

FOR THE WEEKLY MIRROR.

The following, from a late Periodical, has been handed us by a correspondent.

A STRANGER IN LONDON.

Translation of a Letter, supposed to have been written by a Chinese Merchant, in London, to his correspondent, Nan-Chang fu, at Peking:

GOOD FRIEND,

As this is the tenth moon since we parted at Canton, it may be proper to let you know I have arrived safe at my destination. The great English ship, soon after I went on board, weighed her anchors, and having spread out several clothsails, we soon lost sight of our beloved shores, I felt as if shut out from the world. For many succeeding weeks we were driven furiously by strong winds; no land was visible; and I began to fear we should wander over the ocean, no one knew or could tell where. But though we encountered several gales, no serious injury was sustained. The captain had liberty, when he pleased, to consult an oracle, who had one of the best births in the state-cabin, by that means the coming storm was always anticipated; so that, before it was on us, the men were aloft, the sails reefed, and every thing rendered safe. The sailors call this talisman a barometer; and I believe it was given them by the God of the Christians, in compassion to those who adventure upon long and dangerous voyages over unknown seas. Soon after day-break one fine morning, a mariner, placed for the purpose at the mast-head, called out "land."—The intelligence was pleasing to all; and you will readily conceive, that my curiosity was excited on approaching the remote and almost unknown quarter of the earth, whence issue those hordes of roving barbarians, who have approached the shadow of the celestial empire, to crave the bonus of a leaf of tea.

Being deeply laden with the produce of Chinese benevolence, the ship approached the shore with great caution, and frequent heaving of the lead. Having landed several passengers, we continued our course round the eastern part of the Island. Unwilling to trust myself too soon among this singular race, and never having trodden upon other than the sacred dust of the land of wisdom, I remained on board until we entered the mouth of a river called the Thames, on whose spacious bosom we were floated by the tide. In a few hours the spires of innumerable temples became visible, and before night I found myself on shore. As the hour, at which I landed was late, the captain advised me to engage a sleeping room in one of the caravansaries. This plan I adopted, and on the following morning, having arranged my dress, proceeded to the mercantile house to whom my letters of credit was addressed. On my way thither, I was surprised by several rude people, who, passing in a contrary direction, stared me full in the face. I at

first felt disposed to order the big fellows a specimen of the bastinado, but recollecting that perhaps they never before saw a gentleman, I exercised forbearance, and let them go. Intelligence of my arrival, by some means unknown to myself, had been transmitted to the person to whose care I was recommended. Under his roof I soon found myself at ease, and in comfortable circumstances; and must admit, that, though there is little similarity between our own people and these English, they are not quite so savage as we generally supposed. As there is among them several customs which I can scarcely comprehend, I shall review them cautiously; after which you may form your own judgment concerning them, and agree or differ with mine as you see fit.

The following day, which the natives have named Sunday, was singled out, according to the custom of the country, for professed religious purposes. The learned among them affirm that every seventh day is to be set apart for the worship of their God; and whoever infringes it, by doing business, violates the law. As this nation is said to be the most religious of any upon earth, I felt desirous to examine their sacred book. Having procured a copy, I found that all, and more than all that I had heard was true. The morality of the volume I found singularly pure, the language simple and forcible, the authority by which the precepts are urged unquestionable, and a certain air of veracity, against which resistance seemed of little use, pervaded the entire production. And yet I do not perceive that there is much agreement between the injunctions of the book and the practice of the people. Indeed, I doubt, notwithstanding the sublimity of the writing, whether its contents are believed. Were they accredited, some little conformity to their requirements would surely be granted. Of such a disposition I saw little enough. The book says, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain;" but idle and senseless appeals to that very name are of constant occurrence. The book says again "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour;" but in several quarrels, of which I was a reluctant spectator, assertions to the prejudice of an adversary were uttered, and even attested on oath, which were irreconcilable with truth. Unwilling to decide hastily, I tried further. The book says, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." As a direction of this sort seems congenial with the habits of man, to whom periodical seasons of rest are grateful, I felt confident that here we should find an entire coalition between the command and required obedience. Full of this persuasion, and having a desire to view the interior of the metropolitan city, when meditation might be assisted by silence and solitude, I arose on the morning of the second Sunday, put on my superior robe and girdle, in compliment to the natives, and commenced

a solemn perambulation, intending to pursue it through the chief avenue of the celebrated mart of commerce. To my surprise, I saw very little difference in the thronged and busy crowd. Here and there you might see a bazaar, with one or two shutters put up; but that was a mark not only of irreligion, but hypocrisy, for they did business all the time. The only difference I could notice among the passengers was, that they were dressed better than usual. So far from finding every body at home, every body seemed from home. Provisions of various kinds were bought and sold; carriages and horses were in general requisition. In this most thinking nation, is there not something extraordinary in these things? Upon mature reflection, I think that possibly I have entertained mistaken views. Such, very likely is your opinion. You will therefore understand, that in this most Christian country, though one day in seven is called Sunday, the distinction is nominal, for the pursuit of trade and pleasure is never wholly suspended.

(To be continued.)

THE MONTHS. No. 8.

August derives its name from Augustus Cesar, the Roman Emperor. The general aspect of nature is now peculiarly interesting. Abundance and richness characterize the productions of the fields. Both man and beast are the objects of Divine care. The tender mercies of God are over all his works—Instruction may be gathered from every object.

Amid the joyousness and gratitude which this season inspires, a slight feeling of depression imperceptibly creeps in. The glories of summer are evidently departing. The flowers will soon fade. The ripening of the fruits is the beginning of their decay. The perfection of the productions of the earth is the signal for their destruction. Life, too, is ebbing away. Youth quickly attains maturity, and then speedily declines.—The heat of the day is often intense. The days are shortening, and the nights are advancing upon us with increased coldness.—Insects abound at this season. They are teeming in the air, and peopling the waters. The caterpillar has changed the earth for the air, and renounced its fellowship with worms, to emulate the motions of the bird. The tadpole is metamorphosed into the frog, and leaves its watery habitation to enjoy its summer evening leaps. The living inhabitants of eggs have burst from their imprisonment, and are enjoying life and happiness, according to their respective organizations and instincts.

This month is the season for hop-picking, in some parts of England. The hop is cultivated on account of its use in making malt liquors. It is planted in regular rows, and poles are set for it to run upon. When the poles are well covered to the top, nothing can make a more elegant appearance than one of these hop gardens.