MISCELLANEOUS.

365

Correspondence on China by a Chinaman.

To the Editor of The Open Court:

At present we are in the midst of an intellectual revolution. Owing to the efforts of reformers like K'ang Yue Wei and Liang Chi Ch'ao, the whole literary classes of China are at last aroused from their former stupor and lethargy, and we may hope to see some tangible results in the near future. The object of the Reform party is at present the restoration of the legitimate Emperor to power, and they believe that when this is accomplished an era of reform and progress will be duly inaugurated. They are at last appealing to the national spirit in the race and must therefore succeed ultimately. Practically, however, they have not accomplished much beyond frightening the Empress Dowager into withdrawing her decree for establishing a new reign with the advent of the current year. This is, however, a great deal to any one who understands Chinese institutions and the autocratic self-will of the Empress Dowager. K'ang is now a refugee here, like Voltaire on the shores of Lake Leman, thundering against Mandarin corruption, oppression, and ignorance. For this reason the reward offered for his head is now Tls. 140,000. To my mind, however, his reform schemes appear too revolutionary and unpractical. Contrary to Confucius, he is striving after the distant and the high instead of the near and the lowly. When he had the Emperor's ear, if instead of abolishing certain old established departments he had advised the abolition of such an obnoxious custom as the "Kowtow"; if instead of recommending the confiscation of all temples throughout the Empire for use as schools, he had contented himself with the founding of a single really useful educational institution; if instead of creating a new fleet and building railways, he had interested himself

1 The author of this letter is a scholar who is exceptionally well versed in Western civilisation. Not having permission to use his name, we omit his signature.
in the restoration of a single roadway in Pekin, he would have earned for himself the respect and gratitude of all. His mistakes, however, were due to his past education. Nevertheless, his influence over the literati in China and elsewhere could not be disputed, and for such practical measures as above indicated we must look to some other Peter the Great or perhaps Napoleon.

ZARATHUSHTRA.

Professor A. V Williams Jackson, the Zend-Avesta Scholar of Columbia University, New York, published in the January number of the Cosmopolitan an in-

teresting illustrated article on Zarathushtra or Zoroaster, the prophet of Iran, born about 666 B. C. The canonical gospels tells us of the three Magi who came from the East to worship Christ and an apocryphal gospel adds the statement that they