

MISSION FIELD.

LETTER FROM CHINA.

CHANG Tz Fu HONAN, CHINA, May 12th '97

DEAR MR. MAOKAY,—We have just received your statement on the state of the funds. It must be a cause of great anxiety for all on the committee. We feel it keenly out here. Dr. McClure the Treasurer has sent me word that he thinks that we will not be allowed to build our house this year. If so we will not be able to start medical work at this station for we are counting on giving up the buildings we occupy at present for hospital purposes. We need the house and are hoping to be able to meet one half of the expense of it ourselves. Dr. Menzies has been out a year and a half now and is eager to get at the medical work.

It would be a calamity to curtail our work in China now. Never were the prospects so bright. The Emperor has sent out a decree commanding schools to be established in all the provincial capitals. The object is to teach English and the Western sciences. When such a school is established in Honan we will no doubt be asked to supply one or more of the teachers. If we fail to meet the demand the Jesuits may obtain a most signal advantage. In so many things the Chinese seem indeed to be waking up from the sleep of ages. I expect that a great and effectual door shall be opened during the next few years in every province of China. As it is now our opportunities for preaching the Gospel in this region are only limited by our time and strength. If our staff were increased several fold there would still be too much work for all.

Let me now tell you what some are enduring for Christ's sake.

A young man named Li living in a village near by came and had his name recorded as an enquirer. A few weeks afterwards while he was here attending Sabbath service his mother and elder brother came to our front gate reviling him. The old mother cried and pounded her head on the stone steps until we advised him to go home with her. He continues to come however and now there are three other men in the same village who are quite hopeful although we have not yet recorded their names.

Another named Lin living in the city has boldly confessed Christ and destroyed all his household gods. His landlord is greatly incensed and threatens to eject him if he don't restore the gods but Mr. Lin is immovable.

Still another named Ma. He lives in the city. He has been coming for about a year to hear the Gospel. He has destroyed the family gods and himself and wife and son and daughter-in-law believe. He is a very poor man. His wife though an invalid tries to help a little. She reels silk and makes about two cents a day. When he bought a Bible for eight cents I was almost ashamed to take it. His mother is a devoted idolator and in her rage she got her other son to beat him if he would not restore the gods to their places. He refused and the brother commenced to beat him. He made no resistance and soon the brother left off running him but got his son dismissed from his situation. Mr. Ma rejoices that he is worthy to suffer for the Gospel and continues faithful. Several of his neighbors are also interested so that a little company of six or eight of them meet each evening to study the Bible.

A young man named Wang, a cotton dealer living in a village North of us, was first impressed about three months ago. That day there were several hundred in the front yard listening to the Gospel when several young men tried to create a disturbance. It seems that because we were patient and didn't get angry with them he went home saying to himself that we couldn't be the bad people so many said we were. The result was he came again and again and he seems very real. We have recorded his name as an enquirer. He offended his partner because he would not water the cotton consequently the partnership has been dissolved. And now his mother who all along advanced the money to buy the cotton has turned him out of the home because of his new faith. But he is not the kind to be easily beaten. He will find some other means of livelihood. Several others in his village are also interested.

A Mrs. Li from the city brought several of her friends to service last Sabbath and told us that she had burned all her gods on Saturday evening. It made us clap our hands for joy. We had been praying for her for some months. She is an influential woman and can do much good. She also told us that she had taken some of the Gospel books to the Prefect Yamen and gave them to his grand-daughter who can read and now this young girl reads them to her mother and grandmother and other ladies in the Yamen. This young girl along with two other ladies from the Yamen called to see the foreign ladies last week. (The prefect is the chief official of the seven hsien districts of this Chang To prefecture.

The two sons of the hsien official brought their little sister here for treatment last week Dr. M. is treating her.

At Ta Kuan Chuang twenty five li from the city where a very hopeful work has begun a woman burnt all her gods last week. She was a noted idolator and when the heathen neighbors saw the fire made of the gods they exclaimed. Alas, Alas! Some awful calamity will happen her within three days but the three days passed and no harm came so the faith of many in idolatory is shaken because the gods failed to avenge themselves on such a noted offender.

Dr. M. and Miss R. are on their way to the coast on a wedding trip.

Mrs. Goforth and children are in excellent health. Mrs. G. joins me in best wishes.—Yours in the work, J. GOFORTH.

P.S. Miss Pyke is well and hard at work. She gives promise of being a missionary of the right stamp.

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR.

DAILY READINGS.

First Day—"Covet earnestly the best gifts."—1 Cor. xii. 1-31.

Second Day—"The excellence of Christian love."—1 Cor. xiii. 1-13.

Third Day—"Love thy neighbor as thyself."—Lev. xix. 1-18.

Fourth Day—"An example of neighborly love."—Luke x. 25-37.

Fifth Day—"Love the fulfilling of the Law."—Rom. xiii. 1-14.

Sixth Day—"Love one another as I have loved you."—John xv. 1-17.

PRAYER MEETING TOPIC, Aug. 22.—"Have we the spirit of Christ?"—Rom. viii. 1-18.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST.

To get the spirit of Christ is the highest aim in life. This being gained, it brings with it all other joys.

If we have the spirit of Christ we shall fear no man, we shall hate no man, we shall seek to give ourselves for all men.

The spirit of Christ will prove itself, not by consciousness that we have the mind of Christ, but rather by consciousness of our own sinfulness, and a great, loving longing for Christ and His righteousness.

"CHRIST, WHO STRENGTHENETH ME!"

Paul says, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me." Every true Christian echoes the words of Paul. He feels that when Christ gives him might, he is sufficient for all the trials, burdens, temptations and duties of life. Drawing his spiritual life from Christ, as the branch receives the sap that gives it vitality from the vine of which it is a part, the Christian believer feels that he is stronger for all that is demanded of him. And the measure of his strength is just the measure with which Christ dwells in him. The triumph of Christian living is found when the child of God is "strengthened with all might according to the glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness."

Paul himself was an illustration of the fact. He had of course the same nature and temperament after his conversion as before, and yet Paul the Christian missionary was a very different man from Saul of Tarsus, the bigoted Pharisee. When he was a Pharisee he could not have said, as he does in connection with the words we are now considering, "I know how to be abased." Humility was not in the catalogue of Pharisaical virtues. It was Christ who strengthened him for abasement, suffering, meekness of spirit, as well as for abounding labors.

The same thing will be found true of the Christian martyrs. Any honest man must admit that they were strengthened by a spirit of Christ. Look at Cranmer, holding the hand, that in a moment of weakness had signed his recantation, out into the flames, that as a fitting punishment it might be burned first. Hear brave old Latimer calling out to his fellow Martyr: "Be of good cheer, my brother Ridley, for we this day light a candle in England, which by God's grace shall never be put out."

So also of the men and women that now are bearing the burden and heat of the day. Whence is their strength? Is it in their good resolutions? If that is the case, why are not all men strong? For all men make good resolutions. Is it any peculiarity of temperament? No; they do not differ in this respect from others, yet, to any one who watches them, it is plain that they are different from what they once were, and that they are making steady progress. Whence comes it? It comes from the fact that they draw strength from Christ. They rest not on human weakness, but upon omnipotence.

And there is the only source of true strength for you. You can be sufficient for all things, the trials, burdens, anxieties, toils, if living only in Him who endoweth you with the spirit of Christ, who strengthened you.