

Leh is situated are much behind those of other districts in education. In order to remedy this defect he promulgated a decree that from every family in Leh and the neighborhood, where there is more than one child, at least one child must be sent to school, and being satisfied that the Moravian Mission School is the best in the town, he decided upon having them sent there. When this decree was first published all sorts of rumors circulated among the people. Some parents thought it was a plan to kidnap their children, that they might be sent to England, and there compelled to become Christians, others suggested that the latent object was to train them for porters, to cross the mountains and carry packages from one part of country to another, or at least, some surreptitious plan by which they might be induced to become Christians. In consequence of these rumors the decree of the Vizier was, at first, silently ignored, or disobeyed; but as the missionaries visited the

people and explained matters to them, this feeling of suspicion gradually wore away, and when the ruler sent out policemen to look up the children, they began to attend, so that by last accounts they had a very large number of day scholars at that station. The routine of instruction embraces the Tibetan, Urdu, and English languages, and a portion of the time each day is devoted to religious and Biblical lessons. The missionaries have wisely left attendance at the religious instruction optional. At first many absented themselves during this hour, but gradually the number who attend increases. By last accounts there are sixty present daily. Truly our brethren and sisters in the Home Churches should bear this mark on their hearts before the Lord beseeching Him to open the hearts of this stolid people to receive the Word of the Gospel, that it may prove itself the power of God unto the salvation of many souls there."
—(Rev.) Paul de Schreinitz.

III.—MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE FROM ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD-FIELD.

China.

THE WORSHIP OF HEAVEN BY THE EMPEROR.

[Though long, this descriptive letter from our correspondent, Dr. Happer, will be read with interest.—Eds.]

Canton, Dec. 21, 1882.

DEAR EDITORS.—This date, designated the winter solstice, is noticed in some way in all lands. It is the shortest day of the year. It marks the time when the sun, having reached the farthest point in its southern declination, begins to return towards the north. But in no nation has this natural phenomenon such a significance, and so important an observance, as in China. It is the time of one of the most imposing religious services in the world. It is the day on which the Emperor of China, as the high priest of the people, worships heaven as the patron god of China. This observance of the day is connected with the state religion of China, which is a system of nature worship, or a worship of the objects of nature as the source of the blessings which men derive from them. Heaven, as the greatest object in the world of matter, is regarded with the highest reverence, and as the object from which a great portion of the blessings of life comes, heaven is the object of special worship.

This day, being selected as the time for special worship by the Emperor, is connected with the system of natural philosophy which is believed among this people. It is held by them that there is a male and female principle in nature, by which all natural things are produced and influenced. Heaven is regarded as the head representative of the male principle, while earth is regarded as the head of the female principle. From heaven all productive influences proceed, as heat, fruitful

showers and favoring breezes. The annual going forth of these influences is coincident with the commencement of the return of the sun from its southern declination, at the time of the winter solstice, on the 21st of our December. This being, according to their system of nature, the commencement of the going forth of the power of production of the male principle in nature, of which heaven is the head, this day is chosen for the time of the special worship of heaven by the Emperor of China. It is appointed as an observance of the state religion of China; all the ceremonies, offerings, worship, prayers, hymns and sacrifices connected with it are prescribed in a ritual which forms a part of the statutes of the Empire.

The worship is performed at the altar erected by the Government for this special worship. It is situated in a park, which is located in the southeastern part of the city of Peking, and which comprises some 500 acres of ground. The altar is made of marble. This park is surrounded by a brick wall, and is divided into three divisions by brick walls running north and south. The southern part of the eastern division is the site of the altar at which the worship is offered at the winter solstice. In the northern part of this eastern division was built the imposing building which was burnt by lightning in September, 1882, at which prayer is offered in the spring for a fruitful season.

The altar is a structure of a peculiar character. There is, so far as I know, no other one like it. It is circular in shape, and consists of three successive platforms, the higher placed on the lower one. The first platform is 210 feet in diameter, and is nine feet above the