

Correspondence.

CORRESPONDENCE IN CHINA.

INQUIRERS.—PERPLEXING CASES.

The relations of the missionary to professed inquirers after the truth are most important and solemn. It is often a work of amazing difficulty to fathom a man's motives on any subject whatever.

It is becoming quite common for persons to come to us with high professions of love for the truth and willingness to learn more about it. And there, too, is a difference in the cases thus presented.

AN ILLUSTRATION.—A BEGGAR OR AN INQUIRER.

I will state, in illustration, a recent case from the literary class. Seven or eight years since, an individual was in the habit of attending the exercises at one of our chapels.

He has written me three letters, in which there is a curious mingling of the religious and material elements of his experience. The first letter is politely inscribed *ping* (petition).

In his second letter he speaks of the Great Shepherd, of himself as a lost sheep, and of missionaries as shepherds who ought to pity and seek out the wandering ones.

In his third letter he speaks of having renounced idols, and turned to Christ, and then draws a sad picture of his dreadful straits.

His family would be scattered, and the laws of heaven violated. "The dilemma is a fearful one—no means of living, and yet suicide sinful."

Now, are all his professions false? He asks for temporal aid. He has continued to do so, even after being told that we usually regard "place-seeking" by inquirers as a suspicious circumstance in regard to their sincerity.

THE PERPLEXITY.—PRAYER ASKED.

You at once perceive the trying position we occupy in regard to such cases, and the objections that lie against any course that may be adopted.

I have given one specimen and it will prove suggestive to any who feel disposed to examine it. We cannot, indeed, give aid and comfort to all the distressed.

The subject may be allowed to point a moral. Missionaries are needy. The best need more grace, the wisest more wisdom.

THE MISSION AMONG THE PAPUAS OF AUSTRALASIA.

[We prefix an account, which may not be familiar to all, of the character of the people alluded to in the subjoined article from the *Evangelische Kirchenzeitung*.]

There are two distinct native classes in Australasia, "one of negroes called Papuas, and one belonging to the Malay race. The Papuas inhabit New Holland, New Guinea, Louisiade, the Solomon Islands, New Hebrides, New Britain and New Caledonia; and in New Holland, particularly, they have projecting lips and woolly hair, like all other negroes, from whom they are distinguished by very thin, lean arms and legs."

These facts will enable the reader more thoroughly to appreciate the hindrances to missionary effort in Australasia, and the amazing success delineated in the testimony which follows.

[Translated from the *Kirchenzeitung*.]

The writer of these lines has still a lively recollection of having been present, while yet a student, at a mission festival in Dresden, more than twenty-three years ago; on which occasion the well-known Einsiedel read the annual report. It made then a deep impression upon me, that this distinguished man was not ashamed of the cross of Christ; still more, however, was I affected by

his description of the apparently insurmountable difficulties that surrounded the mission among the Papuas. The missionaries of the Society had lost all courage, and all hope ever to gain access with the Gospel message to the insupportable savages among whom they had been appointed to labor; and for this reason begged earnestly to be recalled.

With the blessings of faith came also those of a developing civilization. The cultivated fields have furnished abundant harvests of barley, wheat and potatoes. All the natives of the colony, men and women, wear clothes made in European style, which, with few exceptions, they have earned by their own labor.

The children, about thirty in number, attend school every day, and make satisfactory progress. The most advanced read the Bible with facility, write neatly, and cipher tolerably well.

Thus the light has begun to shine upon a people sitting in unparalleled darkness.

CORRESPONDENCE IN SOUTHERN ILLINOIS.

DEAR BROTHER:—It is more than a year since I came to Carrollton. Then the old-fashioned stage, running thirty-five miles south to Alton, and ten miles north to Whitehall, kept open our communications with the rest of the world.

Now all this is changed. The St. Louis, Jacksonville and Chicago Railroad is in fine running order as far north as Petersburg, Jacksonville, the seat of several fine schools and colleges, as well as the chosen site of our State Asylums for the Blind, the Insane and the Mute, is only an hour and a half from us on the north, and to the south, within easy distance, lie Alton and St. Louis.

Religiously, our county presents the idea of being considered a part of Egypt; but I cannot help thinking that the

shadow of that dark land at least rests upon us. There are regions of moral darkness and spiritual destitution, which present a strong contrast to the material prosperity that everywhere abounds. In our village, which contains about two thousand people, the Presbyterians, the Methodists, the Baptists, the Campbellites and the Romanists have each a flourishing church. Being pastor of the first, you will permit me to add a few facts concerning it.

Already it is seeking to gird itself for this work, by erecting a new and more commodious house of worship than the one now in use. The money for this purpose is pledged by our own people. We do not go abroad for a dollar.

Toward the moral and religious education of our youth and children, an advance was made during the past week by the organization of a county Sabbath-school Convention. A fair representation from different parts of the county was present.

Our church at Walnut Grove, eight miles east of Carrollton, has been greatly prospered under the ministry of Rev. J. R. Armstrong.

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Now, Birmingham, Pa., is said to be the dirtiest place in all America. But a principle of compensation is said to extend through grace as well as through nature.

voice that will be heard by ten thousand ears. It cries out of the clouds of smoke that wrap us round: I am black but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem.

These good deeds are not unappreciated, and the donors will not be unblesed.

The liberal soul shall be made fat.

P. S. DAVIES.

BIRMINGHAM, PA., July 28, 1866.

LETTER FROM CAPE MAY.

DEAR EDITOR:—This ever popular watering place is again crowded to overflowing; and no wonder, for there is nothing on earth so invigorating as this glorious ocean breeze. It met us the moment we arrived, and has been fanning us day and night ever since.

Sitting upon the shore, watching by the hour the ceaseless roll of the billows, or driving along the hard, level beach, are pleasures that we never weary of. We are enjoying, too, a full moon, with an almost cloudless sky, and certainly no more sublime sight is ever offered to human vision than the grand expanse of the moonlit sea, shining like molten silver far out to the horizon; not a "path of rays," as the poet has it, but a wide expanse of brilliant whiteness, that brings to mind the "sea of glass mingled with fire," as seen in vision by John.

The telescope from the side-walk on Chestnut street is on the beach every night, and many take a peep at the moon and the planets who never think of doing so when at home. The spherical roundness of the moon comes out beautifully when viewed at the full. The deep fissures, valleys, mountain-ranges, and craters of extinct volcanoes appear very distinctly.

The ladies will be interested to know that the profusion of elegant dresses and the show of jewelry and diamonds exceeds anything that was ever seen here before. The question with many ladies appears to be, how much of expensive and gorgeous finery they can possibly display.

The little Presbyterian church here is pressed into heavy duty on the Sabbath. At nine o'clock in the morning the Episcopalians use it. They pack it *crush* full. At eleven they leave it, and the Presbyterians enter. The scene at the door, as one set crowds out and the other crowds in, is novel.

On last Sabbath, Rev. Dr. Seiss, the popular Lutheran divine of your city, preached, and the church was filled to overflowing—pews, aisles, gallery and vestibule. Such a mass of well-dressed listeners, from all parts of the land, must have formed an exciting audience for an appreciating minister, and richly did the Doctor repay the waiting assembly.

The first germ of piety in the soul of Paul was doubtless formed at the stoning of the martyr Stephen, but its development into life occurred on the way to Damascus. Timothy, on the contrary, dates the commencement of life in his soul (without being conscious of any turning-point) far back in the teachings of his pious mother and grandmother.

Most beautiful and pathetic was his contrast of the enduring, indestructible nature of the Christian life, with the

fading, evanescent character of all earthly things. The expansive, ever-growing character of the Christian life brought out sublime thought; and at the close, an appeal was made, tender, direct and searching, to those who *fight away* this heavenly life, which it is their Maker's wish that every man should possess.

Such impassioned, fervid, animated delivery is seldom enjoyed when a minister reads every word, as does the Director; but he has a way of having his eyes more upon the audience than the manuscript, and this easy reading is one secret of his power. Few preachers say what is so good, and throw their soul into what they say, as does this gifted divine.

The choir of the church deserves special mention. The first hymn given out was "Safely through another week." The congregation was all ready to sing with a will, as the words reminded them of home services; but the choir moved to the worship by singing an old-fashioned tune that nobody knew. The second hymn came, and the choir having displayed their artistic ability, we supposed that they would allow us to join in the worship. But the audience was again disappointed, many closing their hymn books. We fared no better at the close of worship. A new tune, made up of odds and ends, in which were discoverable traces of "Antioch," "Silver Street," and one or two other tunes, effectually prevented the swell of praise which the crowded assembly was ready to offer.

A morning prayer-meeting is kept up daily in one of the churches. The meetings are interesting and refreshing. Brethren from the West take part along with Philadelphians and others, and lend variety to the exercises.

CAPE MAY, July 31, 1866.

TWO QUESTIONS.

No question can be more important than this: Are you resting and depending upon Jesus Christ alone, and with all your heart for if not, you may as well give up all pretensions to godliness, for you have not any if you have not begun on this foundation. "Other foundations can no man lay than that which is laid." Come, then, be no exceptions here. That excellent disposition, that devout ceremony, all that is nothing at all, unless you begin by disclaiming all good works and all human merits, and come to rest on the Lord Jesus and upon his finished work and righteousness. Now, that is the first question: begin with Christ, if you can see that that and say, "Yes, blessed be God, I do in that respect, walk according to the commandment;" then next, I want you, Christian, to answer this: Is there anything which you are now indulging which you know to be wrong, or which you must know to be wrong if you took the trouble to search? Then I charge you, by your allegiance to Christ, give it up now. The leak sinks a ship, and one sin really labored will be a proof that the grace of God is not in you. You may fall into one sin, may fall into fifty sins, and yet be a Christian; but you cannot live in one sin, and love one sin, and be a Christian, for it is indispensably necessary to vital godliness that all sin should be the subject of your heart's disapproval. What about this? My dear brother, saved in Christ, is this any one command of your Master which you have neglected? I shall give no more about what it may happen to be, for it must be a different one in every case; but there one thing that you might do: Is there one service which you might render your Master which you have not rendered? Then I charge you, as you hope to be approved in the day of judgment, and as the sincerity of your attachment to the Lord, see that one thing be done, and do it at once, with all your heart.—*Spurgeon*.

THE JOY OF A CHRISTIAN LIFE.

A life of sound religious principle has joys. It is not that cold, dreary, inactive tract of country which it is so often described to be. Let the picture be drawn with candor and impartiality, and amidst few fleeting clouds, there will be sunshine to gild the scenery. The evening more particularly of a religious life must ever be painted in glowing colors. And if the life of a real Christian could be analyzed, it would be found to contain particles of satisfaction than the life of other man. But make, I entreat you, experiment for yourselves; and you will find the "ways of religion are the ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." And if they be so in the present world, what joys will they lead you to in the world to come! There every cloud will be dispelled, every mist dispersed; the sun will be drawn aside; we shall no longer see through a glass darkly, but shall see God face to face. We shall rest from labors; all tears shall be wiped from our faces; and nothing will be heard but thanksgiving and the voice of melody. Then we shall look back upon the trials, temptations, and vicissitudes of life, as the Israelites, when arrived in earthly Canaan, looked back upon the bondage of Egypt, the terrors of the wilderness, and the passage of the Red Sea. We shall commune together of these things which have happened. "Did not our Lord burn within us while our great Leader, Captain of our salvation, talked with us the way, and opened to us the Scriptures? Did we not anticipate that which we actually enjoy? Blessed forever be the Father, who have given us this glorious inheritance! Forever blessed be the Son, who has purchased it with his own blood! Blessed through all ages be God the Holy Ghost, who has sanctified us, and made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance with the saints in light."—*Rev. P. Beachcroft*.