

Peking, China.
15 Sept. 1887.

Rev. W. H. Belden,
Bridgeton, New Jersey.

Dear Brother,

Your communication in reference to annual-
taneous meetings in behalf of
Foreign Missions, to be held in
the State of New Jersey by
all Presbyterian Churches,
during the week Nov. 13th to
19th is at hand.

You may be assured
of our sympathy & you ask
our prayers that God's Spirit
may come in mighty power upon

yourselves & upon those for
whom you meet to pray.

We do most gladly give
you our sympathy & our
prayers. For we realize that
we are engaged in a work
which is literally invested with
difficulties. It is a work
so great & so difficult we
are quite convinced we can
do nothing unless the arm
of the Almighty be stretched
out in our behalf. May
I venture to refer to some
of these difficulties & ask
that in your simultaneous
meetings mention be made
of these things daily before
the Lord? Some of these

are common to the work
at home & to that in every
foreign field. Whenever we
work - at home or abroad -
we meet the native de-
pravity of the human heart -
in every man an enmity
so original, so subtle, so
persistent it can be
removed only by a change
so mighty & super human
as to be well called the
"new birth" - a regeneration
which can be wrought alone
by the transforming power
of the Holy Spirit. But it
often seems to me that
here this enmity is strengthened
a hundred fold by the bad
conditions of life that

are the heritage of centuries
of sin. And there are
outward hindrances that
seem almost as strong as
nature depravity itself.

There is the great & compact
mass of customs, institutions
& philosophies, sacred to the
nation by centuries of use,
fostering national pride
& scorning intrusion, at
once atheistic, pantheistic,
& idolatrous.

There are gigantic social
vices, so enormous & super-
sicious as to corrupt
society to its lowest depths
through every strata from

lowest to highest.

There are national habits whose tenacity is next to omnific, & national traditions whose power can be broken by no human arm, forming a double band, stronger than steel, binding the people to their false systems with a strength which they, unaided by a Power from without, can never break.

Then there is the pride of great names - the pride of one great name, perhaps I should say; for in China one name over-tops all others.

Throughout China education is widely diffused. In no country is the schoolmaster more abroad. But who is it & what is it that is taught? It is Confucius. It is Confucius' thoughts that are familiar to every man in authority in this land; & it is his character that is reproduced in them all. In his lifetime he had three thousand disciples; hundreds of millions are his disciples now. For two thousand years he has been the undisputed teacher

of this most populous land & has reigned supreme. In many schoolrooms there is a tablet or inscription sacred to Confucius, & every pupil is required, on coming to school, on the morning of the 1st & 15th of every month, to bow before it as an act of worship. Thus in China all who receive the slightest tincture of learning do so at the fountain of Confucius. They learn of him & do homage to him, from the first. Temples are erected to him in connection with all the colleges of the country. On the 1st & 15th

of every Month offerings
of fruits & vegetables are
set forth, accompanied by
the burning of incense.

Besides this, twice a
year, in the middle of the
Spring & Autumn months,
Confucius is worshiped
with peculiar solemnity.

At the imperial College,
in this Capital, the Emperor
is required to attend in
state, & is in fact the
principal performer.

The emperor kneels twice
& bows his head six times
to the earth & then it is
that the presence of

Confucius' Spirit is invoked
in these words:

"Great art thou, O perfect
sage! Thy virtue is full;
thy doctrine is complete.
Among mortal men there
has not been thy equal.
All Kings honor thee.
Thy statutes & laws have
come gloriously down.
Thou art the pattern
in this imperial school.
Reverently have the sac-
rificial vessels been set
out. Full of awe we
sound our drums & bells."
I verily believe the standard ^{for}

which Christianity has yet met, on any field, is the pride of this great name. Until faith in this is broken, there can be found no place in the hearts of the people for Jesus - the name that is above every name.

Taking into the account alone what man can do, there are some of the difficulties that confront us. But shall I stop with these? What of the unseen powers of darkness, under the leadership of Satan, father of

lies & destroyer of souls from the beginning? The Bible places the origin of sin at this Arch-Friend's door. This is the most reasonable account that has ever been given of it. Sin is ante-human & extramundane. It exhibits a violence & reveals itself in methods of assault that argue its intrusion into the field of human history from spheres beyond the reach of our observation. It is best accounted for on the supposition of the real personality ^{& agency} of Satan. And the Scriptures assure us that

there is an invisible
agency at work intent on
the destruction of man.

Paul speaks of "the ^{rulers} ~~Prince~~
of darkness"; of "the Prince
of the power of the air," &
bids us be on our guard
against "the wiles of the
Devil." He tells us there
are principalities & poten-
tates, & rulers & spirits of
wickedness with which we
must wrestle. These are
not earthly magnates.

They belong to the order of
celestial intelligences. They
are the more to be dreaded.

Hence something more

than human strength & earthly armour is required for the conflict in which we are engaged. "Subtler forces than any we can measure, or even attack, complicate the problem of the world's conversion & retard its achievement."

Truly, "no holiday task is ours when we talk of reducing the world to the obedience of Jesus Christ."

That sums up the problem of all the ages."

Indeed ours is a great work. No greater ever enlisted the mind or the

heart of man. But it
is as difficult as great.
Powerful forces are arrayed
against us - so powerful
that nothing can be ac-
complished in this war-
fare without Divine help.

It is that we may be
clothed in the panoply of
God & that we may have
His help that we may
& that we are glad to
know that the Church
is praying. No such
cheering news has reached
us since we left native
land for this work eighteen
years ago. Great things
may be expected from these

simultaneous meetings. It
is a praying Church that
is a victorious Church.
It is a matchless enterprise
in which the Church is
engaged. Giant forces
are arrayed against her,
but not almighty. God is
almighty. God is on her
side. God is able & God
is willing to answer prayer!

Yours in Gospel bonds.
W. Lee J. J.