

MISCELLANEOUS.

MISSIONARY WORK IN THE INTERIOR OF CHINA.

A LETTER FROM THE REV. PETER RIJNHART.

September 16, 1897.

Your kind letters and books came duly to hand, for all of which receive my thanks. We read them all with great interest, especially the *Gospel of Buddha*. We find in our work amongst the Buddhists here that though the books they have contain such excellent teaching, there are only a handful (from among the priesthood) who to any extent live up to that teaching. In fact we find the same here as we do at home, where Christians with the Bible in the hand go even completely contrary to its sublime teaching. Among our friends we count three or four living Buddhas, reincarnations who receive worship of man. One of them, Cho é ni Kambo, was greatly interested in us having the words of him whom they call Shach Kya Munni in our language.

I would have written before this, but your letter came while we were attending the large numbers of wounded belonging to the imperial troops, just after the suppression of the rebellion. In the bustle connected with this work your letter became misplaced, but then we had the books. Only lately it turned up, and I am sending these lines to thank you. We made a trip in the brigand district south of the Koko lake, and I think the following notes of our journey will interest you. We may not agree as regards doctrine, yet we may be interested in each other's thoughts and work.

Long had I yearned to be able to get the south of the Kokonor to give the Gospel to some of the numerous Tibetan brigands there. But for lack of funds, not being able to buy the animals needed to carry tents, books, that is, Tibetan scriptures, provisions, etc., I had been obliged to wait and pray for an opportunity when I should be able to carry out my plans without having to incur the expense of extra animals so very much needed for any extensive work amongst the nomads around and west of the lake. And I welcomed with great joy an invitation to go and operate on an old man's eye who was blind with cataract, and whose encampment, five or six days' journey from here, was right in the district inhabited by the robbers we wanted to reach—and for fear of whom only heavily armed parties dared to cross that part. As far as I know, no European ever came there, much less a missionary with the word of life for those in darkness and in the shades of death.

I was therefore the more delighted as the man whose father we were to attend to was to supply the animals to carry the things we wanted to take, and bring us back here in twenty days. In having him as our guide gives us a certain safety, being a robber amongst robbers; nevertheless we do well to take any firearms we

have, as rifles and revolvers, less to shoot with than to show off to any bands we might chance to come across, as if to say, "We are ready for you." On the 12th of August we start, taking besides Gospels, tent, pots, and for food dried dough-strings, roasted barley meal, butter, and pressed tea leaves. Our party consists of our patient's son; a Panaka Tibetan; a lama; his bookkeeper; our servant, a Tibetan from Ladak; my wife, who wants to get acquainted with the women there, and myself, carrying Charles, our little boy, forty-two days old, while Topsy, our dog, runs between the horses' feet as excited as if she knew where we were going and what important services she is to perform for us at night. A journey in these regions differs from travelling at home in a railway carriage in which one enjoys while travelling so much comfort. It even differs greatly from travel in China which is in many respects very comfortable in one's hired boat or cart, mule, litter, or sedan chair. Every night one is brought (overland travel) to an inn where for a few sapeks one gets a room, bedstead, food, etc. Here this is not so; the journey is made on horseback—in the saddle from daylight till 4 p. m.—and the only things one looks for at that time is a place with good grass, near fresh water, where some days previous cows have grazed, so that the cow dung, now dry, may serve as fuel. This found, the yaks are unloaded, the tent put up, a fire of dry manure made, and the pot placed above it on three stones.

Then on a journey here no food can be bought, so that provisions have to be taken in large quantities (in encampments one can always buy meat and milk). Now add to such inconveniences the constant strain upon one's nerves while travelling through passes, gullies, and glens for fear of being pounced upon by a band of robbers, and you have a faint idea of the whole. And this is travelling in the steppes of Northeast Tibet.

On the morning of the second day one of our Tibetan's yaks died, in spite of the long-continued incantations of the lama, which he uttered while stroking the back and sides of the yak with his sword. Five long stages we made, four along the seashore. During those days we off and on came in contact with Panaka. On the fifth day we arrived at the encampment—without meeting any robbers I should not say, because we saw some all the time, even travelling with them—but at any rate without any assault from them.

This encampment consists of seven tents, while further along the shore there are many more. In this camp there are horses, cows (or yaks), sheep, goats, dogs, and dirty men, women, and children, the latter three more dirty here than in any other part we have been.

The tents are made of a stuff made of wool manufactured by the natives. This cloth is stretched over ropes which are held up by poles. Seen from a distance, they appear like huge spiders. In the centre of the cloth a strip is left open to give an exit to the smoke ascending from the temporary furnace just below it which divides the tent into two parts. On the right-hand side is the place of honor. Here guests are received, and at night the men sleep there, while the women, the children, some kids, lambs, and in this case also a little deer, occupy the other side. Their possessions, as small bags of barley, bales of wool, are placed all around the sides and back of the tent on stones.

The inhabitants of those tents, as I remarked above, are dirty—*very*. They are a healthy, strong set of people, comparing very favorably with the Chinese, a race destroyed by vices such as opium-smoking, drinking, etc. The man's clothing consists of a short garment of cotton with wide lambskin collar, over which they wear a longer sheepskin gown, reaching to the knees, a pair of pants and top boots.

There are some that have the Chinese queue, others have not; a felt hat trimmed with lambskin covers their heads. The women wear a long sheepskin reaching near the ground, a pair of top boots, and a hat similar to those of the men only lower. Their hair is divided and braided into about fifty tiny braids. The needs of this people are few. Each man a matchlock, sword, flint and steel, knife and chopsticks, and each man a basin of wood. Each family has a tent, some sheep, cows, horses, etc.

On the whole they are a jolly lot, laughing and joking is very common amongst them, though their encampments are innocent of any musical instruments excepting drum and cymbals, used in reading their Bibles. The men go armed to the hills with the flocks and herds, while the women at home are occupied in making cheese, butter, and they also press out and dry in the sun the manure cakes for burning; but even after this dirty work they seldom wash their hands, only wiping them on the grass, and shortly after, with those dirty fingers, milk the cows or mix their barley meal, butter, and tea without a thought as to its being dirty. Their children are never washed, but soon after they are born are rubbed all over with butter and put to roast in the sun.

On the third day after arrival I was fortunate in removing the entire lens in operating for cataract, and there are hopes of restored sight in the eye operated on. Every evening after the animals return from the pasture many Panaka gather around our fire, and while they smoke our servant's tobacco out of his pipe in turns we talk with them as we are able, giving Gospels to such as can read, and those that are able to do this seem more abundant than north of the lake.

I estimate low if I say I think that one in every tent of ten or twelve inhabitants can read.

Many lamas frequent our fire, and as we tell them of Jesus our heart yearns for their souls. One evening while talking to some priests one of them asked: What department does this *Jesu Masika* (Tibetan for Jesus Christ) control? Buddhism has many deities, each one having his own faction. Upon telling him that Jesus governs the world—heaven, sun, moon, stars, even our very lives—their god seemed greatly astonished, and doubtless wondered if that was so, where their gods would come in. Among others, we gave books to a party of thirteen priests, who, well laden, returned from obtaining contributions. Two days later the report reached us they had been attacked and robbed, perhaps by the very men who brought us the report. In all, we distributed over two hundred Gospels to priests and laymen, about one for each tent in this district. The books were gladly received and read by those who obtained them, and I estimate that by the books alone over two thousand persons have been reached who never as much as heard of the existence of any other religion than Buddhism. One strange feature about this part is the absolute absence of prayer-flags, and prayer-wheels.

PETER RIJNHART.

TANHAR, N. E. TIBETAN FRONTIER.

[The Rev. Peter Rijnhart, a native of Holland and a Protestant of the Dutch Reformed Church, started for China some years ago with the ardent desire of preaching Christianity to the Tibetans. He reached the frontier, but was not admitted into the country. He is not sent by any special church or missionary society, but depends entirely on voluntary offerings of such people as are interested in him and in his missionary zeal. His friend Mr. Charles T. Paul, 14 Alexander Street, Toronto, Canada, is always glad to receive contributions for the courageous missionary. Mr. Rijnhart's letter is so interesting that we take pleasure in publishing it.—ED.]

THE GOD OF IRON.

i. The God who made the i - ron grow, He want - eth men of i - ron, Who

This system consists of three staves: a vocal line in treble clef and a piano accompaniment in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The music is in common time (C). The vocal line begins with a fermata over the first measure. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line and chords in the right hand.

in all things their manhood show. He scor - neth slave and ty - ran. He

This system continues the musical score. The piano accompaniment includes dynamic markings: *f* (forte) above the vocal line and *f* below the piano accompaniment. The system ends with a *mf* (mezzo-forte) marking.

want - eth men of i - ron will, Men gen - u - ine and re - al,

This system continues the musical score. The piano accompaniment features a consistent rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the bass and chords in the treble.

Whose glowing hearts yet throb and thrill With love of the i - de - al.

This system concludes the musical score. The piano accompaniment features a *f* (forte) dynamic marking. The system ends with a double bar line and repeat signs.

Again and again does she strive to secure
 This prize of all prizes, but who can allure
 With smiles howe'er potent or will of what might
 A sunbeam to break from the path of its light.

She soberly watches it play on the floor
 Till with tears her blue eyes are at last running o'er.
 But her quivering lips soon break into a smile
 That outrivals the sunbeam, as free from all guile.
 And she bends her bright head in a transport of bliss
 And imprints on the sunbeam a sweet baby kiss.

Ah, little one, thou hast a secret revealed,
 The best way to conquer, sometimes is to yield.
 Though sunbeams can never be brought by our will,
 To leave the straight path of reflexion, yet still
 We may enter their warmth, we may live in their light,
 And see them dispel the dark shadows of night.

The sunlight of truth unto mortals does yield
 A ray from the All of Truth still unrevealed.
 You must enter its light, it will not come to you,
 For truth never can to itself be untrue.

BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES.

THE COMPLETE POETICAL WORKS OF THEODORE TILTON. In one volume. With a Preface on Ballad-making, and an Appendix on Old Norse Myths and Fables (London, Fisher Unwin; Oxford, Blackwell; Paris, Brentano, 1897).

Mr. Tilton has brought together into this beautiful volume, constituting a *ne varietur* edition, his complete poetical works. Our readers will find here in their correct and authentic form many poems which have often been unfaithfully quoted and reproduced. We read again here with the increased interest which they merit, poems which have been published from 1867 to the present day, either in volumes or in pamphlets under the titles "The Sexton's Tales," "Thou and I," "Swabian Stories," "Great Town," "The Chameleon's Dish," "Heart's Ease," etc. Mr. Tilton has enriched his book by a remarkable preface in which he emphasises the merits of the rhymed ballad which is so appropriate to the Anglo-Saxon and Teutonic genius, and in which he has discussed with competence the problems that touch the future of poetry in so far as they are the necessary manifestation of the collective soul of each race. He also points out here, and this is not the least novel part of his book, the important rôle which devolves upon Americans in the future destiny of the English language. An appendix replete with erudition completes the volume. Its subject is a study of the gods of the Vikings and of the old Norse mythology constituting a rapid excursion into the proto-history of the nations from which English is derived. The poems themselves are instinct with a noble and pure inspiration. Humor is united with fancy, seriousness with grace. Penetrating criticism will reveal here the inward history of a high mind and the testimony of a personal evolution which is also the general evolution of our time.

L. A.