

One day two old women, Mrs. Li and Mrs. Chao, came to the dispensary, "the blind leading the blind." Mrs. Li was quite blind with cataract in both eyes. Mrs. Chao, with turned eye-lids, was not much better. Neither of them had any one to wait on them, but they went away to talk the matter over and after a few days came back for operation. Mrs. Li, being the blindest, was to be operated on first, and Mrs. Chao would wait on her and when her eye was well they would change places.

When it came to be Mrs. Chao's turn for operation, we wanted to do both the eyes, but she refused, giving as the reason, that they had agreed to be treated eye about, and it was Mrs. Li's turn next.

### A LETTER FROM HONAN.

By Rev. R. A. Mitchell.

Hsin Chen, Honan, April 22nd, 1898.

Dear Mr. Scott,

We have neither Luther nor Eck in North Honan, yet the battle goes on between those whose rule of faith is the Scripture only, and those who add traditions and customs of men.

Some two months ago, Mr. Goforth received a letter from Father Gerard of Little Fort (Hsien Chen), saying that it was reported to him that Mr. Goforth called the Roman Catholic a false Church, and asking him to come to Little Fort, and prove it in public debate. Mr. Goforth replied that he would gladly do so when he had time, assuring the priest that this time he would not spare the papacy.

Two weeks ago, the rush at the time of the Literary Examination in Chang Fe Fu being over, Mr. Goforth was ready for the debate, and, along with Mr. McKenzie and the writer, reached Little Fort on the 7th inst. In arranging the time Mr. Goforth had thought only of his slack time and had forgotten about Easter. Word reached him when about to leave home that the priest would prefer deferring the debate until Monday. No objection was made to that, but as the carts had already been ordered, all came on thinking three days extra preaching the Gospel would do no harm to the cause of Christ. Seeing, however, that we had arrived, the priest preferred to go on with the debate on Friday, though he would be very busy between whiles.

The headquarters of the Protestants were the largest room of the inn, about thirty feet long, twelve wide, and eight high, with unplastered mud walls, roof of reeds festooned with cobwebs and pendant straws, thirty to the square foot. Door and window (in one) consisted of a six-foot omission of the front wall, which at night was partially closed by a screen of corn stalks leaned against the eave. The floor was mother earth. Eight feet of one end was occupied with the mud-brick bed, and about the same space at the

other end, fenced off by a manger, showed signs of its ordinary occupants.

The place of debate was a point on the roadside, slightly raised, and under the shade of a willow tree, which lent its kindly protection from the hot sun.

The debate was begun by Mr. Goforth reading the first commandment, and proceeding to show that the Roman Catholic Church break it in their adoration of Mar., in their prayers ascribing to her such attributes and giving her such titles as the Scriptures give only to our Lord Jesus Christ and the Heavenly Father.

The priest's defence seemed to give Mary a place decidedly lower than what is given her in the actual use of their Church. During the morning the debaters did not seem to come to close quarters, apparently running on parallel lines.

In the afternoon, Mr. Goforth, opened with a concise summing up on the subject of Mariolatry, and went on to show that the mass was another offence against the 1st Commandment. Under this head, variety in interpretation in Scripture necessarily came up. Father Gerard had said repeatedly that he had not much time to read the Scripture, but here he ridiculed the variety among the Protestants, and claimed its infallible guide in the Church, and taunted the Protestants as not being in existence four hundred years ago, our ancestors being Roman Catholics. A little later he objected to the reading of the Church's persecuting edict against all who did not believe in the "real presence," saying that Western things belonged to the West, and should not be mentioned to the Chinese.

Later, a misunderstanding by Mr. Goforth as to what verse of Scripture the priest had asked him to read, led to his reading a verse referring to Judas, and caused an excursus on the cupidity of the Roman Catholic Church. As a result, the last address of the day by the priest was a violent repudiation of the charge fastening it on the pastors who, he said, were selling the Lord for \$800 a year with extras for "old women and kids." They are all hirelings who will not protect their flock, but he protects his to the end. If he cannot do so in the district court he will go to the Prefect; if that will not do, then on to the provincial capital and thence on to the imperial capital.

Next morning when the debate was about to begin, the priest, who the previous day had fought shy of Scripture, insisted that the Bible only be quoted in debate, and that all the histories Mr. Goforth had at hand were useless. The latter objected to being limited, saying that he would prove from facts that the Roman Catholic Church's fruit was such as the good tree of Scripture did not produce. The priest asked if he wanted to tell all the vile things of history and "dig out his face" before the Chinese. Father Gerard had determined that this should not be done, and the meeting closed somewhat in disorder, after