

LETTERS FROM THE FIELD.

AFRICA.

WAR NEWS ON THE CONGO.

DR. SNYDER.

[Rev. Arthur Rowbotham, formerly of the Congo Mission, kindly sends us the following personal letter, written to him by Dr. Snyder. It gives a graphic picture of the anxiety caused to our distant missionaries by the Munchausen stories of the Spanish press.—EDITOR.]

Your welcome letter came to me day before yesterday. How welcome your letter was I imagine you can understand. How welcome our mail was you will better understand when you have read what follows. The middle of July last, a mail came overland bringing the usual quota of letters, none of later date than April 21. With my mail came a postal card from Dr. Sims, as follows: "Eleven United States men-of-war sunk by the Spaniards; five men-of-war of Spain sunk by the United States. Boston and New York being bombarded and on fire. Awful affair, awful scenes. War declared April 21." Nothing more. Our papers told of the blowing up of the Maine, but later news we had not, save the terrible news contained in Sims' postal.

Well, I was just clean upset. I couldn't sleep, eat, read, or think. I felt that I must fly to some place where news could be gotten. But that was impossible, and I had nothing to do but wait the weary two months that followed. I looked in Webster's for the definition of "suspense," but he has entirely failed in giving a comprehensive definition. He never was held over the flames of torture, wondering when the ropes would break. The longest day must pass, however, and so the days grew into weeks, and the slowly crawling weeks into months. The day came when we might look for a steamer. At

last, one day, when least looked for, a messenger came from Bene Luedi, with the news that a steamer had been there and had left Sheppard at that place. Sheppard, you know, had been down to Matadi with his wife. Then came a weary waiting of a week longer for our men to go and return. They came, but brought the news from Sheppard that all our mail was lost. Oh, what a disappointment! I went to bed again with a fever. I say "again," for I had been sick ever since the first news two months before. One more week, and then, one day, as I was sitting on the verandah of my new house, I saw two men coming, each bearing on his head a suspicious looking bag. These they lay at my feet, but I was too overcome to grasp all it meant—only for a moment, though, and then, with a yell, I summoned Morrison, and sent for Verner, Hawkins, and Sheppard—the rest you can imagine.

How our hearts rejoiced over the victory of Dewey! Over the heroism of Hobson! And how relieved was I to know that all my dear ones in New York were safe.

And yet the mail left us, as it always does, in a very unsatisfactory state of mind. It left us with Dewey outside of Manila, and Sampson outside of Cuba.

I would dearly like to be home now.

LUEBO, September 24, 1898.

BRAZIL.

ASH WEDNESDAY IN BRAZIL.

REV. W. M. THOMPSON.

To-day is Ash Wednesday, and the first day of Lent. While I pen these lines the faithful are returning from church, each with a cross made on the forehead with ashes mixed with oil.