

GALE'S LETTER TO THE Y.M.C.A.

MY DEAR FELLOWS,— I have been a very poor correspondent, I must confess, and yet I am sure of consideration and forgiveness at the hands of undergrads, who know how hard it is to be up to the mark in the line of correspondence. I am in Seoul, and at the mercy of Koreans, who make my oriental quarters a club house, and really give me but little time to myself.

Hardie is here now, and it is needless for me to say how much I enjoy his and Mrs. Hardie's company. The Meds and the Varsities were always bound together, even though their friendship showed itself only on grim occasions, as when they marched against the Bobbies, or fired off the heavy guns in Queen's Park. We remind ourselves once in a while of the fact that we were there.

Hardie and I are to be together if it is at all possible. In the event of other missionaries going to Fusan, which now looks settled, we shall strike north and try the Yaloo river district, which marks the boundary of Mauchoonie. No one has lived in that province as yet, nor do I anticipate any difficulty in getting settled if one goes quietly. I hope to start just as soon as I hear from you through the committee.

My heart is down south still, but the summer that has gone by has showed me conclusively that if a choice can be made I should choose as far north as possible.

I am very sorry that I was delayed in sending you some report for 1889. I shall send one for 1890, which I hope will reach you before spring.

This has been a year of earnestness in our work here: Heron and Davies both gone. Yet—

"Things like these you know must be
At every famous victory."

I can give those of you who have no idea of Korea only a very imperfect picture by letter. There are mountains everywhere; that is the first thing you notice. These near Seoul are white-topped and wrinkled-looking as though they had been planted here before the world began. A prophecy stands in the Wizard books of Korea, reading thus: "When the river Han is navigable to the city, and when the mountains round about are capped with white, then this present dynasty will end." This has come to pass, and the King lives in terror that his days are numbered. Shut off from all communication with other nations there is a look of dead loneliness in everything, and the expression of ignorance in these tilted eyes and dusky eastern faces adds to it all, and makes it a something beyond expression.

In Korean life one must not forget the regular round of diseases which sweep our whole district every season of the year. They are scarcely noticed; those who die drop off and the survivors go shuffling along in a way quite indifferent. We have no newspaper reporters to write up cholera and small-pox, and make them terrible. In America a few cholera symptoms plus a newspaper reporter can terrorize the whole continent. Here for a time this autumn we saw cholera victims every day, and it looked quite ordinary after all—as Dickens says, "Old fashioned death."

Amid the confusion of voices each day I am working hard at the classics to master if possible the language of the educated of Chosen. These are the books of Confucius, just as they have in China. They are interesting but more difficult even than old German or Gothic.

I am hoping and praying that this may be a prosperous year in the Y.M.C.A., and that you may be really blessed. I think Y.M.C.A.'s might be far more powerful than they are if they were only filled with life by the Holy Ghost. By His power only can we offer acceptable service to Christ our Master. Through Him only can we overthrow these mountains all round about us. It is not by any means smooth sailing out east as a missionary. Life that is all sunshine and picnic isn't worth the living. Let me quote from Carlyle, speaking of King David:—

"David's life and history, as written for us in those psalms of his, I consider to be the truest emblem ever given of man's moral progress and warfare here below. Is not man's walking in truth always that—a succession of falls. Man can do no other. In this wild element of a life he has to struggle onward: now fallen deep abased: and ever, with tears of repentance, with bleeding heart, he has to rise again, struggle again, still onward. That his struggle be a faithful, unconquerable one; that is the question of questions."

This is life exactly. As young men I think we have greatest cause for thankfulness when God overwhelms us with difficulties, or plants great craggy mountains in our way. May the light and joy revealed through the Holy Scriptures be the inheritance of every Y.M.C.A. member.

Pardon me for again writing a line from Carlyle, but he is like an old Hebrew prophet, and his words pass often through my mind. Speaking of Luther's birth: "There was born here once again a mighty man; where light was to flame over long centuries and epochs of the world; the whole world and its history was waiting for this man. It is strange, it is great. It leads us back to another birth-hour in a still meaner environment. Eighteen hundred years ago—of which it is fit that we say nothing, that we think only in silence; for what words are there? The age of miracles past? The age of miracles is forever here."

Now good-bye for a little. To all the fellows my love and Christmas greetings.

JAS. S. GALE.

Seoul, Dec. 1st, 1890.

SCHOOL OF SCIENCE.

A precedent has been formed by several of the senior men bringing their lady friends to the School of Science to show them the building; not that the latter has any marked beauty, but they, no doubt, endeavored to work the "impressible" scheme. As this may appear to be a forecast of co-education in the School of Science, the matter is looked upon with distrust (?) by the Engineers.

Mr. Newman, '91, who was laid up with typhoid last term, is back again, and intends to go on with his year. It is a pleasure to see his beaming countenance again in the corridors.

The graduating class and the Executive Committee of the Engineering Society had their photographs taken at Dixon's last Wednesday.

The Engineering Society met in Lecture Room No. 2 on Tuesday, Jan. 27, President Robinson in the chair. The Corresponding Secretary, Mr. Sylvester, read an interesting communication from Mr. J. A. Duff, B.A., '90, the former President of the Society, who now is in Patterson, N.J. In this letter Mr. Duff offered some new schemes for the Society's welfare. He proposed a radical change in the Executive Committee, substituting an editor and sub-editor of the Society's Engineering "pamphlet" in place of the 2nd and 3rd year councillors. This important question will be discussed at the next meeting. Following this came a paper on "Dynamics," written by the same gentleman. This paper was prepared especially for the first year men who have examinations on this subject. It dealt with all the intricate investigations and wearying formulæ in such a simple manner as to be of the greatest use to the first year men next April. It was resolved that a vote of thanks be tendered Mr. Duff for his able paper. Mr. Virgil Marani then read a most interesting paper on "The Sea and its Waves," replete with illustrations, both practical and humorous. He accounted for the many ocean currents, the disturbances of the sea, and other many curious phenomena of a like nature. He concluded with a personal anecdote of thrilling interest, illustrating the force and height of ocean waves. The chief feature of the story was the extraordinary conduct of an immense wave, the height of which, by careful observation at the time, was found to be equal to that of "Varsity's tower."