

The Noni China farmers are rejoicing exceedingly at what they suppose to be the beneficial meteorological effects of the murder of the Roman Catholic priests at Tientsin. The spring and early summer, as with the other years by a long and continuous drought, notwithstanding that on several occasions the Emperor had prayed in state for rain. This misfortune—and the natives say that since the signing of treaties there has been a constant recurrence of similar droughts—was very generally put down to the presence of foreigners among them, and notably to the spies of the Roman Catholic church at Peking, which tower above the Imperial palace and by so doing, are believed to have destroyed the geomantic influences of the neighborhood. The expression of these beliefs had been common among the people for some months, and in their eyes received confirmation when, the day after the massacre, the heavens became "black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain." The fulfilment of the popular superstition was unfortunate, and will make many in China exclaim, "Peking, the writer of a letter from Tientsin, who narrates the circumstance, "God help us in the next year of drought. Perhaps all things considered, it would be better if, for a time, the missionaries abstained from enlarging in the presence of the crowds on that chapter in the Book of Kings which contains the account of the massacre of the priests of Baal and its consequences." *Figaro*, August 10, 1898.

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