

Missionary Intelligence.

(From the Missionary Magazine.)

CHINA.

LETTER FROM MR. ASHMORE.

Scalow, April 4, 1871.—The two stations under charge more particularly of the native church, have yielded us great encouragement, and at the same time have been the occasion of much solicitude. The Tang O brethren have been subjected to something of a test of constancy; but it promises to end grandly.

The circumstances were odd enough. Several months ago a ship was wrecked on the reef near their village, and, Chinese-like, the whole town turned out to gather the pieces of lumber that were washed ashore. Some three or four of our members assisted in the haul; but they came the next day and told me what they had got. I told them they should at once deliver them up, and wait patiently for the proper official to appportion their salvage. This they did. Meanwhile the matter was taken in hand by the English consul, and the Mandarins pounced on all the villages around to make good the claim. The lumber constituting the cargo was soon all delivered up; but the Mandarins put in, as their manner is, a heavy demand for hard cash in addition,—no small share of which would lodge in their own pockets, as is the fashion of the country. But these people were wretchedly poor, and as money could not be had, they were assessed a certain percentage of their incoming sugar crop.

So far, all was well. As the amount was levied on the village, everybody had to pay. But now the head men of the village, who were made responsible, proceeded to assess a little more on their own account, as their pockets also needed lining. Hereupon many began to demur. Among them, the brethren said they would cheerfully pay the original assessment, notwithstanding they had, as they considered, quite rectified their share of the wrong, and that before the Mandarins came to take up the case. But this was too much and they began to talk of an appeal.

Upon this, the head men became angry, and said they would not now have any of the disciples' sugar, but they would, on the other hand, turn their relations out of the synagogue; that is, they would allow them to have no share of the village gods, henceforth and forever. As for the brethren themselves, this was quite to their satisfaction, as they had renounced the village gods of their own free will. But their relations were not believers, and they did not wish to involve them in trouble. So they had a consultation with their unbelieving relatives, and several families told the believing members to go ahead, and they would take their share of the consequence if things did not go right with the "Village Gods."

Encouraged by all this, one or two of the more zealous among them preferred to build a small house for the worship of the living God, to which they could invite their unconverted relatives who had been thrust out. So they began, and raised twenty dollars—quite a sum for people who have to live, much of the time, on sweet potatoes for breakfast, dinner, and supper. I have guaranteed the rest, which, together with a donation from the American consul, will enable them to get things started. So, if all is well, in a few months they will have a small, unpretending place of worship of their own.

I feel much obliged to the head men of that village for having facilitated what I had anticipated would cost me so much patience and perseverance.

MAULMAIN.—In the Burman school of Mr. Haswell, the number of pupils on the catalogue is 110,—being more than for many years. Both Mr. and Mrs. H. give instruction daily.

We regret to hear the paralytic disease of Dr. Haswell is somewhat aggravated, and his strength is declining. He communicates, however by the hand of an amanuensis the following information: "On the first Sabbath in March I had the privilege of baptising the captain, two mates, two seamen and the cabin boy of an English ship, having previously baptised the sail-maker of the same vessel. The captain not only attended chapel himself, but frequently brought twelve or fourteen of his crew. It is cause for joy that there are some such captains, whose ships are Bethels, whether in port or at sea."

ASSAM.—Mr. Clark urges the necessity of more missionaries for Assam. He says: "We are approaching a critical period. The

Hindu faith shows symptoms of a general breaking up, like the ice on the rivers and lakes in the spring. Now is the time for the truths of Christianity to be lovingly, yet forcibly presented by the cultured mind of an American missionary. We ought to strike somewhere for the Nagas." After enumerating several needy and promising points, he adds: "Six more men we should have in Assam proper."

SIAM.—Dr. Dean remarks that some things in the churches connected with the Chinese mission of Bangkok are hopeful. Some of the members seem ripening for harvest work, or the heavenly home; others need to learn what are the first principles of doctrine and duty.

WHAT THE POPE DREADS.—When a deputation of French Catholics had presented their congratulations to the Pope on the occasion of his anniversary, he returned his acknowledgments but added: "Nevertheless, I must speak the truth to France. There is in France a more formidable evil than the revolution, a more formidable evil than the Commune with its men let loose from hell, who flung fire about Paris, and that is Catholic Liberalism." Could arrogant bigotry go farther? Shameful that a pope boasting of his infallibility should denounce the thoughtful, reverent students of the Word of God, as more to be dreaded than the sacrilegious, atheistic wretches who sacked the churches of Paris and murdered the archbishop and scores of priests in cold blood.—Exchange.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

ITALIAN BRIGANDS.

In the days of Pope Leo XII, who ascended the Papal throne in 1823, the States of the Church were sorely infested by robbers. There was no safety for the traveller. Many a father left his home, never to return, or, if he did return, was reduced to poverty by the payment of the exorbitant ransom which he was compelled to give to the banditti who had captured him. The government failed to protect its subjects. There was a general sense of insecurity.

Monsignor Pellgrini, an ecclesiastical dignitary, entered into negotiations with a band of the brigands, and offered them, on the part of the government, a free pardon and liberal pensions, if they would surrender, and quit the Papal States, engaging never to return. They accepted the offer, and the whole band, twenty-two in number, surrendered. They were conducted to Civita Vecchia, expecting to be furnished with a passage to some foreign port. But they were deceived. Instead of being allowed to leave the country they were thrown into prison, and informed that the imprisonment would be for life. Pope Leo XII broke faith with them.

In 1829, LEO XII died, and was succeeded by CASTELIONI, who became Pope PIUS VIII. What deeds of money or justice were performed by him, the present chronicler does not record. He reports only that the imprisoned brigands remained in jail the victims of Papal treachery.

PIUS VIII died in 1830, and MAURUS CAPPELARI next occupied the priestly throne, under the name of GREGORY XVI. He, too, suffered the prisoners to pine away within the stone walls.

GREGORY XVI died in 1846, and MASTAI FERRETTI, now Pope PIUS IX, took his place. He has ruled in Rome twenty-five years. But the prison doors have been kept fast barred and bolted, save that as one after another of the inmates died, the corpses were carried out for burial. Fifteen of the prisoners were removed in that way.

These men had been committed to prison without trial. There was no *habeas corpus* act in Italy, and so there appeared to be no hope of regaining their freedom. But the entry of the king of Italy into Rome changed the state of affairs. "PIETRO MAST" (we quote the *Times*), "the only man in the band who could read or write, represented to the King that GASPARONE the robber-chief and his followers had never been tried or even indicted, and that, whatever might be their crimes—GASPARONE himself is said to have at least fifty murders, besides arson, rapes, and burglaries on his conscience—the law had lost its hold upon them after more than thirty [forty] years proscription, and they were now entitled to a full and free release. The justice of their demand was admitted, the seven prisoners are now at large, and, if not pensioned, are at least provided with means of susten-

ance at a charitable asylum for decrepit old men.

"The report of their arrival re-awakened in Rome the memories of their former exploits, giving full scope to that popular love of the marvellous and the terrible which draws such glowing pictures from traditions dimmed and blurred by a long lapse of time. The old cut-throat heroes drove through the streets of new Rome as the relics of that old Italy from which, it is to be hoped, a whole age of progress separates the present generation. GASPARONE is now 77 years of age, and his youngest companion is only ten years his junior. The old miscreants made their appearance in the Corso, in the Piazza Farnese, and the Campo dei Fiori, in their gala costume—conical hats with flying ribbons and peacock feather's velvet jackets and shorts, crimson silk sashes, and high gaiters; their snowy locks and beards, which reached down to their shoulders and breasts, enhancing the glance of their dark eyes, their wild but fine features, and their firm and erect bearing, indicative of a manly strength which nearly half a century's captivity had not wholly subdued. A curiosity not unmixed with a certain admiration wrung cheers from the crowd which pressed everywhere on their path, the object of general interest being, of course, the Chief, GASPARONE himself, who, besides deeds of daring worthy of a second FRA DIAVOLO, boasts of very close relationship with Cardinal ANTONELLI, the son of his mother's sister, twelve years younger than himself.

"Themselves a wonder to the world, these old ruffians gazed upon the world with wonder, the discoveries of our age, gas-lights, steam engines, telegraph wires, photographic apparatus, and especially revolvers, filling them with as much surprise as if they were the Seven Sleepers just roused from a half-century's slumbers."

The *Times* closes the account of this transaction in the following words:—"We must be allowed to hope that with the consolidation of the Government and the spread of education there will be either a wiser system of prevention or stronger machinery for the repression of crime. But in the meanwhile we may congratulate ourselves that we live in better times than those of Antonio GASPARONE and ANNIBALE DELLA GENGA [LEO XII]—the days in which a robber without mercy could only be put down by a Pope without faith."

C.

MENTAL CULTURE.

WHAT ARE THE PROPER SUBJECTS OF A COLLEGE CURRICULUM?

One of our correspondents last week referred to the Address of Professor Higgins at the recent opening of the Session of Acadia College, as one well worthy of publication. We have been permitted to peruse it and fully endorse the opinion. We have much pleasure in being able to place so much of it as is suited for the general reader in our columns. What are the proper subjects of a College Curriculum? is a question that is being examined closely and discussed with much ability at the present time, and we doubt not that Professor Higgins's paper will be of service to many who are exercising their thoughts upon that question:—

The points we have urged thus far may be briefly recapitulated thus. First, the grand benefit of study to a young man perparing for life's duties is not learning, but culture. Secondly, for the purposes of culture, that which excites the most general, vigorous and healthy mental effort is the most effective. These positions are by no means new. They are the old foundations upon which the systems of education have all along been built; and though they are evidently overlooked by many of those in our day who theorize or experiment on education, yet are they so manifestly sound as to commend themselves to any man of judgment who will look them fairly in the face. Let us, in the light of these views, examine briefly some of the objections so frequently urged against the subjects embraced in the Curriculum of College study; and endeavour to discover in what direction and with what limitations useful changes might be introduced. And first it may be proper to note a distinction that is not always clearly drawn between Collegiate and Technical Education. Schools of Technology, or Medicine, or Law, or Divinity, are from the nature of the case shut up to particular classes of studies. The education they impart is not general but special. It is their aim to qualify men for the discharge of certain specific duties—duties which require a knowledge of certain special facts

and principles. Institutions of this class may therefore be obliged sometimes to include studies that are not in the highest degree suited to develop the mind. But collegiate education is not beset with the same difficulties. A college aims not to make doctors or lawyers, but only to make men, and it must therefore use such means as will best secure this latter result. The course of study in a college must be arranged solely with reference to its adaptedness to promote the intellectual growth of the student.

We have a right to insist that a Medical School shall include in its course of study all those subjects a knowledge of which is necessary to the medical practitioner, whether the study of them is, or is not well adapted to promote intellectual growth. We have no right to require such a school to teach any thing that is not of practical utility in the profession. Culture is with it, in some degree, a secondary aim, and we have no cause to complain if it is made to hold a subordinate place. With the College, this is reversed. Culture is the grand aim, and every thing else must be made subordinate to it. If we allow any other aim to control the selection of studies we destroy the true character of the college as a college, and make it partake of that of the Technical school. Its objects would no longer be to produce intellectual athletes, but to turn out men more or less qualified for this or that pursuit in life. This is evidently the misconception of those who clamor most loudly against the usual course of collegiate study. Holding by an incorrect ideal, they apply a false criticism, overlooking or undervaluing the true work of a college, they complain because it does not do that which is the special business of institutions of a different class, but which is, in no proper sense, the duty of a college. On this ground rests the objection, already referred to, to certain studies in the curriculum on the score of their being not applicable directly to the business in which the student will be engaged in after life. Such a criticism against a school of Medicine or Law, or Divinity would be valid. But against a College, it has no force whatever. It shows only that the man who urges it has misapprehended the matter. If it could be shown that some of the studies included in the College course are ill adapted to promote mental development and growth, this would be a valid and a serious objection, and one which would demand the best efforts of college authorities to provide a remedy.—

But, so far as I know, no such objection has been urged; certainly not against those studies upon which the greatest share of opprobrium has been heaped. Those who would have us abolish Latin and Greek for example, and put French and German in their stead, urge the change for the most part for no better reason than that the latter being living tongues are likely to come into more frequent use than the former. A merchant will not unfrequently have to translate a French letter before filling the orders it encloses, or a Bill of exchange before getting it cashed; and as no such blessed missives ever come to him in Latin, he has no hesitation in affirming that, of the two, French is by far the most valuable acquisition, and that the study of it ought to supersede that of Latin in the College course. Here and there a man with some juster appreciation of the true issues of the question will venture to defend the change on higher grounds, urging that the studies which it is proposed to substitute are equally adapted to the purposes of culture, and have the additional advantage of their ulterior utility. But that they are equally adapted to the purposes of culture is the point which requires proof, and for which as yet no satisfactory proof has been adduced. Indeed the argument, whether conducted *a priori* or *a posteriori*, seems to point strongly in the opposite direction. Any one who has occupied himself with the study of the classics, and who has noted the operations of his own mind while so employed, can scarcely fail to have felt that the study is eminently suited to promote mental culture. It cultivates in a high degree the memory, the judgement, the taste and the imagination. It begets the habit of careful discrimination. It induces accuracy of scholarship without the dogmatism with which accuracy is too apt to be associated. And it brings the student into intimate contact with some of the ablest thinkers the world has ever seen. In short there is probably no study which could so ill be spared from the Curriculum as that of the ancient Classics. They fill a place in the work of education, which no thing as yet discovered can adequately supply. Other subjects have been substituted as an experiment, but with no very encouraging result. The men trained according to the

improved modern methods are usually smart men, full of knowledge, confident of success, and zealous for the promotion of the world's progress, but, as a rule, they lack much of that breadth of culture and genuine refinement which is characteristic of those who have enjoyed the benefits of classical training.

The objection to advanced Mathematical studies is not pressed quite so frequently, or so urgently, as that against the Classics. When it is urged the objection usually rests on two supports, first that these studies are dry and difficult; and second that they lie remote from ordinary affairs.

The statement that they are dry is one in which I do not wholly concur. The facts and conclusions with which they deal certainly do not appeal strongly to our sympathies. They contain nothing sensational or thrilling. And yet I have observed that these subjects never lack interest to him who clearly understands them. The recognition of truth, whether standing alone or forming a link in a chain connecting higher truths with those that are lower, is always a source of pleasure to him who can see it distinctly. If a study seems to any one to be dry and uninteresting, it is generally not the fault of the study, but is the result of the imperfectness of the grasp with which he has laid hold of it. All that is necessary for the most part in order to transform a dry study into an interesting one, is to spend a little more effort in mastering it, of course the more difficult a subject is, the more likely it will be to be imperfectly understood and therefore to be regarded as uninteresting. The studies to which reference has been made are not wholly free from difficulty, but this is not in itself, certainly, a solid ground of objection. On the contrary, difficulty is one of the prime virtues of any study that can claim a right to a plan in the curriculum of a college. If it presents no difficulties, it would be useless as a college exercise; and within the limits of the student's ability, the more difficult it is, as a rule, the more valuable it will be. The more he has to wrestle with difficulties the more it will tend to strengthen his sinews and make him a vigorous man. Let us settle it in our hearts, once for all, that useful study involves hard work, and, that if one can succeed in picking his way so as to have an easy course, it will generally be a useless one. *Nil sine labore* is a maxim of very wide application, but is especially true of culture.

As regards the objection that the abstract portion of the Mathematics have no practical bearing on the world's industries it would be quite sufficient to show that according to previous arguments the objection is wholly irrelevant. But as a matter of fact these studies are not so far removed from practical affairs as might at first appear. Many of the rules which practical men employ every day without knowing quite what they mean or upon what principles they are founded, can be adequately understood only by the study of the Higher Mathematics. Besides it occasionally happens that some of the lines of argument therein wrought out will apply not inappropriately to some of the popular topics of the day. For instance when Darwin showed that an animal in its successive generations could undergo an unlimited number of changes in a given direction, and from that fact drew the inference that animals might undergo an unlimited amount of change, and thereby be transformed into animals of a different species, it was not quite clear to every one how the premises could be true without involving the truth of the conclusion. It seemed not unreasonable to infer that an unlimited number of increments would produce an unlimited amount of increase. But to one familiar with the principles of the Calculus, the fallacy would be at once apparent, since by the law of limits therein discussed it is shown that a thing may be increased an infinite number of times and yet the whole increase be but an exceedingly small amount. Successive generations of cows might have their necks elongated through an infinite number of generations and yet the neck of the last cow of the series be only a fraction of an inch longer than that of the first. Of course, under these circumstances, a giraffe could not with any certainty be predicated as the result of the changes however numerous they might be.

The true end secured by the study of the higher mathematics is however quite apart from all this. Its utility as a College study consists in its adaptedness to develop the power of pure abstract reasoning. It introduces the student to a region of thought where the blinding storms of passion and prejudice and self-interest are un-