

T. Richardson, as far as San Francisco, where she will join a party of missionaries of the Northern Presbyterian Board, with whom she will make the voyage to Japan and Shanghai. Rev. E. Lane and Mrs. Lane sailed from New York in the regular steamer for Rio Janeiro on the 23d inst. These friends are earnestly commended to the prayers of all God's people. Others are expected to leave for both of these missions later in the autumn.

## LETTERS FROM MISSIONARIES.

### China Mission.

*Letter from Rev. M. H. Houston.*

HANCHOU, CHINA, July 25, 1871.

As the hot season is now upon us here, our work moves along more slowly than usual. Mr. Stuart has left this place and returned to Gūchou, and the boys' school has been dismissed for a holiday of a month. Only the smallest boys in the school remain here; the others, together with the teacher, have gone to their homes. Mr. Helm has been favored with stronger health this summer than he had last; and for myself, the bright, hot weather of China agrees with me better than any other. I have met a few other foreigners here who enjoyed this peculiarity.

Beside the ordinary causes for gratitude, we had special reason a short time since to thank God for his good providence over us. We were startled early in the morning by a terrific clap of thunder, so close upon us that my first impression was that our new house had been struck by lightning. It proved, however, that the blow had fallen upon a little house just below us, killing the proprietor. When we saw how our two-story house with its foreign chimneys had been kept safe, while the lightning fell on the low house just beneath, we could not but feel that God had shown us mercy in the sight of this people. This feeling was not lessened when we saw the manner in which the fate of the poor man was regarded by the people. Crowds came to see the scene of the accident, and all were of one voice that the man was undoubtedly the worst man in the city. He had

certainly cheated some one out of his money and driven him to commit suicide, and so heaven struck the wretch dead. Again and again did we have to repeat the words of Christ—"Nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." They were slow to believe, and sometimes replied, "If he were not the worst of men, why did heaven kill him?" I was told by my teacher the next day that no one would bury him, and that the officials had to take the matter in hand. Had it been a foreigner killed, the catalogue of evil reported against him would most probably have had no end. When one of their temples is struck by lightning, the people evade their own logic by saying that an evil spirit took refuge in the temple, and the god struck the building to drive him out.

Certainly the man on whom calamity falls in a heathen land has a hard lot while he lives. To all the distresses under which he groans, there is added the bitter thought that all around look upon him as a criminal who is only getting his dues. Though he has escaped before, yet vengeance now suffereth him not to live. A few days after the occurrence which I have just mentioned, I was sitting in one of the gates of the city, talking with the people, when a sudden gust of wind, seizing the heavy gate, swung it to; and, as it got to its place, it struck a bystander on the head, knocking him down, and causing the blood to flow profusely. The natural feeling of the people was shown at once in their rushing to pick him up, and one man jerked out his own tobacco-pouch and clapped

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## RECENT INTELLIGENCE.

MISSION ROOMS, COLUMBIA, S. C., Nov. 30, 1871.

Mr. A. H. Erwin, a member of Sugar Creek church, near Charlotte, N. C., sailed in the steamer Henry Chauncey from New York for Barranquilla, on the 13th inst. He goes out to establish a school in connexion with the Mission at Barranquilla, and is commended to the prayerful remembrance of God's people.

We have letters from the Brazil Mission as late as the 23d October. Mr. and Mrs. Lane arrived at Rio Janeiro on the 20th of October in good health, having had a pleasant and expeditious voyage. They expected to proceed to Campinas by the first favorable opportunity. By the same mail a letter was received from the Rev. Mr. Morton, dated Campinas, October 19th. He was excellent health at the time. His letter is mainly occupied with facts and details connected with the recent abolition of slavery throughout the Empire of Brazil.

We have letters from China to the 16th October. The letter addressed to the Church by the Mission, published in our present issue, in behalf of a populous region of China that has never yet enjoyed the blessings of the gospel, deserves the serious and prayerful consideration of all God's people, and we commend it especially to the attention of such of our young men as have their attention turned to the foreign field. Some of the facts contained in this communication are at variance with the generally received impressions of the excessive populousness of the country; but even if these opinions are correct, the population of China is very great, and the work to be done in imparting to them the blessings of the gospel is sufficiently great to tax the energies and resources of the whole Church. Mr. Houston, at the date of the letter, above referred to, was on his way to Yokohama, but expected to be absent from his labors in Hanchou only a few weeks. He speaks of there being two hundred or more Japanese passengers on board the steamer with himself, among whom were several princes travelling with their families.

A letter from the Rev. Stephen Foreman, published in our present issue, gives