

the way to save the trouble of bringing them up. Some people smother five or six daughters."

THE MISSIONARY'S LETTER.

Here is an extract from a letter written by a much-esteemed missionary to the Chinese, to his young niece at home, in answer to one she had sent him. Perhaps it will remind you of your own missionary Mr. Burns. After speaking of little Isabella's lessons, he says:

"That puts me in mind now, that I have got lessons to learn too, but as I have such a very different kind of teacher from what you have, I will just try and tell you something about him. In the first place, he does not care whether I learn my lessons or not, and if I do not come near him for days together, I think he is not at all displeased. Some little boys and girls might think how very pleasant it must be to have such a teacher. My dear Isabella, when you grow up you will see how fortunate it was that you had not such a teacher. Well then, imagine you see an old man with a pair of great spectacles, each eye about the size of the ring of your parasol, and very much like it; his head is shaved almost to the crown, from which hangs a long tail, that reaches down about as low as his knees; his coat and his trousers, his shoes and his stockings are, I dare say, different from anything that ever you saw; in the hot weather he wears a jacket made of small twigs of bamboo, very neatly strung together, just like a fishing net; this is too keep him cool; round his waist he wears a sash, with a number of little articles hanging to it by cords, and contained in cases and neatly embroidered bags, one is for his spectacles, another for his tobacco, another for his key, one for carrying olives in, which he is very fond of sucking all day, and a number of little nic-nacs; as they have no pockets like ours, when they have anything large to carry, as books or the like, the Chinese stuff them up their coat sleeves, which are always large enough to carry a good sized bundle; another favourite place for carrying things is in their stockings, and although you will think, I dare say, that it is very strange for them to do so, you should think that perhaps they look upon it as quite as strange in us to have bags that we call pockets, made in our clothes. But, perhaps, you wonder what I want with a teacher at all; well, I'll tell you; it is, that I may learn to read and speak the Chinese language, which is about as different as you can imagine from the English; but why should I want to know the Chinese language? Why, just that I may be able to tell them about Jesus Christ, and how he came upon earth to save the Chinese, for I dare say you know that he commanded his disciples to go into all nations and preach the Gospel, and before any one can do that, he must first learn the language of the country. Now, when you think how many poor Chinese there are that know nothing about Jesus how thankful ought you to be that that is not your case, but that you have a kind mamma to tell you all about him, and what he has done for you.—Although the Chinese people know but very little about God, and do many things that are very wicked, yet there is one thing among them that I think we ought to praise and imitate; that is, the honour they give their parents; they think so much of this that they call it the chief good, or the stem, that all other good actions spring from, just as you see the branches springing from the stem of a tree. Now, I do not think it is necessary to tell you to do the same, because I believe that you love your papa and mamma, and I know that they love you.—*Pres. Mos.*

THE REV. W. C. BURNS TO THE CONVERSER.

*Chinese Hospital Hong Kong,
May 24, 1849.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I did not expect when I wrote to you last month from the continent of China, that I should be so soon again in Hong Kong,

nor was it altogether from choice that I returned here again so soon; but the messenger who came here last month, in returning to us with letters, tracts, &c., was waylaid when near where we were, robbed, and severely bruised in one of his limbs. In consequence of this I thought it better to come back myself, as I have hitherto gone in and out in safety; and after being here for ten days I propose to remove again to-morrow, if the Lord will, taking with me a supply of tracts and other necessities for a few months to come. Of course there is considerable danger everywhere from those robbers, who infest this country both by land and sea: but my path of duty seems plainly marked out; and therefore I must go forward, confiding in our all-wise, almighty, and gracious Lord and Saviour. He hath hitherto wonderfully led and sustained us, and we must take courage from this, as well as from his unchangeable promises, in looking to the future. At the time when we turned backwards towards Hong Kong we had been eight days in a very populous and extensive district, about forty (English) miles to the north-west of Hong Kong; and could we have gone forward, the stream of population would have led us down the banks of a river which, after running about thirty (English) miles, joins the Canton River at some distance below that city. As it was, we took a shorter route, towards Nam Tow, the chief town of Luir Oan district, and from thence returned to this place by water. I cannot add any very interesting particulars regarding these last days spent in China; we had, however, upon the whole, much to encourage; although in one place (Tong Haw) there was a good deal of mutual animosity among the people, inasmuch that a number of villagers were even engaged in deadly conflict in our immediate neighbourhood, yet we were quiet from fear of evil, and had many favourable opportunities of making known the truth both in going out among the villages, and at our daily worship in our lodgings. Here I met also with what was new—opposition in writing to the doctrines we were teaching. I was charged with reviling their gods and sages, and it was argued upon the principles of their philosophy that there could not be a God existing before heaven and earth. Although it is sad indeed to meet with a darkness so gross as this among the intelligent creatures of God, yet it is useful to be thus made acquainted with the real state of the Chinese mind; and to be thus opposed, is perhaps not worse than to be received with Chinese politeness, and listened to for a season with vacant indifference. The place to which we propose to sail to-morrow is not far from the point where we embarked for Hong Kong in coming back, and it is said to be very populous.

I shall add no more at present, but only that we need and look for the continual prayers of God's people for ourselves and for the people among whom we go forth. Should we be favoured and preserved in our path, it is quite possible that I may not have an opportunity of again writing until, if the Lord will, I return here: so that if you hear nothing you may view it as a token for good.

Ever yours, dear friend,

W. C. BURNS.

P.S.—Though my means were not quite exhausted, I yesterday drew on Jardine, Matheson, & Co., for 30*l.* sterling. Our expenses in the country are not great, as I live at the same board with my companions. I have reason to praise God that I am as yet in perfect health.

W. C. B.

DR. LANG'S OPINION OF WICK AND ITS PEOPLE.

The Rev. Dr. Lang of Australia, paid a visit to the north of Scotland a few weeks ago; and, among other places, visited Wick. He has published a short sketch of his tour to the north, and

we have much pleasure in inserting his impressions of Wick and of its people:—

"It was arranged," says he, "that I should preach on Sabbath evening in the large Free Church in Wick, and address the congregation thereafter on the religious state and prospects of the Australian colonies,—the audience which accordingly assembled on the occasion consisted of about 1500 people. I also delivered an address of a more secular character, in the Town-hall, on Monday morning, at ten o'clock, on the general capabilities of Australia as a field for emigration. Joseph Rhind, Esq., Provost (Mayor) of Wick, being in the chair.

"I witnessed at Wick one of the most interesting pieces of moral scenery to be seen anywhere in the world. It was a Highland congregation of upwards of two thousand of the stranger fishermen, including a comparatively small number of their female relations, who attended them in the expedition, sitting on the grass in the green field which had been hired for spreading and drying their nets, near the town, listening to an impassioned discourse in the Gaelic language, delivered from a tent or wooden covered pulpit, by the Rev. Mr. McLeod, the Free Church minister of Logie Easter, in the county of Perth, who had arrived for the purpose on the day previous. There is something in such a scene that carries one back irresistibly to the Lake Tiberias, when the preacher was the Divine Redeemer himself, and his audience the fishermen and villagers of Galilee. I had a better opportunity of judging of Mr. McLeod's ministerial qualifications from a discourse in English, which I had the pleasure of hearing him deliver in the Free Church in the afternoon, on the words 'Hast thou faith?' He is, indeed, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, and the Free Church deserves the highest credit, for having sent so able and zealous a minister to dispense the ordinances of religion to these Highlanders, during their temporary residence in Wick. There is something peculiarly affecting in the melody of the Gaelic psalmody in the open air, and, when the large congregation departed slowly to their temporary abodes in the town and neighbourhood, I could not help asking with a feeling of satisfaction at being myself a Scotchman, whether there was any other country under the sun, in which such a scene as I had just witnessed could be exhibited, in the case of an equal number of fishermen,—a proverbially regardless and lawless class of people,—collected for the fishing season in one little sea-port town, from a great extent of country around. There were some French and Belgian boats on the Scotch coast at the time, and I understand that they had fished on Sunday as on other days.—But the Highlanders, of course, did not; they had learned, in their respective islands, to 'Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy.'

"Mr. McLeod had preached twice in the earlier part of the day, but, after the dismissal of the English speaking congregation in the afternoon, I observed the Highlanders again mustering to the number of nearly 1500, on the green field, as in the morning. The service on the occasion was conducted by Alistair (or Alexander) Gair, a man of truly apostolic spirit, who, I understood had been in the habit of attending the Highlanders as catechist, or evangelist, on their yearly visits to Wick, for forty years past. He is a small farmer, and is now, of course, an old man, of venerable appearance, and is held in great reverence and esteem by his countrymen. One's heart cannot but warm to such a man."—*Edinburgh Witness.*

NATIONAL FASTS.—There have been three national fasts recommended by Congress, and directed by the Presidents, besides that which was recommended by President Taylor, and observed on the 3d inst. The first was in 1812, on the third Thursday in August; the second was in 1813, on the second Thursday in September.—The third was in 1815, on the second Thursday in January.—*U. S. paper.*