life, and suggesting hope, at the thought that one may thus leave behind the mistakes and failures of the past, and press on into new life and fruitfulness.

Away in the west, there is that great range of mountains which separates Shansi from Honan. How grand and majestic they look, towering into the blue sky. I don't know why, unless it be that the words of David in that Psalm, which is so precious to travellers, the 121st, suggests the thought to my mind: but I never look upon these mountains, without having my thoughts raised to God, and being made sensible of His presence.

Even when a child I had this feeling, as I looked from an upper window of our house, and saw away far in the North the Campsie Hills mingling with the clouds. And they were always nearer to me on Sabbath days than they were on week days. I know now that the reason was that the public works in the great city that lay between me and the hills had ceased for the time to darken the air with their smoke; but then it simply seemed to be a happy arrangement of nature that God's mountains should draw nearer on God's Holy day. I wonder how much the religious instinct of the Jew and the Scotchman is owing to the presence of their mountains in their land.

But to come back to Honan, and from the mountains to the road over which we travel. It is decked all along with beautiful spring flowers. They are nearly all familiar ones, among them the violet; but the Chinese violet: