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## **AN EXAMPLE FROM JAPAN.**

A missionary of one of the Evangelical denominations writes from Japan as follows, to a friend: –

"One of the things which most of all pains and torments these Japanese is that we teach them the prison of hell is irrevocably shut, so that there is no egress. They grieve over the fate of their departed children, parents and relatives, and often show their grief by tears. They ask us if there is any hope; any way to free them by prayer from that eternal misery, and I am obliged to answer there is absolutely none. Their grief at this, affects and torments them wonderfully; they almost pine away with sorrow. They often ask if God cannot take their father out of hell? and why their punishment must never be at an end? They do not cease to grieve and I can hardly restrain my tears at seeing men so dear to my heart suffer such intense pain. Such thoughts have, I imagine, risen in the hearts of missionary teachers of all churches. Again and again, I and my brother missionaries were questioned by people about their dead parents and fore-fathers who had not heard the gospel. These distressed hearts ask if they could pray for their ancestors. I have had most painful scenes, and I think many American church missionaries have had."

This is the same old experience coming to the front again in a new place. Over and over again have we presented examples of these same sad results of preaching the orthodox (?) doctrine of irrevocable punishment. The Evangelical missionary world is receiving constant notifications that the religion of Christ, as interpreted by their standards, is not a welcome message [R1045 : page 6] even to the pagan world. It is not good news, or the gospel, for the heathen to be informed that their ancestors who died without the light, so called, have sunk into an eternal abyss of suffering in the future world; that the condition of the vast multitudes of the dead of their race is irrevocably fixed in despair when they pass out of this life. The missionary

experiences of "Orthodoxy" are undoubtedly more full of testimony in this respect than has been heretofore made known. Much has been told, but more undoubtedly has been concealed. From the instances in which we are permitted by correspondence to get glimpses of the unrest of the heathen under the teaching of this faith, we may well conclude that there is a larger amount of the same kind [R1045 : page 7] of suffering which is not allowed to pass into current missionary history.

It is remarkable with such instances as above constantly brought to attention, that the American Board cannot see the propriety of sending out ministers who cherish the larger hope and who could conscientiously carry to the pagan world a Gospel that would give comfort and satisfaction to those anxious and suffering souls. But instead of this they refuse to send out such ministers, and insist that only those who believe the repellant doctrines are fit for the foreign field. The time is coming, and rapidly coming, when this action will be reversed; when missionaries will be authorized to carry their own enlarged faith and hope to those who are waiting anxiously for the comfort and blessing of a true gospel.

– *Selected.*

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