THE

Annual Report

OF THE

Shansi Mission

A. B. C. F. M.

FOR THE YEAR 1897.

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1898.
The grain of mustard seed sown in the Shansi field has sprouted and taken root. Year by year the roots are striking deeper into the soil and the trunk and branches of the tree are making a sturdier growth. The kingdom of God has been set up, that kingdom "which shall never be destroyed," but which "shall stand forever." As we reach the close of another year's work, forgetting the weariness and trials and disappointments which are behind, with perfect confidence in the assurance of God's Word, we would press forward unto those things which are before.

I. The Field.

The three principal stations are situated on the T'ai-yuan-fu plain, covering about 2,400 square miles, but the mountains on either side opening for work increase many-fold the territory to be reached.

T'ai-ku, the oldest station, with head-quarters at the city of T'ai-ku, the most important business city of the province, occupies the middle portion of the field.

Fen-chou-fu is a large prefectural city in a region to the south and west, including 2,139 villages and one Chou and seven Hsien cities.
Jen-ts'un, fourteen miles to the north-east of T'ai-ku, is a rich walled village in a district dotted with large towns.

The mercantile instincts of the men of this province have won them the name of "Jews of China," and the province is also sometimes styled the granary of the empire. The principal crops of the district are wheat, opium, millet, and a species of sorghum, the seed of which is ground into flour, with a large variety of beans and lentils, peas, corn and so forth.

II. The Force.

1. The Missionaries.—At the beginning of the year, six men and seven women were at their posts in good health. Mr. and Mrs. Davis and Miss Bird left us in March for the U. S. on furlough. In October we welcomed back to the work Mr. Thompson and Mr. and Mrs. Price, who returned without their son Stewart, whom they went home to save. Mr. Atwater profitably spent three months of the year visiting and examining the older and more established work of the North-China Mission.

Four children have been born into missionary homes this year:—Helen Marie Williams, May 18th; Dorothy Hall, November 18th; and in the U. S., Alma Thompson, July 31st; Thomas Eleazer Davis, Sept. 12th.

2. The Native Force.—The whole force, comprising evangelists, teachers, medical assistants, and opium refuge workers, numbers twelve men. Four of these helpers were added during the year, two of whom are converted business men who have exhibited a spirit of service and an aptitude for it. While these men have performed their work in various degrees of ability and zeal, confidence has not been misplaced in the case of any one.

Preacher Liu is a rare man in any land. He is an eloquent preacher and fearless exhorter, in which work he never tires. Helper Ts'ui, besides preaching every Sabbath, in eight months made 170 visits to surrounding villages.
III. Evangelistic Work.

1. Churches.—There is in the mission but one organized church, that at T'ai-ku, but both the other stations have baptized communicants. The church membership at T'ai-ku is 37, 19 baptized during the year; probationers, 42. At Fen-chou-fu there are on probation 48, 33 taken on during the year; and 28 baptized, 10 during the year. At Jen-ts'un, the number on probation is 3; baptized 3, and 4 baptized children.

The church at this formative period necessarily grows but slowly; great care being exercised in the admission of members. Many of the applicants are from those who have received instruction in the opium refuges, whom it is deemed wise by some to keep waiting at least a year before even taking on probation, for fear of their falling into the habit again. The year has seen a steady, thoughtful development of the spiritual life of a goodly number and a large expansion of influence upon the heathen about us, who will certainly come in in larger numbers at no distant day, when conviction and love shall have overcome pride and shame.

T'ai-ku notes distinct advance in the spirit of Sabbath keeping; two shops with closed doors every seventh day drawing the attention of large numbers in the city to the principles of the church. No severe case of persecution has occurred. Mr. Ch'eng was set upon and beaten by his neighbors for casting in his lot with us. Mr. Ho's Christian books were thrown into the fire and burned, because he would not perform idolatrous rites at the birth of a grandson.

The Wednesday evening prayer meeting, with an average attendance of sixty, is a growing power in the life of the church. Three Christian weddings were celebrated during the year and no funerals. In February a delegation of fifteen men attended the Annual Conference of the Churches of Central Shan-si at T'ai-yuan-fu, the capital of the province; each member bearing his own traveling expenses. The Conference
having for its motto "To deeply know Jesus," made a lasting impression productive of much good throughout the year. At the annual meeting of the church, the church roll was read and revised, a committee appointed to confer with apostate members, money subscriptions made in the interest of self-support, etc.; everything as far as advisable being put into the hands of the natives.

The Sabbath congregations everywhere filled the houses of worship; in several places to overflowing. Fen-chou-fu is rejoicing in the building of a pretty little gothic chapel, 20 by 35 feet inside measurement, with a seating capacity of 200. Connected as it is with the woman's waiting room this chapel is a great addition to their equipment, and the moderate amount, not exceeding $700, spent upon it will be repaid by the increased reverence and spirit of true worship it awakens. The idea is that this building for use in connection with the hospital and dispensary be erected with foreign money, but the village chapels by native subscriptions. With such a model copies cannot fail to be made when numbers demand them. With no model but a heathen temple or a rented Chinese dwelling used for purposes of worship, how can temples be erected to the living God?

The week of prayer, observed with daily meetings, using topics in common with Christians all over the world, strengthened faith and the sense of kinship and gave fresh enthusiasm to these isolated bands of believers. The list of subscribers to the North-China Church News, a paper printed at Peking by the American Board Press, numbers 18 names, showing a good degree of interest in the progress of the kingdom. Christmas was duly celebrated at Fen-chou-fu and T'ai-ku; Li-man and Jen-ts'un uniting with the latter. Including school boys and other children, over one hundred at either place sat down to the feast provided by the foreigners (not at the expense of the Board). At T'ai-ku, Mr. Thompson in the evening gave a
lecture on his world-round trip, illustrated by lantern pictures, to the great delight of a crowded house. The following day, Sunday, was full of interest; the guests at both places remaining over for the services.

a. Sunday Schools.—Two Sunday Schools are in operation. At T'ai-ku an attendance of about seventy was faithfully sustained during the year, with the exception of July and August, the International Lessons being used. The same methods are used as in home schools. Preparation is made in a teacher's meeting Saturday evening. Scripture rolls are used in teaching as also in preaching and among the women. Home schools will help greatly by sending old rolls when they are through with them. At Fen-chou-fu a different method is followed. The Christians and inquirers meet and recite passages of Scripture learned during the week. This is the original Sunday School idea. With their minds stored with these passages they will be ready for any study of them that may come in the future.

b. Christian Endeavor.—A society was formed among the T'ai-ku school boys in the fall of 1896. Most of the boys have joined this year, either as active or associate members. The meetings are led and the business transacted by the boys themselves. Much interest has been felt during this year on the subject of tithing. Letters have been sent to the Foochow society and to a society in America. The society is spoken of at the boys' homes as a stimulant to good works.

c. Self-support and Benevolence.—At Fen-chou-fu the lack of church organization prevented some forms of Christian activity from being developed. The Sunday collection, however, was considerable. The total amount raised during the year was about 47,000 cash, $25.43 gold. As the baptized membership of the station was still small and quite scattered, no chapels were opened during the year.

The T'ai-ku church raised for home expenses 35 taels,
6

$19.92 gold. Tun-fang's Sabbath congregation has quite outgrown its place of worship, which is totally provided from native sources, and steps are being taken to secure larger premises. There is a most encouraging spirit of desire to support and carry on their own work. At Ch'ê-wang the people raised this year three-fourths of the rental of a more desirable place of meeting.

2. OUT-STATIONS. (1). Li-man.—Dr. Hall carries on the medical work of the T'ai-ku station temporarily at Li-man, where he is assisted by two evangelists. Of these men and the conditions of the field Dr. Hall says: "They have witnessed a deepening of the spiritual life, and their service for God and for their fellow-men increases in power and efficiency. More than one hundred visits were made to surrounding villages. . . . . . One of the best evidences we have of increased interest is that the people are beginning to read the Bible. Where, in former years, we heard only cursing and revilings, old men, young men, and children now ask to examine the Christian books."

Daily worship was conducted in the hospital during the year. The Bible study which proved such a help last year, was continued with great success and manifold blessing. On Friday evening a prayer meeting was regularly held for the patients.

(2). Tun-fang.—At Tun-fang life and growth have been most marked. The Christians, many of whom are ex-opium eaters, have a good name and respect in the whole town. Brother Wang, who was formerly the overseer of a gambling tent, has borne petty persecution with Christian patience, and is becoming a leader in the church.

An unusual spirit of independence in planning and carrying on their own work is manifest. Concerning a visit there Mr. Williams writes: "It was a most blessed experience to arrive unexpected at their village at the close of a winter's day
and find the people gathering for their weekly prayer meeting. Seventeen friends assembled and most cordially welcomed the foreign pastor, who was present with them for the first time; the meeting having been started and carried on for a year wholly by themselves."

(3). Ch'ie-wang.—The work at Ch'ie-wang is as discouraging as that at Tun-fang is hopeful. The people are spiritually dead, and seemingly have no influence in the community. We hold on with regular Sunday services, hoping for a change for the better.

(4). Nan-chang.—Our force was too limited to supply Nan-chang on the Sabbath, so we have conducted services there every Wednesday. The people have met at a private house, no expense having been incurred. Several families have put away their idols, but as yet only two old men have been taken on probation, none having been baptized. Frequently several come to this service from the surrounding villages, who seem hopeful.

(5). Ch'ing-yuan.—This district lies west of the Fen River and stretches many miles north and south. While the work does not seem to be taking root in the city of Ch'ing-yuan, the opium refuge carried on there has been the means, through its patients, of rousing considerable interest in several villages. Especially in Nan-ch'ing-tui, Tung-ch'ing-tui, Wu, and Kung there are interested inquirers. Seven men were received on probation. The work in this field, although it is partially Roman Catholic, having a church and monastery, is bound to grow with proper fostering.

(6). Huai-jen.—At Huai-jen three families are holding on to their faith against great odds. Sabbath services have been regularly held among themselves by the faithful few. Only a few visits have been made there, because of the distance from Tai-ku and the impossibility of a few workers being in many places at once.
Hsi-ying.—An out-station was opened in Hsi-ying, an important market town in the Hsiang-yuan district, lying away in the hills, eighty miles to the south-east of T'ai-ku, by Mr. Clapp, who spent a month there last fall. A young helper was left in charge, and the place will be visited by the missionaries as often as possible. The mountain road leading there, passable only by pack animals, traverses Yu-shih and Wu-hsiang districts. These districts contain no large cities, but numerous mountain villages. The whole region is practically untouched.

3. Woman’s Work.—This year has in good measure fulfilled the promise of last year. So we have good courage to go on. Over one hundred visits have been paid to twenty villages, and the calls and visits to other houses count up to not far from the same number. The number of women and girls who have been systematically taught in the various villages speaks well for the future intelligence of the church. Six women were taken on probation at Christmas; all of these are reading regularly. Others seem not far from the kingdom. The awakening of those whom the gospel reaches is striking here as everywhere. Many, moreover, are anxious to read who are not interested in their souls’ salvation. It affords them a pastime, and when the struggle for food is unnecessary and opium has not dulled the instinct for variety, a new interest is gratefully received. The first half of the year Sunday service was held at Huai-jen, but during the last half the growing interest at Tun-fang led to a change. The plan of holding a service in the morning at Tun-fang and in the afternoon at Ch’e-wang was tried, and so far with happy success. At the former place the audiences vary; now large, now small, now regular, now changing, with the exception of five or six stand-bys who are always there. There have been as many as thirty present, there have been only five, but the average is gratifying. At the latter village the attendance is small, but regular, and most of the women have had considerable instruction in the past, so
they are quick to understand. The use of Sunday School Picture Rolls has proved a great attraction. Ten villages were opened this year, and all but three of the whole twenty are still open for visits and teaching. Most of the work has been done at short range. Regular appointments once a week, when possible, seem for the present most satisfactory. Besides the village work, much teaching of the opium women has been done, a somewhat discouraging work, but without which the work of breaking off patients, which is so clamorously demanded, would be quite useless. Our ideals are not yet realized; some of them are too vague to mention even to ourselves; but we press on undaunted, because our trust is in

"Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come."

4. Opium Refuge Work.—The question is often asked at home, "Why spend so much time and strength on Opium Refuges?" "Is not the work of the missionary evangelistic rather than reformatory?" Such questions could only be asked by one ignorant of our field. Probably seven out of every ten of the villagers are addicted to the use of opium while the proportion in city populations is even greater. This is true of men and women alike. To such people, whose sensibility is deadened and whose moral perception is well-nigh annihilated, the gospel is proclaimed. It has little or no effect upon them. But let them come to the Refuge to rid themselves of this habit! With the pill method, they now pass through the process with little discomfort, and the exceptions are very few to daily attendance on the evening gospel meetings and morning service. They are required to remain with us a month, and during this time they are enabled to get some intelligent conception of the plan of salvation. It is estimated by one of the veteran missionaries of China that on an average thirty sermons are preached for every Chinaman converted. The
opium refuge offers an opportunity to hear this average number of talks on Christianity. The opium sot is as devoid of pride as most others are full of it, and though a hard task master yet opium thus becomes the schoolmaster to lead him to Christ. Those who have found the Savior of men bring in others, and so the work gradually extends itself.

Of the thirty-three taken on probation at Fen-chou-fu during the year all but three or four were from the opium patients, and the large majority of them give hopes of a permanent change and are daily witness to the promise of a living Savior, whom they have found in the Refuge. In just the proportion in which an opium patient is genuinely converted to the one true God may we hope for self will and determination to resist the longing to return to the subtle embrace of the dream-god opium. Some of the hopeful cases are those where husband and wife, both being slaves to the curse, they bring their children along and live with us till the craving be overcome. Even when the patients are not converted they generally go home from the Refuge kindly disposed and with prejudices broken down, and so the Refuge work is an opening wedge which gives us access to the people and prepares the way for the reception of the gospel. This is especially feasible during these days of small appropriations, because the fees generally cover the running expenses of the work.

5. Mission Depository.—In Tai-ku, although there were no colporteurs in the employ of the station, two or three Christians and some of the helpers have occasionally taken books and tracts to fairs and theaters to sell and tried thus to spread the gospel. When Mr. Clapp made a tour to Hsiang-yuan-hsien last fall Mr. Lin and Mr. Liang, who had charge of the Opium Refuge in that region, often went to the fair which was held for some days, and also went out on market days to preach and sell books. In this way several of the cheaper sort were disposed of; but the people are very poor and very much besotted
with opium, so it is almost impossible to sell a book whose price is above ten cash.

In all some 1,424 Bibles, Testaments and portions have been sold, together with 1,254 other books and tracts.

The Fen-chou-fu Bible and tract work was carried on altogether by the missionaries. The book case is located in the waiting room of the dispensary, and the crowds who came on clinic days were invited to buy books; all visitors having had free access to the case to view and examine the contents. There has been a considerable demand for literary and scientific books, and this demand will doubtless increase as time goes on. The communicants and probationers are all expected to own Testaments and Hymnals and to buy commentaries and helpful tracts.

IV. Medical Work.

**Grand Totals for the Mission:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dispensary patients.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T'ai-ku</td>
<td>4,563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fen-chou-fu</td>
<td>3,602</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In-patients.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T'ai-ku</td>
<td>547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fen-chou-fu</td>
<td>70</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opium-patients.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T'ai-ku</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Li-man</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch'ing-yuan</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hsi-ying</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fen-chou-fu</td>
<td>130</td>
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</table>

Total 9,247

The medical work is only a means to an end. The central thought for the year has been, "To every patient a word for Christ." We realise more than ever the truth that medical work of itself is of little use unless it ultimately leads men to Christ, the Great Physician of souls. Medicine at best can
only restore the body somewhat to the condition it was in at first, but the Savior of all men can restore men to what they ought to be—new men in Christ Jesus and children of the household of God.

There are two hospitals and dispensaries in the mission—one at Fen-chou-fu, one at Li-man—and their influence has been widely felt during the past year.

At Fen-chou-fu, there was during the spring a sudden falling off of patients from the dispensary, due no doubt to "one of the waves of popular prejudice stirred up by the envy of Confucian scholars." This passed; large numbers came in the fall, increasing steadily to the end of the year.

Dr. Atwood says: "This class of patients is least satisfactory, as they come and get medicine and go, and many get but little clear knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. It serves a good purpose, however, in conciliating the people and relieving the irritation caused by having foreigners among them. More hopeful is the hospital, where the patients listen to the truth spoken to them personally in their rooms and in the waiting room to those who are able to leave their rooms. Some of this class we have good reason to believe have given themselves to the service of the Lord instead of serving dumb idols. One very striking case is worth speaking of—a woman from Kuailin-ti, a village in the mountains. She came to us for treatment for epithelioma of the foot, caused no doubt by the irritation of the bound and broken foot. She had contracted the opium habit to relieve the pain, which prevented her sleeping night and day. Her body was reduced almost to a skeleton, and even in this condition she was nursing a two-year old child, and the cries of both all night long, while she was leaving off opium (we require all who enter the hospital to leave off this habit), were pitiful. The opium habit being cured her flesh and strength were soon restored by the use of Mellin's food and milk, and she was ready for the amputation. The station does
not yet possess an amputating case, and it is not always con-
venient to borrow when the nearest is seventy miles away; so
a saw was made of a strip of band iron from one of our Boston
boxes, and with this and a finger knife the leg was amputated
below the knee. The great kindness shown her by the foreign-
ers led her to accept the truth and the true God instead of
her false gods. Her husband has also accepted the truth, and
they are now a happy family. All the village in which they
live, but a small hamlet in the mountains, is now Christian,
with the exception of one or two families. The other families
were brought in through the opium refuge work."

"New light has come to us in regard to the case reported
last year as simulating demon possession. The case has re-
turned to us several times, and the cause of the remarkable
symptoms is now apparent. A tumor was found to be pushing
the eyeballs forward and pressing from within upon the brain.
We believe in prayer and faith, but we believe that this also
includes the use of means. The Lord of creation did not disdain
to use means, and should we, His creatures, despise anything He
has thought it wise to create for man's use? If there is any
healing going on anywhere it is divine healing. The vis
medicatrix naturæ is a vis Dei, and all the forces and properties
of mind and matter are the emanations of His omnipotent will
ever present in nature and humanity. We take it that the
Lord never went into partnership with the devil. When the
proposition was made by the devil the Lord said: 'Get thee
behind Me, Satan.' We do not believe in honoring him even
in this world more than He did. The poor natives believe in
lords many and devils many, but we believe they are mostly
the figment of the imagination."

"Invitations have been extended to us to open opium
refuges in distant places. These invitations we have not yet
been able to accept. We hope to do more in the future. We
lack room even at home for the work, and it has, to a large
degree, crowded out the hospital work. It is hard work, but it
is still harder to have to turn people away for lack of room
when we feel that they might have been brought into the
family of faith if we had room enough to receive them.”

Dr. Hall gives two interesting cases from Li-man. “In
the great day when we shall all meet Him face to face we
believe that some souls will be found, some souls of men who
have heard of our Savior during this year and hearing have
accepted and crowned Him Lord of all. Such loving witness
we have to the Holy One. A lady, wife of an official, was
treated in the opium refuge. She was impressed with the
truth. She gave careful attention to the daily Bible lesson.
Before she returned to her home she said to me: ‘I believe
in the one true God and feel that Jesus has forgiven my sins.
Pray that I may witness for Him.’ She brought a number of
her friends to the hospital. Some time after she again entered
the hospital; this time to be treated for laryngitis. She had
not gone back to opium. During her stay she never seemed
happier than when telling her sisters what had been done for
her. She wanted them all to understand and trust. A gentle
genuine witness for our God and her God. The day she left
she said: ‘I shall know what heaven is. If I die I shall go
there.’ Soon after her return to her home she was exposed
to a storm and caught a cold, which rapidly developed into
pneumonia. Her husband and attendants urged her to take
opium to relieve the pain. ‘If I die I will die, I will not
take opium.’ When asked to worship she refused. ‘My God
will help me.’ Her last message to us before she died was, ‘I
believe Jesus loves me.’”

“One old man, for sixty years a dweller in darkness has,
since his conversion, expressed a desire to learn all the charac-
ters in the New Testament. He is taking four characters a
day, and says he hopes to read about Jesus before he goes to
live with Him.
"Our faith is strong that when our number of workers is such that we can follow these people to their homes and show to them that our interest goes beyond our hospital doors, Christ will reign in more hearts and homes."

"The great increase in the volume of work naturally called for an increased fund for supplies. Instead of an increase, or even the sum used last year, we were expected to make one dollar do the work of two. One line is enough to report a single case or a class of cases, but words cannot tell of the days and nights of watching and waiting—human lives in our hands—knowing we must have medicines or send the poor sufferers away unseen. During the year the support of the evangelists in the hospital has been assumed by two bands of young people in Seattle, Wash.,—Happy Hearts of Green Lake, and Plymouth Happy Hearts of Plymouth Church."

"The people are here; the door is open; it is our prayer that it may not be shut; it can be kept open only by those who know and love the Lord. The promise is to those who do His commandments. Deut. 28: 1-14."

Besides the opium refuges connected with the hospitals, three others have been open under the superintendence of Mr. Clapp, one in T'ai-ku in two courts, one for men, one for women; another at Ch'ing-yuan in care of Mr. Tu; and a third in the hills at Hsi-ying, cared for by two helpers. The two latter were visited by foreigners as often as possible.

**V. Educational Work.**

1. **Boarding-schools.**—There have been three boarding-schools in the mission, two for boys, at T'ai-ku and Fen-chou-fu, and one for girls at Jen-ts'un. But soon after Mrs. Davis' departure the girls' school was closed, as Fen-chou-fu boys' school had been the year before, soon after the departure of Mr. Price.
Near the end of February the insistence of the Christians at Peu-chou-fu induced the foreigners remaining on the field to reopen the school. The same plan could not be followed in Mr. Price's absence as when he was here to devote all his time to it, so this new plan was tried. Only Christian books and the usual studies from the Western curriculum, geography, arithmetic, and so forth, were to be taught; the patrons were to pay the entire cost of the food for teacher and pupils and half the cook's wages. The school was not expected to be a large one at first, but it was pleasing to see the entire willingness of the church members to do this much in order to secure Christian education for their children. The school was running at the close of the year, but with decreased numbers.

The T'ai-ku school, owing to shortness of funds, was in session only seven and a half months, but with a more regular attendance than in former years; the enrolment being twenty-five, the average attendance twenty-one. A very large number of applications was refused because of the lack of accommodations and funds. The principle adopted two years ago not to receive any new pupil except the children of Christian parents, has been adhered to, though it has been hard to refuse them, and in some cases, no doubt, has worked against us. Mr. Liu has continued as the Chinese teacher, though somewhat against his own inclination. The cost of the school to the mission was about $170.00; an effort being made to keep within the appropriation, which was done. This amount includes a part of the rent, but not the teacher's salary, which was provided for by special gifts from friends in America. More extended examinations than usual were arranged, Messrs. Thompson and Williams being invited to act as examiners. These gentlemen expressed pleasure and satisfaction in the quality of work done. The more advanced classes have been marked for daily recitation on a standard of ten, and the grades have been very good. Monthly reports have been sent to the parents.
The time seems to have come when an advance must be made in school policy, or much of the hard drudgery of past years will be lost. Unless the schools be pushed on to a higher grade in the near future they must largely fail of the purpose for which they were started, namely, to raise up assistants and helpers for the work of the mission.

2. DAY-SCHOOLS.—For a long time the people at Tunfang called for a Christian school, but in vain, because of the depleted treasury of the Board and the lack of a suitable teacher. At length the missionaries decided to offer from their own reduced incomes towards the teacher's salary, fifty-five cents a year per pupil up to twenty pupils; the patrons to secure teacher, room, fuel, and all other expenses. Much to the missionaries' surprise the people objected to this plan and, by private subscription, raised the whole support of the school, excepting sixty cents gold a month, which the foreigners were very glad to contribute. Christian books were also provided. The teacher is a Christian from their own number, only superintended by the foreigners, and so the “Tun Fang Congregational Free School” has very little suggestion of the foreigner about it. Nan Ch'ing-tui, K'ung and Nan Chang have urged hard for Christian schools, but neither trained teachers nor means for assisting in their support are at hand.

3. STATION CLASSES.—At Fen-chou-fu the annual station class of baptized converts and probationers was held February 7-14. Some forty were in attendance, and we were conscious of much good resulting from the Bible study and unifying effect of the time spent together. At its close ten men, all adults, were baptized.

During the winter vacation of the T'ai-kn boys' boarding-school, the empty school rooms gave opportunity to hold a station class. Fifteen Christians and inquirers responded to our invitation to spend a month of study with us. One-half the expenses were paid from the mission funds. The class was
divided into two sections of those who could read and those who could not. A course of instruction was given in the book of Acts, another in the Scriptures, arranged topically, besides different catechisms and the singing of hymns. The men were remarkably attentive to their work, never absenting themselves from recitations, and some seemingly foolish men showed a surprising grasp of the truth. The results of their faithfulness have been lasting, being evident in their lives throughout the year.

Conclusion.

In thus reviewing the year's work our hearts are stirred with various emotions; joy over the success which God has granted to His servants in doing His work, yes, blessed joy in witnessing the beginnings of Christianity in a heathen land; and faith which pictures the outgrowth from these small beginnings when Christ shall have set free this people and brought them under glad subjection to Himself. But joy and thanksgiving and hope are mingled with sorrow and disappointment, because the work is crippled and retarded from lack of funds with which to carry it on. That only fifty-six per cent of the amount deemed necessary to carry on our work for the year could be appropriated by the Board is a strange, sad fact which should be speedily attended to by the supporters of our work. Fully one-third of the work done in 1897 was paid for by the missionaries from their own reduced incomes. So from the rapture over a soul new born, we must descend to making a surgeon's saw from strap iron; from the uplifting evening prayer, we often turn to sleepless nights spent in planning ways and means. With a further reduction for 1898, granting us only forty-six per cent of the necessary amount, what are we to do? May God, whose is the work, move upon the hearts of His children to provide the means, if it is His will that it be carried forward. Then will they with us rejoice over many souls reclaimed for the Master.
Incidents reported by Chinese Helpers.

On the south-east side of Pure Spring City, six miles away, is a village called South Green Hill. In the village is an enquirer named Wu Hung-wen. This man cannot read. He tills the soil for an occupation. His years are 50 and more. At home he has a wife, together with several small children. In Pure Spring City west suburb free school he reformed from opium and heard the Lord Jesus' doctrine. On returning home, taking the false gods and idols which he had, he cast them away. His wife was raising a pig, whose hide for the most part became diseased, the black hair changing to red and white. Unbelievers talked foolishly and wildly, and gave his pig a strange reputation. They said his pig could talk, and every day wanted to eat rice and flour and drink broth with him. Because of this, men of other villages hearing this kind of talk, no man dared to buy his pig. Approaching New Year's time he hoped to sell his pig to pay a debt. The pig still could not be sold. He himself also did not dare to kill it and sell the meat, because of the Pure Spring butcher guilds. If he killed it, doubtless the slaughter-house men would accuse him, and the officials come and punish him. The director of the slaughter-house, because he had a covetous heart, knowing well that outsiders' talk was foolish and wild, bought the pig at a very unjust price. The just price was 4,000 or 5,000 cash, but he would give only 1,000 or 2,000. There was no help for it but to sell the pig thus cheaply. The little children crying bitterly said: "Father, they have so cheaply bought our pig, ask them to give us some bits of shank and intestines." The slaughter men were hard-hearted, and of both the bones and intestines gathered up every portion. The children wept a while. Even a little they did not give them. It should be known that always upon the earth there is evil. Believers in the Lord are harmed by the devil in every sort of way.
Wax Tree Grove is a native of Longevity County, but has been in business in Necessary Village, Elm Inn County, for 20 years. Each year he made, besides his food, over 100 taels. After hearing the sacred doctrine he longed for it with a whole heart and continually attended to worship. In this manner more than two years passed by. Last year in the first month he received baptism and entered the church. In the second month the moneyed men and managers of the shop urged him unpleasantly and desired him to leave. He was happy to leave the shop and sincerely desired to serve the Lord with singleness of purpose.

This indeed is leaving worldly things to follow the Lord. This man is 42 years of age. Wax Tree Grove, in preaching the gospel, has courage. Last year, in the winter, in West Encampment market town he preached and carried on an opium refuge. In that region there is a sect, which spreads false doctrines and deludes men, with 3,000 or 4,000 members. One of these men came to the refuge for opium treatment. On returning home, Wax Tree Grove sent three copies of the Scriptures by him to the leaders of the sect and wrote a letter praying them to reject the false and return to the right, saying, "Either come to me and hear the doctrine or I will go to your mountains and there preach the truth. As you wish." They afterward did not return a letter.

Now, Wax Tree Grove is at Pure Spring City preaching the Word. Nine or ten men have repented and recognized the Lord.

Teacher Liu last year at T'ai-ku went to Mr. Tu's home for a call, because the two men for ten years, as touching earthly matters, were good friends. At the time of this visit there were many present; rich men, scholars and business men. They discussed the doctrine; there were those who said evil things. Teacher Liu asked them to read John 6:44, and greatly incensed they said, "Who are the children of the devil?"
Teacher Liu said, "Men who speak falsehoods are the children of the devil." They became angry and said, "Are we the children of the devil?" Teacher Liu said, "He who speaks falsely is a child of the devil." They asked again, "Are we the children of the devil?" He said, "If you don't repent you are all the children of the devil."

They all became angry. Mr. Tu was very angry. He threw his own lamp into the court and Teacher Liu's lantern after it. The teacher picked up his lantern and called a servant to light it; then, quite self-possessed, talked with them a little. Every man dropped his head and was silent. After this Teacher Liu did not revisit them for two or three months, but continued to pray for them. Three months passed. Mr. Tu and his companions invited Teacher Liu to go to his house and "sit a sit". So the teacher, for the sake of preaching the gospel, again went to sit awhile. Now he does not go frequently, "many days, one time." Although they do not speak evil words, still they are heart-hard, love the things of the world and do not repent.

This year, on the sixteenth day of the first month, at Feng-chou-fu, was one Mr. Han, who formerly practised magic arts and physiognomy, cast nativities, explained the eight nativity characters exchanged at betrothal, and practised geomancy for some tens of years. He trusted in this to support his family and pass the time. He continually heard the holy doctrine and also knew his practise was false, but because he made much money, he could not leave it. In the first month, while hearing the gospel, he was moved by the Spirit, and of his own will collected very many wicked books and everything used in his deceptions, brought them to the chapel and burned them with fire. After this he repented with his whole heart and believed the Lord. He plainly said, "Many years with these I've both made money very much and committed sins very many."
Wang Chü-chi, church member, keeps a mat shop. Because of the day of rest, he kept the commandment, closed his doors and did no business. His older brother persecuted, his younger brother was not pleased, his wife persecuted still more and constantly cursed him. For more than a year he kept the Lord's day. Every workman in his employ listened to the gospel and attended worship; some repented, some were taken on probation.

This year in the first month Christian Wang could not hold out against his brother and the others, and on Sunday opened the doors. He was greatly troubled, and even shed tears over the affair. In the chapel all prayed together about it. After two Sabbaths he again closed the doors and kept the Sabbath as of old. In this affair the Heavenly Father heard our church and Bro. Wang's prayers and overcame his opposers. A more strange matter! Praise the Heavenly Father! Their younger brother also has a mat shop on the East Street of T'ai-ku. He did not observe the rest day. Because of these two brothers the guild was not peaceful, and accused the younger at the court of justice. He begged Bro. Wang to undertake for him. Bro. Wang said, "My own younger brother, I command you. You must hear my words. Keep the Lord's commandment; on the Sabbath you also close your doors." Both the older and the younger brother agreed to keep the Sabbath. So the court and the mat guild were quite at peace. This affair is truly beyond man's comprehension. "To close one shop unwilling, close two shops."

To all my brothers in Christ, greeting: Know all that I, the least of the church members, daily go forth to all the villages around wishing to preach for the Lord and bear a little witness, although my strength is not sufficient. I beg that all who read these words will bear me before the Lord in prayer,
that He may increase the ways and means of preaching the gospel. In all these towns I suppose there are several thousand men who have heard the gospel. With one accord they say that no one ever calls the gospel bad. In every village there are men who say, "We want to join the church, but how much silver will you give us to live on?" I reply, "Not any." They say, "If there's no money in it, what's the advantage?" I answer, "Preachers preach the gospel, they don't preach food. The superior man considers doctrine, not food." Also, according to God's Word, I say, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." They all reply, "Now we have nothing to eat." The Lord says He has called us to preach the gospel to the poor. It is not that they do not listen; everywhere they listen, but they do not comprehend it. Will not all believers consider what good plan there is to teach many of my poor countrymen to quickly return to God?

Donations.

The following donations were received by those under whose names they are severally designated and are here gratefully acknowledged:

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