

Correspondence.

LETTER FROM CHINA.

STATISTICS OF MISSIONS.

CANTON, March 26, 1864.

MR. EDITOR:—Thinking that many of your readers will be interested in some statistics relating to the number of Protestant missionaries in China and the stations where they are laboring, and the probable number of converts from heathenism connected with them, I send you the following tables. A bird's eye view may thus be obtained of the present condition of the missionary work—with the aid of the imagination. The estimated number of converts is given in round numbers.

Table with columns: Name of Port, No. of Missionaries, No. of Converts. Lists ports like Canton, Amoy, Fuh Chau, etc.

In the mainland opposite Hong Kong, which is an English colony, it is estimated that there are some 300 converts connected with three German missions, whose headquarters are at Hong Kong. These are included in the last item above.

Of these 111 missionaries 5 or 6 are absent on visits to their native lands. The wives of the missionaries are not enumerated, nor are several unmarried ladies engaged principally in teaching. There are about 20 different American, English and Continental societies engaged in the work of propagating the gospel in China. Of the missionaries about 57 are from America, 9 are from Germany, and 45 from England, Ireland and Scotland. There are boarding schools for the training of youth, male or female, in the doctrines of the Christian religion at Canton, Swatow, Fuh-chau, Ningpo and Shanghai, and day schools at most if not all of the ports occupied by missionaries. There are several flourishing out stations and country churches already formed, connected with the missions at Amoy, Fuh Chau, Ningpo and Shanghai, and perhaps at one or two other ports. It would be safe to estimate that there are over 100 native Christians employed at the different ports as school teachers, or preachers, exhorters, collectors, etc. more or less, where the gospel is regularly preached by the foreign missionary or his native helper.

I am sorry to mention that there are 5 ports open to foreign trade and residence, in this empire, where there are no Protestant missionaries, viz: Newchang, the most northern consular port, Kin Kiang and Chinkrang, on the river Yang-tze, and the two Formosan ports. At each of these four ports there are foreign merchants, but no preacher of the doctrines of Jesus. The merchant is ready to avail himself of increased facilities for trade and to occupy new ports as soon as accessible; but the church lingers and fails to enter and possess the land. Ought these things to be? Christ never commanded men to go into all the world and trade with every creature, but he did command his followers to go everywhere preaching the word. The children of this world are indeed more active and more wise than are the children of light.

The following table has been supplied by an American missionary of this place, relating to the condition of the work here, at the end of December last year. It may be of interest sufficient to present to the friends of missions at home.

Table with columns: Name of Mission, When begun, No. of Stations, No. of Missionaries, etc.

Besides the above, in connection with the South Baptist Mission there is an out-station distant some fifty or sixty miles from Canton, where there is a church of some 17 members, and where two native assistants are employed. There is also one missionary hospital at Canton, doing a good work.

There is a considerable diversity of practice among missionaries in regard to what constitutes a proper subject of baptism. Some baptize inquirers on much less evidence of real interest and change of heart than do others; some baptize inquirers as a means of grace, before conversion, while others, the large majority of American missionaries, baptize only those who seem to give credible evidence that they have been born again, and are "new creatures in Christ." It is first necessary to know the principles according to which inquirers are baptized, before one can

judge accurately in regard to the Christian character of those baptized.

The work progresses here and in other parts of China slowly, if viewed by an eye of sight only, but surely, if regarded by a vision of faith. A great and glorious work has been commenced at this port, and at the other consular ports along the coast of this vast empire. The present number of converts is not relatively large. But the work is the Lord's, and will prosper in His own good time, as in other lands. Missionaries are "faint yet pursuing," "going forward," praying and laboring in hope for a great and abundant harvest day. Let them be cheered by the knowledge that Christians in western lands are also praying "Thy kingdom come," and looking by faith forward to the time when many shall be born in a day in the land of SINNIM.

THERE IS NO NEW THING UNDER THE SUN.

Daniel Webster, in his last hours, said to his physician: "Doctor, tell every body that nobody knows anything!" Events are constantly occurring to revive this declaration and attest its truth. In this day of startling discoveries and abundant self-complacency, we find the Book of Job, claiming to be the oldest written volume of earth, frequently confirming some of the most occult and wonderful discoveries of modern science.

Who ever dreamed, when reading the enumeration of Job's early possessions, that one of his revenues was PETROLEUM, OR COAL OIL? Hear his own words, in the 29th Chapter, from the 2d to the 6th verse:

"Oh, that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness;

As I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle; when the Almighty was yet with me, when my children were about me;

When I washed my steps with butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oil!

THOMAS CHALMERS.

THE APOSTLE OF CITY MISSIONS.

Seventeen years ago, on the 4th of June, was carried to his final resting place amid the tears of all Edinburgh—nay, of all Scotland—and with one hundred thousand spectators at his funeral, the man who had won such a place in the hearts of the multitude, not by his surprising powers of eloquence, or by his massive intellect, but by his deep personal concern, unparalleled labours, original, comprehensive and successful plans for carrying the Gospel to the neglected and degraded masses of his countrymen. The commencement of the ministerial labours of Dr. Chalmers gave not the slightest promise of a career that was not great and ordinary pastor. A cold, heartless formalist; devoted to intellectual and especially mathematical pursuits; aspiring, as he himself afterwards admitted, "to be successor to Professor Playfair in the mathematical chair of the University of Edinburgh," he entertained such low views of ministerial duty as to be satisfied with employing five days of the week in scientific pursuits at a distance from his parish, leaving two days, Saturday and the Sabbath, to the labours of the ministry. What could have been expected, in the way of eminent parochial services, from a man who conscientiously pursued such a course, and who, when a discussion arose respecting the union of other duties with the ministry, defended his course in a pamphlet from which the following is an extract:

"The author of this pamphlet can assert, from what to him is the highest authority,—the authority of his own experience,—that, after the satisfactory discharge of his parish duties, a minister may enjoy five days in the week of uninterrupted leisure for the prosecution of any science in which his tastes may dispose him to engage."

To make the apostle of city missions out of this cold and conscientious devotee of abstract science, was as great a work almost as to make out of persecuting Saul the apostle to the Gentiles. And the same means—the transforming power of the Holy Spirit—exerted in connection with divine providence in his life, brought about the marvellous result. Chalmers was prostrated with a long and serious illness. His foundations were shaken. The nearness of eternity revealed at once the shallowness of his hopes and plans. He rose and returned to his work a new man. The study of mathematics, upon which he looked as his great field for literary distinction, he relinquished entirely. In the discharge of all his parochial duties there came a total alteration. As if to make up for past neglect, the spiritual care and cultivation of his parish became the supreme object of his life. We quote from Dr. Wayland's memoir:

To break up the peace of the indifferent and secure, by exposing at once the guilt of their ungodliness and its fearful issue in a ruined eternity; to spread out an invitation wide as heaven's all-embracing love, to accept of eternal life in Jesus Christ; to plead with all, that instantly and heartily, with all good will, and with full and unreserved submission, they should give themselves up in absolute and entire dedication to the Redeemer; these were the objects for which he was now seen to strive with such a severity of conviction as implied that he had one thing to do, and with such a concentration of forces as to idle spectators, looked like insanity. Most earnest entreaties that every sinner he spoke to should come to Christ just as he was, and bury all his fears in the sufficiency of the great atonement, were presented in all possible forms, and delivered in all different kinds of tones and attitudes. "He would bend over the pulpit," said one of his old hearers, "and press us to take the gift as if he held it that moment in his hand, and would not be satisfied until every one of us had got possession of it. And often when the sermon was over and the psalm was sung, and he rose to pronounce the blessing, he would break out afresh with some new entreaty, unwilling to let us go until he had made one more effort to persuade us to accept of it."

He continued his practice of visiting his parish, but instead of finishing his work in a fortnight, it occupied him the whole year. The visit on these occasions was not merely an agreeable recognition and a pleasant ceremony. It was improved by Dr. Chalmers as an occasion for earnest conversation on the subject of personal religion, with the members of the family, and of solemn exhortation to lay hold of the salvation offered in the gospel. "I have a very lively recollection," said Mr. R. Edie, "of the intense earnestness of his addresses on occasions of visitation in my father's house, when he would unconsciously move forward on his chair to the very margin of it, in his anxiety to impart to the family and servants the impression of eternal things that so filled his soul." It was in this manner that he carried the gospel to every family in his parish, like the apostle teaching publicly and privately to house, testifying repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

But this did not exhaust his efforts. In the autumn of 1813 he opened a class, in his own house, upon the Saturdays, for the religious instruction of the young. At first it was intended that it should meet monthly; the numbers, however, who presented themselves for instruction, and the ardor with which they entered upon the tasks imposed, induced him soon to hold the class every fortnight, and then every week.

He did these private labors in addition to his diligent preparation for the Sabbath. Instead of two or three hours which he formerly took for the work of preparation, a large part of every week was now devoted to the duty of studying, devotionally, the best could bring the truth home to the hearts of his hearers. In a letter to his mother, he writes, "You may tell my father that I have at length come to his opinion, that the peculiar business of his profession demands all the time, all the talents, and all the energy that any minister is possessed of."

It was not long before the whole aspect of the Sabbath congregations in Kilmarnock church was changed. The stupid wonder which used to sit on the countenances of the few villagers or farm-servants who attended divine service, was turned into a fixed, intelligent, and devout attention. It was not easy for the dullest to remain uninformed; for the best trained of his people to follow him, at other times, and much oftener, he took the matter of his message so as to force for it an entrance into the most sluggish understanding. The church became crowded. The feeling grew with the numbers who shared in it. The fame of these wonderful discourses spread through the neighborhood, till at last there was not an adjacent parish which did not send its weekly contribution to his ministry. Persons from extreme distances in the county found themselves side by side, crowded in the same pew.

THE ACQUITTAL OF THE ESSAY AND REVIEW WRITERS.

The London Quarterly has a careful and discriminating article on this subject, from which we make some extracts: "What is the strict legal effect of the judgment which has actually been delivered? Now, any examination of it will show that this question is not very easily answered. Possibly of set purpose, certainly in sure effect, there has hardly ever been a solemn decision of so high a tribunal of which the true legal

presence. Its very wording proclaims the obscurity of the difficulty. It begins and ends with an eager disclaimer of 'pronouncing' exactly that which the Church required, namely, 'any opinion on the character, effect, or tendency of the publications known by the name of Essays and Reviews; and that not on the ground on which Dr. Lushington's judgment might be defended* as declining to fix an explanation on passages of Holy Scripture which had not already any fixed ecclesiastical interpretation, but with the avowed object of leaving the volume unexamined. The judgment refuses to consider even the whole essay either of Dr. Williams or of Mr. Wilson. Its consideration is confined to a few short extracts. The meagre and disjointed extracts which have been allowed to remain in the reformed articles of charge are alone the subject of judgment." Nay, by a ruling which we never remember to have met with elsewhere, against which in the hearing of the case it seemed almost intimated that the arguments of counsel were unnecessary, and against which we believe that lawyers in general would emphatically protest, it was determined that whilst 'it is competent to the accused party to explain from the rest of his work the sense or meaning of any passage or word that is challenged by the accuser, the accuser is, for the purpose of the charge, confined to the passages which are included and set out in the articles as the accusation.' Thus the language of the accused in the extracts, though in itself the most erroneous, could be explained away by the quotation of other words from the body of the writing, which seemed, however inconsistently, to contradict the error charged upon them, whilst the accuser was prevented from traveling into the same surrounding matter to show that his interpretation of the offending words was the true one. On such a rule it is scarcely conceivable that any false teacher should be convicted. For hereby in its earlier stages hardly ever vents itself in such distinct and complete propositions of false doctrines. It avoids, or adopts with a gloss, a reservation, or a quibble, the language of old formularies for plainly contradicting which it might be at once condemned. Its very novelty makes it impossible that it should speak distinctly out. It has to win its way for the admission of its new teachings by frequent reassertions of the admitted truth which it would subvert, and by the most subtle inventions of ambiguous expressions through which, without a palpable contradiction of the old, it may insinuate the new. It is not, therefore, difficult to understand how, acting upon such a rule, the majority of the Court were able to conclude that, 'On the short extracts before us our judgment is that the charges are not proved.'

"The effect, then, of this judgment is most assuredly not that all things contained in the obnoxious volume, or even in these two essays, may be taught without punishment by clergy of the Established Church. There may, so far as this judgment decides the matter, be many punishable statements in them. 'If,' says the judgment, 'the book of these two essays, or either of them, as a whole be of a mischievous and baneful tendency, as weakening the foundations of Christian belief, and likely to cause many to offend, they will retain that tendency.' All that is ruled is that the particular extracts before the Court did not absolutely contradict the particular extracts from the Thirty-nine Articles or formularies with which in the accusation they were contrasted. 'Certainly, there was as little as there possibly could be in their escape to warrant any exultation. In both cases it was what is well known in the legal profession as 'an Old Bailey Acquittal.' The language of the judges of both Courts as to the offenders was the same in tone, and the acquittal was scarcely less severe than the condemnation. Though the judge in the one Court thought the case just capable, and the majority of those in the other just incapable of legal proof, both took equal care to separate themselves from the accused; both intimated, with almost equal clearness, their sense of the utter impossibility that men of scrupulous integrity should occupy such a position in a Church from the teaching of which they in spirit dissented, whilst they kept its emoluments and office. 'Certainly if this is in the judgment of the escaped a triumphant acquittal, they are men of the most modest expectations, and are most readily thankful for the smallest mercies. We think that in the judgment of the English people the tenets which narrowly missed with such pleadings the full censure of the law will be generally felt to have been morally condemned.' Nevertheless the Review believes the results of the acquittal must be disastrous, 'a fearful impetus given to opinion in the direction, which must end in heresy.' It says: 'This danger can scarcely be overstated. For assuredly a new element of latitudinarian uncertainty has been for its future trials imported by them into execution of the law. As certainly, moreover, the moral sense of the Church has been grievously shocked by perceiving not only that its faith has been now endangered, but also that all correction of offenders for any of the new forms of unbelief which modern thought may be expected to develop has been rendered hereafter, whilst matters remain as they are, well nigh impossible. 'The present attempt is to set all our teachers absolutely free. The Viscount Amberley and Dean Stanley, with it may be a score of other old deans and young vicars, would abolish all subscription, and the Colensos and Wilsons of the Established Church have shown us with no little clearness what is the

ten of which completed the "bill of fare" at his wedding, to "modify the joy" of the occasion, although he had arrived at the temperate age of thirty-two. Romish writers might well deem the great reformer worse cursed than Arius for his apostasy. Life was stormy, but he stood like a rock amid the bursting tempests and heaving billows, exiled by enemies, banished by friends. His discipline was reviled, his doctrines contemned. Disaffected Genevese named their dogs "Calvin," while his polemical adversaries excited his choler with charges against his favorite doctrine of predestination: "He makes us wood and stone by his notions of fate." He teaches "the fate of the Stoics." "He makes God the author of sin." "His God is a tyrant—a poetical Jupiter."

"Calvin's God is a hypocrite, a liar, and double-tongued." Modern days have said nothing severer than was said to his face in his own lifetime. 3. We may admire the manner in which he impressed himself on his own and succeeding times. He alone of theologians succeeded in impressing the doctrines of predestination and election upon the popular mind. His Institutes were the great book of English Universities for a hundred years. Finally, Dr. Wentworth spoke of the indebtedness of the Methodist denomination to Calvin, although for a century the pulpits of that Church have abounded with denunciations of the great reformer. The thought of the massesis concrete. It is dialectically necessary to demolish men in order to demolish their principles.

Calvin has been abused to get at Calvinism, and it had been torn up root and branch to demolish a single objectionable feature of the system. Yet the speaker considered the work to be one of supererogation. Calvinists had destroyed Calvinism—it had perished in the house of its own friends. It had been well asked, if the great reformer should rise from the grave, where would he find pure, unadulterated Calvinism? "The great doctrine of predestination," says Calvin's German biographer, "after it had gained a complete victory in the Reformed Church, and annihilated Roman Catholic Pelagianism, sunk from the firmament." The "mystery lies beyond the circle of human inquiry."

We may profitably omit discussion which begins and ends with the inscrutable. Methodist views of the sacrament are substantially those of Calvin. Methodist preachers are lay and not priestly. Methodist ordination is Presbyterial. Methodists ought to adopt Calvin's jealous care of the rights of the laity. So fearful was he of clerical assumption that he introduced two laymen for one priest into the ecclesiastical councils of Geneva.

As a denomination, the Methodist Church might rejoice that, though once heretics, they were now in fellowship with the communions that revere the name of Calvin—imitating the piety, intellectuality, and zeal of those who show "every good word and work" (by a singular paradox) alongside a theory that, if carried out, would paralyze all human effort. It is a singular phenomenon that the purest liberty was nourished in the lap of the dire necessity of Hobbes and Jonathan Edwards. It is another illustration of the tendency of common-sense to override metaphysical theories that the republicanism of the present day has come up with the stern belief and sterner preaching of Geneva, Scotland, Holland, and Old and New England.

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The American Quarterly Church Review for July, opens with a very long and interesting article called "New York City a Field for Church Work," which gives the following statistics: "The number of churches and chapels of the Protestant Episcopal Church in this city is sixty-three. Supposing thirty-one of these churches and chapels to accommodate one thousand worshippers each, and thirty-two to accommodate six hundred each, and we have, provided by the church, accommodations for the worship of God to fifty thousand and eight hundred souls; leaving nine hundred and forty-two thousand and two hundred persons for whom she has made no provision. "According to a late report the Romanists have thirty-one churches, (of which six are for Germans), and sixty-four ministers in the city; the Presbyterians have fifty-five; the Dutch Reformed, twenty-two; the Methodists, forty-one; the Baptists, thirty-three; the Congregationalists, four; the Friends, three; the Unitarians and Universalists, six; the Jews, twenty-four Synagogues; and there are for miscellaneous sects, sixteen buildings or halls. Now, of these two hundred and thirty-five churches and chapels, &c., allowing one hundred of them to accommodate one thousand persons each, and the remainder half that number each, and the estimate is a large one, we have church accommodations of some sort for one hundred and seventy-seven thousand and five hundred persons; and still there are seven hundred and seventy-one thousand and seven hundred persons in this Christian city of New York for whom no provision to worship Almighty God after any form has been made. After allowing all necessary deduction for the young, the aged, the sick and the infirm, who cannot attend upon Public Worship if they would, still the fact stares us in the face that there are hundreds of thousands of persons in this city to-day who could not, even if disposed, worship at Christ's altars in any form or manner whatever."

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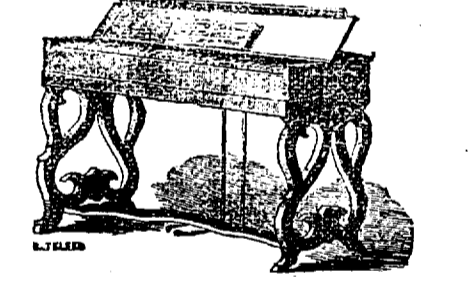
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