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PRESENT OFFICE AND DEPOT OF THE CENTRAL CHINA RELICIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.

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Tract..
Society..

Annual

Report,

Officers and Committee for 1906.

President.

REV. GRIFFITH JOHN, D.D., LONDON MISSION.

Treasurer.

REV. JOSEPH S. ADAMS, Am. BAPTIST MISSY. UNION.

Colportage Secretary.

REV. C. G. SPARHAM, LONDON MISSION.

Agent and Secretary.

MR. H. B. STEWART, TRACT SOCIETY, HANKOW.

Committee.

REV. A. BONSEY, ... London Mission.

THOS. F. BUCHANAN, Esq., ... National Bible Society.

REV. E. F. GEDYE, M.A., ... Wesleyan Mission.

REV. A. A. GILMAN, American Church Mission.

REV. R. H. GLOVER, M.D., ... Alliance Mission.

Lewis Jones, Esq., ... China Inland Mission.

W. MILWARD, Esq., ... National Bible Society.

REV. T. E. NORTH, B.A., ... Wesleyan Mission.

REV. G. L. PULLAN, ... Wesleyan Mission.

RT. REV. BISHOP ROOTS, ... American Church Mission.

REV. JOHN SKOLD, ... Swedish Mission.

REV. BERNARD UPWARD, ... London Mission.

REGULATIONS.

1. Name.—That this Society shall be denominated the "Central China Religious Tract Society," and that its headquarters shall be Hankow and Wuchang.

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- II. Object.—That the object of this Society shall be the circulation of Books and Tracts, prepared on the same principles as those of the Religious Tract Societies of London and America.
- Agents, labouring in Central and Western China, and all persons willing to co-operate in furthering the objects of the Society, may, on application through the Secretary, be elected members thereof.
- IV. Executive:—That the business of the Society shall be conducted by an Executive Committee of Twelve in addition to Officers. This Committee shall be elected by ballot at the Annual Meeting, from members resident at headquarters, and empowered to fill up vacancies. It shall meet when necessary (five to form a quorum) for the examination of tracts and the transaction of general business.
- V. Annual Meeting.—That the Annual Meeting of the Society shall be held at Hankow, during the first week in January, to adopt the Report for the year past, and to elect the Officers and Committee for the year entered upon. General Meetings may be held at other times when important business requires it.
- VI. Branch Societies. -That the Committee shall be authorised to aid members of the Society in distant parts in the formation of Branch Societies.
- VII. Society's Publications.—That all Books and Tracts published by the Society must first be submitted to the Committee for examination, and no Tract or Book shall be adopted which is not approved of by a majority of the Committee.
- VIII. Other Publications.—That applications made by members of the Society for assistance towards the publication of books accepted by and specially required in their own Mission, shall be granted, if supported by a majority of the Committee.
- IX. Prices.—That the prices at which tracts should be sold are to be fixed by the Committee.

- X. Subscriptions.—That the Treasurer shall be authorised to solicit subscriptions on behalf of the funds of the Society.
- XI. Report and Catalogue.—That an Annual Report and Catalogue shall be printed, and circulated throughout China.

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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

CENTRAL CHINA RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.

"THE LORD HATH DONE GREAT THINGS FOR US, WHEREOF WE ARE GLAD."

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The Central China Religious Tract Society is only one of many agencies that are working for the spiritual good of But amongst these agencies it occupies an unique position, in that it is the servant of them all. From the New Dominion in the north, to Pakhoi in the south; from the borders of Thibet in the west, to Shanghai on the eastern coast, missionaries of all denominations scatter its productions broadcast amongst the people. Not only in established mission centres, but in villages, market towns, and walled cities where the Gospel is comparatively unknown, tracts are sold to men and women "that sit in darkness and the shadow of death," and who, but for these tracts-"tiny points of light" as Dr. Martin so happily called them-would never hear the name of Jesus Christ. In places where the preaching of the Gospel conveys but little to the minds of those who hear, these tracts are often the means of awakening an interest in spiritual things.

The year just completed is the thirtieth of the Society's existence. For thirty years its publications have been as mighty weapons in the hands of the ambassadors of Christ. During the past year the work has gone on quietly, but unceasingly, and the number of the publications issued is

greater than it has ever been before. There is not a province in the Empire, Taiwan and Formosa not excepted, that the books have not reached; and from all parts we continue to receive the most encouraging assurances as to the value of the work done. And what shall we say of these things? What can we do but raise again our "Ebenezer," saying, "Hitherto the Lord hath helped us." And the Committee humbly thank God for the help vouchsafed during the year 1905. There have been difficult problems to deal with, but the abiding assurance that the work is God's work has been our strength. One by one difficulties have been overcome, and though there are a few that have not been disposed of, we are confident that God will not fail us, and that He Who blessed the Society in its "day of small things," will continue to bless in the day of its expansion.

And this is the

Day of Expansion

in China. From every quarter of the country the ery is the same, "China is moving." Old China, so long satisfied with the obsolete, is now shaking off her obsoleteness, and is asking for the thing that is new. But the new thing, the reform, that China is asking for, is social and political rather than religious. As a matter of fact, there is abundant evidence to show that the Chinese Government, and the educated classes generally, are doing their utmost to keep out the Christian religion by setting up an idolatrous worship of Confucius, and by placing disabilities upon those who decline to bow to the spirit tablet of the great Sage. Another element in the New China that has to be reckoned with, is the student from abroad. Hundreds of Japanese trained students are returning to their homes filled with materialistic and ultra-radical views. In most cases their stay in Japan has not been long enough to enable them to obtain more than a little knowledge of many things. These are the would-be leaders of the country, but, filled with half digested knowledge, they are in reality a source of danger to it. From the point of view of the Central China Religious Tract Society the issue is not a political, but a moral one; and in view of the atheistic and materialistic tendencies of much of the new learning, the Committee feel that this Society has a most important part to play in the re-making of China.

But side by side with the anti-Christian influences alluded to, the religion of Jesus Christ is fully holding its own. The educated classes may hinder, but more and more do the common people hear the Gospel gladly. The

Story of Li Mu-yung

well illustrates this. The Rev. S. Maute, of the Basel Mission, Phy-an-thong, near Swatow, writes:-"Most of the time Li Mu-yung sold his books at Shui-chen, which is a large market town about one day's journey from here, and in the surrounding places. Usually on Sunday he preached the Gospel to the people in a plain, yet good, manner. We are going to baptise ten men at Shui-chen, and this result is a fruit of the work of Li Mu-yung. Next year we are going to send an evangelist to this place, and Mu-yung can travel farther away." This little incident shows how the work is extending itself in ever widening Li Mu-yung, with his books and his preaching, will go further afield and capture some other outpost for the Master, while a trained evangelist will take his place and build up on the foundation he has laid. Colportage—branch of our work is one to which the Committee would call special attention. That the selling of sound Christian literature is a

Sure Means of Gospel Propagation

is well shown by the story of Li Mu-yung, and a few

small sums contributed specially for Colportage work would enable the Society to largely increase its circulation, without materially increasing its financial burden.

THE CIRCULATION

for the year 1905 is the highest yet attained by the Society, and is made up as follows:—

Books	•••	•••	•••	•••		14,994
Book Tr	acts	•••	•••	•••		296,930
Hymn I	$300 \mathrm{ks}$	•••	•••	•••	•••	8,921
\mathbf{Maps}	•••	•••	•••			14,877
Folded T	Cracts		•••	•••	•••	477,059
Sheet Tr	acts	•••	•••	•••		445,257
Calendar	rs	•••	•••	•••	•••	290,451
N. B. S.	roduc	•••		917,035		
John III	I.1 6 L	eaflet,	•••		•••	100,000

Total 2,565,524

The Increase over 1904 being 26,344.

It is interesting to note that

Hunan,

the last opened of the provinces, is taking enormous quantities of our books. Large quantities are also going into many of the Mission Hospitals of the country. This is particularly true of the sheet tracts. At one large hospital in Hunan, every outdoor patient receives one of the Society's tracts with his prescription written on the back of it—surely a happy blending of medicine for the body, and medicine for the soul.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

During the year six new publications have been added to the catalogue. These are:—

1. An illustrated sheet tract on "Elijah," by the late Rev. David Hill.

- 2. "A Catechism of Health," by Dr. P. L. McAll, of the London Mission.
- 3. Tune Book. This book contains the music for the Society's Union Hymn Book, and through the kindness of some of his personal friends in England, the Rev. A. Bonsey, Editor of the book, was enabled to bring out the first edition almost free of cost to the Society.
- 4. "God in Nature, or The Harmony of the Scriptures and Science" by the Rev. C. F. Kupfer, Ph.D.
- A sheet tract on "The Bible a Source of Strength to a Nation," by the Rev. C. G. Sparham, will shortly be issued.
- "Bible Readings in Chinese," prepared by Mr.
 Howard Richards, Jr. It is hoped that this little
 book will have a large circulation in the Mission
 Schools of China.

Dr. Martin's "Evidences of Christianity" has also been brought up to date, the Doctor having revised the Mandarin edition of the book just before his departure from Central China.

FINANCIAL.

The total income of the Society for 1905, exclusive of the Jubilee Fund, was Tls. 11,432.31. This includes Tls. 1000.00 borrowed from the Jubilee Fund, and is Tls. 1300.76 less than the income for 1904. The reduced income is due to two causes:—

- 1. A decrease of about Tls. 1000 in donations, the Jubilee Fund having absorbed much that usually goes to the General Fund.
- 2. High rates of exchange, and the depreciation of copper cash.

In spite of the decreased income, the Society has been able to issue an increased number of publications, and at

the same time to close the year with a credit balance of Tls. 603.89. Nearly the whole of this amount, however, will be required to meet outstanding liabilities. That we have come out so well is chiefly due to the fact that we have been working on a very narrow margin of stock, and that there are fewer outstanding accounts than usual. cannot hope to continue along these lines. If all demands for books are to be met, a full stock must be kept; a full stock means large printer's bills, and the printer's bills must always be paid. The Committee earnestly appeal for growing demands upon the Society are to be met, there must be a proportionately increased income. Therefore the help of God's people is asked, in order that the Society may serve its purpose, and be enabled to bring its publications within the reach of an increasing number of the Chinese people.

THE JUBILEE FUND.

The Society began the year with the motto, "The God of heaven He will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build." There has been a ready response to the appeal issued at the end of 1904, the total sum raised to date being Tls. 6445.54. Expenses in connection with the Fund have not been large, and after paying a deposit of Tls. 500.00 on account of Land Purchase, there remains in hand the sum of Tls. 5808.46.

From the beginning the Committee aimed at securing a piece of land in the British Concession, the advantages attached to which are obvious. It is the centre of Hankow missionary enterprise, it is near the railway and the shipping, and it is near the Chinese city. The land secured is situated in Po-yang Road, to which it has a frontage of 85 feet. The price is Tls. 14,100.00, and this sum must be paid within one year. To complete the purchase we must secure an additional sum of Tls. 8000 by January

31st, 1907. The Committee appeal to all who are interested in Mission work in China to help in this matter. The Missionaries of China are doing their utmost to help us, but we must look to friends at home for the bulk of the money. The Religious Tract Society has generously made its special Jubilee Grant of £300 available at once, instead of requiring us to wait until the buildings are secured. But if the Society is to continue its work it must have its own premises, and given the premises, it is at once placed in a position whereby it can materially help itself, and be of greater use than ever to the missionary body, and to the Chinese people generally.

The fitness of the Scheme

as a memorial of Dr. John's work for China is fully acknowledged by the missionaries of the country, who know best how much the veteran missionary's tracts have done for the cause of missions.

The Committee feel that the work done

justifies them in asking for increased support, both for the Jubilee Fund, and for the General Fund. The opportunity for extension is unique:

if we let it pass, it may not come again.

The Rev. W C. White, of the C. M. S. Lo-yuan, Foochow, writes:—"The opportunity for selling Christian books at the present time is the best I have ever known. I suppose to some extent it is the change of attitude to Western Learning, but certainly the opportunity is unique. The people are keen to get hold of Gospel portions, and, what is more important, they read them; and I know for a fact that a certain district magistrate reads his Bible daily, and is teaching it to the members of his household. The work of preaching and selling of books at the present critical and transitional stage of China's history is of the utmost importance."

Incidents of the Work.

HOW THE TRACTS SELL IN HUNAN.

The Rev. M. E. Ritzman writes:--"You may be glad to know, perhaps, that a few days ago I was down in Yu-hsien, and in one day sold tracts to the value of 4382 cash. All these were tracts of your publication, with the exception of two or three small five cash gospels. I never saw such anxiety to buy books and sheets as was manifested that day. Gospels, twelve cash tracts, or anything that we put forward, they were ready to buy. In my itinerating trip of ten days, I sold 12,226 cash worth of tracts, and could have sold many more, but the return trip was made practically emptyhanded, all stock being cleaned out. If you know of the record for that one day having ever been beaten, I wish you would let me know by whom, and when, and where, many prayers that God may bless the Central China Religious Tract Society, &c."

HOW THE CATECHISM HELPED HIM.

A correspondent writes:—
"One of our enquirers was nearly drowned yesterday, through
falling into the river where it was three fathoms deep. He
said that while he was in the water the Catechism (Dr.
John's) filled his thoughts, and he kept going over the
questions and answers, 'Q.—Whence come Heaven, Earth,
and Man? A.—They were created by God. Q.—Who is
God?,' and so on. The good brother had evidently mastered
his lesson."

AN EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW

"We took up a special collection and received 13,258 cash. It was decided that half should go to

your Society, and half to the British and Foreign Bible Society. In future we hope to make an annual collection for your Society, and one for the B. and F., but on different days. Herewith \$6.00 from the C. I. M. Church, Changteh, with hearty congratulations on this year of Jubilee."

FROM TAOIST PRIEST TO BOOKSELLER.

"In Kansuh we have two good booksellers. One is an ex-Taoist priest who has been a Christian for some time. Brought up a priest from childhood, he learned no trade, and consequently found it hard to get on after leaving the temple. As he was a good speaker, and had a good recommendation from the Christians, Mr. Tornvall, the Missionary in charge of Ping-liang Station, sent him out to sell books and to preach. he worked in the city and the surrounding villages, but, as he loved the work, he was sent on a longer trip with a good supply of books, and a man to help him for a few days. When ready to start, he asked Mr. Tornvall if he could have a few cash for expenses, as he had no money. Just to try him. Mr. Tornvall let him read in the Gospels of the way in which Jesus sent out his disciples, and pointed out that there was no mention of 'money for expenses.' "All right," he said, "I also will make a trial of that plan," and off he went. A month afterward, two missionaries out itinerating, found him in a far away city, preaching and selling his books, and looking remarkably happy. said that although he had not been having feasts every day, yet he could give the same testimony as the disciples: he had lacked for nothing."

IN THE QUARTERS OF THE ENEMY.

"Another Colporteur went to He-Cheng-tzu, where Tung Fu-hsiang and his hordes (the men who tried to destroy the Legations in the Boxer year) were quartered. He spent a fortnight in the place, and brought back 10,000 cash for the books he had sold."

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT.

The Rev. A. E. André writes:-"The Colportage work is indeed an important auxiliary to our other missionary effort. An instance of this has just come under my notice. Five years ago, a Colporteur, in visiting a village sixty li from here, was given lodging for the night in the house of a very poor family. The family, named Wang, consisted of three brothers, the youngest of whom was a teacher, but who, through extreme poverty was driven to lay aside his teacher's gown-or pawn it ratherand take to work in the fields like his brothers. Their house was a tumble-down hut, and their clothes were mere rags, gathered up here and there where the holes were too large, and tied like the mouth of a bag. The youngest Wang had been the village teacher, but in that condition no one would employ him. After dark the Colporteur began telling them the 'Old Old Story,' and next day, on leaving, presented them with a New Testament in return for their hospitality. Wang the teacher read it eagerly. How strange it all seemed. He had been worshipping idols all his life, and what had they done for him? Nothing. On the other hand, here was God promising in His Word that if we 'seek first the kingdom of God, all these things shall be added unto us.' He wanted Eternal Life, but he also wanted 'these things.' Should he give up idolatry, and try Christ? Could he be any worse off if he did? The odds were all in Christ's favour, so he resolved to take the plunge. One day when his two brothers were in the fields, he took down the family idols, chopped them up, and made a bonfire of them. His brothers were very angry, but, as he was a teacher, they still respected him. From that day a change for the better set in. For several years running the crops in that district were destroyed by floods and insects, but theirs escaped. This his brothers and neighbours attributed to the protection of God, and not a few of them are now enquirers. Mr. Wang has again been given charge of the village school, and the whole family are now respectably clothed, and thank God for sending them His Word by the hand of the Colporteur. By it they have been delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the Kingdom of his Dear Son."

"We are all of us held in our places by a multitude of inhibitions, which give us no chance to move or to refuse to move, until a motive strong enough to overcome them has entered a man's heart. The noiseless tract comes to many such as the only chance to hear, to see, and to live."

Rev. Brownell Gage, Yale University Mission.

Colportage Report.

The aim of the Colportage Department

is to

assist missionaries in bringing the books of the Central China Religious Tract Society into the homes of the Chinese people. Owing to lack of funds, we are at present compelled to restrict our grants to the two Central Provinces—Hupeh and Hunan, but our hope is, that a steadily increasing income may enable us to yearly enlarge the area of our operations.

Co-operation with other agencies

is a special

feature of this work. We do not seek to establish a new form of mission work, but to strengthen every evangelising agency that at present exists. The unanimous testimony of the evangelists is, that if their work is to be effectual, they must not only be able to deliver the Gospel message orally, but must also have a clear, interesting statement of the message in book form to place in the hands of their hearers. The Bible Societies have a multitude of Colporteurs all over the Empire, and are doing untold good in distributing Gospels and Testaments in every district. But those who have had most experience in this work, tell us that Scriptures sold together with Tract Literature, are much more attractive and useful than Scriptures sold alone. Hence our object is not so much to send out new colporteurs. and workers, as to co-operate with and strengthen those already working. We make grants of books to Chapel Keepers, Evangelists, and Colporteurs, working under missionary superintendency, allowing the proceeds to be retained as part wages, or as helping to clear travelling expenses. Years ago a considerable number of salaries

COLPORTAGE STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1905.

Superintending Missionary.	District.	Number of Colporteurs.	Partly supported by.	No. of C.C.R.T.S. Publications circulated.	*No. of Gospels &c. circulated.	* No. of Testaments circulated.	* No. of Bibles circulated.	
Rev. C. G. Sparham, L. M. S.	Hankow Hwangpi etc.	29	L. M. S. & N. B. S. S.	180,725	13,347	2,134	452	-
Rev. J. W. Wilson, L. M. S.	Southern Hunan.	20	N. B. S. S.	44,000	21,500	735	150	
Rev. W. H. Geller, L. M. S.	Hslaokan etc.	7	N. B. S. S. & L. M. S.	34,139	4,200	201		_
Rev. J. S. Adams, A. B. M. U.	Hanyang Chiayü etc.	4	A. B. S.	20,000	500	50	100	7
Rev. G. L. Pullan, W. M. S.	Hupeh and Hunan.	11:	W. M. S.	14,500	350	•		
Rev. John Sköld, S. M. S.	Wuchang Shashih etc.	4	B. & F. B. S. & N. B. S. S.	13,068	20,000			
Rev. E. Burnip, L. M. S.	Central Hunan.	8	N. B. S. S.	7,900	4,560	614	110	
Rev. H. Robertson, L. M. S.	Tsaoshih etc.	No returns.	No returns.		19,654	735	150	
**************************************		83		264,332	84,111	4,469	968	

^{*}The number of Scriptures circulated is quoted for general information but as statistics they have already been rendered to the Bible Society in question.

Central China Religious Tract Society.

Griffith John Jubilee Buildings Fund.

The object of this fund is to purchase land and erect buildings for the Central China Religious Tract Society, which has no home of its own.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO DEC. 31st, 1905, Taels 6445.54

The number of PUBLICATIONS CIRCULATED DURING 1905 was 2,526,524, the largest circulation in the thirty years of the Society's history.

The Society is urgently in need of money for the extension of the work. To complete the purchase of an excellent site in the British Concession, a further sum of Taels 8000 must be raised during 1906.

The accompanying Report tells the story of the Society's work during 1905. Read it and ask yourself whether tract distribution is work worth doing or not. If, in your opinion, the work is worth doing, will you help to put the Society in a secure position by contributing something towards this Special Fund, and by DOING IT NOW. The smallest sums will be gratefully received.

were paid out of the colportage funds. This plan has been largely abandoned, with the result that while we can strengthen existing work, we are able to circulate a large number of books with comparatively small expenditure. We dream of a day when the religion of China shall be the Christian religion, when the morality of China shall be Christian morality, when the literature of China shall be saturated with Christian thought. The day is perhaps far distant, but in this Colportage work, we are, as following incidents will show, marching in the direction of our dreams.

Our special thanks

are due to the

Upper Canada Religious Tract Society for their continued Annual Grant of Gold \$500; also to Mr. and Mrs. Duncan McVanel for a special contribution of Ten Pounds for Colportage Work among the Pilgrims to Mung-lan Shan.

The Schedule on page 17 shows that eighty-three Colporteurs have been at work superintended by eight Missionaries, and that they have sold 264,332 publications of the Central China Religious Tract Society, besides Scriptures.

The very nature of the work done makes it

difficult to tabulate results,

yet we may say that in districts where colportage work has being vigorously prosecuted, heathen prejudices have invariably been dispelled, conversions have frequently resulted, and in not a few cases new churches have sprung up which in turn have been greatly helped by the Colportage system. Many results never come to our ears, and those that do come to our knowledge in any given year usually arise from work done in previous years. With reference to general results, the Rev. E. Burnip, L. M. S., Siang-tan, Hunan, gives this emphatic testimony:—"In the course of my repeated visits to out-lying stations under

my charge, I have frequently found that there were enquirers, and applicants for church fellowship, who had been influenced by some one or other of the Central China Religious Tract Society publications. How much of the present prosperity of the work in Siang-tan city itself is due to this literature, I cannot say, but these publications have been freely sold and gladly read both by those in and those out of the church."

Interesting testimony is also given by the Rev. Joseph S. Adams, A. B. M. U., Hanyang. He says, "We have had three colporteurs at work, one of whom is a woman superintended by Mrs. Adams. This woman colporteur has a neat basket for the books, and goes from house to house. She has brought quite a number of women to the chapel on Sundays, and from the proceeds of her sales, has earned enough to keep her daughter in the W. M. S. Boarding School." During the examinations held in Hanyang city a large amount of literature was circulated among the students by the Colporteurs.

One of the most Famous Pilgrim Centres in Hunan,

is Nan-yoh Shan in the Heng-chow Prefecture. In the eighth moon of each year thousands of men may be met travelling, in larger or smaller parties, towards this mountain, to pay their vows or to seek some special favour from the gods. The religion of these men may be darkly superstitious, but many of them are very sincere. They walk with half closed eyes lest they should see anything to excite unlawful desire; at every cross road, under every big tree, and at every temple on the way, they stay and offer prayer; as they walk they unite in chanting the praises of their gods.

Among this class we may naturally look for some who are true seekers after the light, and the following incident given by the Rev. J. W. Wilson will show that by the agency of the colportage good work is being accomplished

among them. Mr. Wilson says:—"It is not a very easy undertaking, even in these days of progress, for the native convert to propagate the faith in a province which until lately was so distinctly anti-foreign as Hunan. Occasionally our brethren have to submit to many insults and endure much hardship. One friend labouring in the Lei-yang district, was the innocent cause of bringing about a disturbance which proved to be so serious that he himself was compelled for a time to go into hiding. He had sold some Scriptures and Tracts. and preached, to a band of pilgrims on the way to the famous Nan-yoh mountain, and the result was the complete disruption of the band, and an expression of desire on the part of some of its members, to learn the tenets of Christianity, which they have since been doing. As might have been expected, the leaders of the band became furiously incensed at the conduct of the colporteur, who, had they been able to lay hands upon him, would certainly have had to Fortunately he made good his escape. It is clear that the Ephesian sentiment of securing gain through traditional forms of worship, still exists in China, and nowhere is it more active than in this province of Hunan. The sacred mountain continues to command the faith reverence of millions in this district, and seekers for gain use the opportunity thus supplied for 'bleeding' the devotees. We are greatly indebted to the Central China Religious Tract Society for the help it renders our colporteurs in supplying them with so splendid a variety of the best kind of instructive literature for the aggressive work."

A PREACHER FROM AN UNEXPECTED QUARTER.

The Rev. John Skold, Wuchang, says:—"The Colportage work is very encouraging. We have still to put up with a good deal of abuse and rough handling, but a great change is coming over the people in the whole of this province. No doubt our publications have done a great deal to bring about

this change. Once on a journey to one of our out-stations, I sat down at an inn, and in an instant had a good number of people around me. A man asked if I had the 'Life of Joseph,' saying that he had previously read the book and been much interested in it. Immediately I began to speak to the people about Joseph and his life, but I did not preach as eloquently as the old man expected, so he interrupted me, and told the whole story to the listening crowd. He did all the preaching for me that time, and in a very good way. This shows that our books are read and meditated upon by the people."

HOW A NEW CHAPEL WAS STARTED.

A few years ago at the L. M. S. chapel in the city of Hwang-pi, Mr. Chang, a merchant who had travelled widely, and was then returning to his country home, had a long conversation with the evangelist, who, before he left, handed him a copy of Dr. Faber's work on Christian Civilization. This he carefully read, with the deepening conviction that in Christianity lay China's great hope. He endured much persecution on his profession of faith but succeeded in gathering a group of men about him, and then took the lead in providing a substantial chapel in which they might meet for worship. A congregation of from fifty to one hundred and twenty people now regularly worships at Chang Hsuen Ling and in all the surrounding villages the truths of the gospel are becoming well known. But more: the chapel stands near the foot of Mung-lan Shan, the most famous pilgrim centre in Hupeh, and has now become the base of vigorous evangelistic effort among the multitudes who every autumn flock to that sacred mountain.

It is only natural with results such as have been achieved, that some of our earnest Chinese brethren should be stirred to wider evangelism. From the same district of Hwang-pi, large numbers of men travel and trade in all the

eighteen provinces, and even in the out-lying dependencies of the Chinese empire. Many of the colonists of Chinese Turkestan are from this district, and one of the L. M. S. evangelists has been in communication with some of them, and finds that they have no mission work carried on in their midst, or indeed, any knowledge of Christianity whatever. He is accordingly arranging to send a parcel of Scriptures and booklets by the first opportunity. It is a six months' journey, all on foot, and transport is expensive, so only a small consignment can be sent: but Mr. Li's hope and ours is that this may be the first step in the evangelization of that vast territory North of the Thian Shan on the great plateau of Central Asia.

APPEALS TO WHICH WE CANNOT RESPOND.

It has been a joy to see evidence of blessing resulting from the colportage in so many districts, and it is with much regret that we have to record our inability to make grants of books to missionaries of other provinces. earnest appeal has come from the Rev. R. Bergling, Swedish Mission, Shansi. His own station, Yun-cheng, is near the Yellow River, and he tells us that in the vast stretch of country immediately to the north of it, reaching some fourteen hundred li from north to south, and containing thirtyfive walled cities, there is not a single Protestant missionary. His own increasing church and school work make it impossible for him to do as much travelling as he would wish and as he formerly did. By evangelists and Bible Society colporteurs, he is trying to spread the knowledge of Christianity. But, he continues, I am not fully satisfied with their work, as I think the spreading of the Bible and its portions only is not enough, and personally I can only very sparingly supply my colporteurs with evangelistic and other literature. I cannot refrain from putting this request to you, to which I trust you will be able to send me a speedy and agreeable

In our church of more than fifty members, amongst whom we have five B.A's, besides other capable men, I can easily find one, two, or more workers. Mr. Bergling's application emphasises an important fact. The missionary Societies usually make no appropriation for the circulation of Christian literature: the Bible Societies can only use their funds to provide for the circulation of the Scriptures. missionary is therefore left to his own resources to purchase Tract Society literature, and often finds it impossible to raise sufficient funds to carry on work on an adequate scale. is our earnest hope that within the next two or three years, our colportage funds may be doubled or trebled so that we may better deal with the situation. The smallest donations will be gratefully received, but for those who desire to have their own representative among the colporteurs, we would say that Ten Pounds per annum, will supply wages and books for one man, while Three Pounds a year will supply tracts and books for a man already partially employed by a mission This is the day of unique opportunity or Bible Society. in China; every city is open to the colporteur; Christian books are readily purchased and carefully read; many of the Christians are prepared to take up the arduous work. We lack only—the sinews of war. Who will come to the help of the Lord against the miahtu?



The Annual Meeting.

In the missionary world at Hankow, the Annual Meeting of the Central China Religious Tract Society is undoubtedly the event of the year. Once a year, at "The Rest," missionaries of all the Societies represented at Hankow and Wuchang, together with "the stranger that is within their gates," meet to hear of the doings of a Society whose function it is to publish tracts and send them all over China. This year the meeting was held on Friday the 12th January and was in no wise behind its predecessors in point of interest. The fact that in the very heart of China there exists a Tract Society having an annual output of more than two and a half millions-actual figures 2,565,524—of publications, is interesting in itself: but it becomes more interesting still when one learns that these publications find their way to every province of the Empire, "Taiwan and Formosa (which, by the way, is not now a province of the Empire) not excepted;" the interest culminates, however, in a series of "incidents from the work," all of which go to show that the Society is doing work of a valuable and far-reaching character.

Dr. Griffith John, the founder of the Society, usually presides over these meetings, but owing to indisposition, was this year unable to do so. Bishop Roots acted in his stead, and made a most efficient Chairman.

After the usual opening exercises, the Chairman called upon the Society's Secretary to read the Annual Report. In this report were set forth the various details of the work done during the year. The circulation has already been mentioned as being 2,565,524. The income for the year, exclusive of the Jubilee Fund, of which more anon, amounted to Taels 11,432.31, of which sum a little more than

half was received from the sale of books, the balance being made up by donations, and by grants from various Home Societies.

Following the Secretary, the Rev. C. G. Sparham, the Society's Colportage Secretary, read the Colportage Report. This was a most interesting document, and gave an account of work done in various districts by Chinese colporteurs, who, judging by the number of interesting incidents quoted by Mr. Sparham, must have done their work well.

In addition to the ordinary work for the year, the Society also floated a scheme having for its object the securing of a suitable building in which to carry on the This scheme is known as the "Griffith John Jubilee Memorial," and is designed in commemoration of that veteran missionary's fifty years of work for China. During 1905 Taels 6445.54 was raised. Now the fact is emphasised that an additional Taels 8000 must be raised in order to complete the purchase of a piece of land in the British Concession. And when one considers the value of the work done for China by Dr. John, together with the widespread nature of the Central China Religious Tract Society's operations, it is most reasonable that the Society should have such buildings as it proposed to erect, and that the building should be called the "Griffith John Jubilee Buildings."

The reading of the reports was followed by some speech making connected with certain resolutions that were proposed.

The Rev. T. E. North proposed "That the Reports and Financial Statement as read be adopted." He said the first thing that struck him about the resolution was its lack of gush and effusiveness. Reports representing so much work, and such valuable work, might well have been adopted by a resolution of greater scope. After sympathetic reference to the enforced absence of Dr. John, and the Rev. J. S. Adams, Treasurer of the Society, Mr. North went on to speak of the

Tract Society as a common platform whereon all might stand. He had found that when union was wanted, there was always a tendency to work rather in the direction of trying to secure an outward uniformity. At a conference recently held at "a certain place," he and others had cheerfully carried a set of resolutions on the Term Question. they had done so the representative of one of the Bible Societies had informed them that all they had done was to make it necessary for the Societies to issue an extra edition of the Bible, so that instead of having three versions, as now, they would have four. When the Conference had recovered its composure, he had proposed the adoption of one Bible containing all the terms—a proposition at which the Conference was aghast. Since then he had been wondering what would have happened if the Conference had been required to edit the Bible in its ancient original form, with all its variety of terms for God, and its various versions of the same story. It did not appear that the original Editors had any difficulty in the matter, nor yet any desire for uniformity, for they put them all in. The presence of Bishop Roots in the chair that day was indicative of a truer unity. The true test of fellowship in the Church was the fact that they were all brethren in Christ Jesus.

Dr. Wolfendale had much pleasure in seconding the motion. He stood on that platform as a representative of the West China Religious Tract Society, which was really a daughter of the Central China Religious Tract Society. In some respects she, the daughter, was ahead of the parent Society, in that she had her own depot, but in general she did her work much on the lines laid down by the Hankow Committee. He hoped the time would soon come when the Mother would be as well housed as the daughter. He thought the Society ought to think of charging higher prices for its books: they were selling at too great a loss.

The next speaker was the Rev. Dr. Taylor, M.A., of

Toronto, who has come to Hankow to do work in connection with the Y. M. C. A. He proposed a vote of thanks to the Home Societies that had made grants toward the work in China, and to all contributors to the funds. Dr. Taylor said that as a new-comer, and as a late member of the Board of the Upper Canada Tract Society, the great privilege was afforded him of sending back word to the Home Constituencies that their confidence in the past had been amply justified, and any appeal for more generous giving in the future fully justified also. Hankow, as a centre of distribution, was a pivotal point of the utmost importance. Geographically and commercially, in politics and education, it commanded a strategic position. Was it too much to hope that in the highest of all planes—the religious—it might be a pivotal centre swinging its influences to the Empire's remotest parts? To old men it was given to dream dreams, and to young men to see visions. He could see the vision, in that centre, of a great mountain which should rise up-the mountain of the Lord and his Word-from whose fresh springs should flow down streams of living water, and to which thirsty wayfarers should come up. The change in China constituted for the Church a crisis the like of which For the first time in the history the world had never seen. of this proud people, the official class and the literati were turning from the past and looking to Western learning for light and guidance in this time of re-adjustment. China was raising her head out of the sands of deep prejudice and close conservatism where it had been buried for 4000 years, and was turning it, startled but expectant, to the West for the best the West had to give her. Should Japan answer her with the stone of a materialist, or should the Christian Church bestow on her the inestimable gift of the Bread of Life.

The Rev. Arthur Adams seconded the motion. He felt thankful for what had been done for the Society by those at Home. He thought some of the grants ought to be made larger, especially that from America. Americans would not let the Chinese into their country: was it not therefore the duty of America to send the Gospel to China.

The Rev. L. B. Ridgely followed with a motion embodying a vote of thanks to the retiring Officers and Committee. He likened the Committee to an organist playing a grand sonata. The Committee were the interpreters of the sonata, and it was the part of the rest of them to raise the wind. He hoped they would raise more and more of it. He thought the resolution ought to express the fact that the Committee were carrying out the Society's ideals. He did not deny that the Committee found pleasure in the work: even proofreading could be pleasant, and there might be pleasure in book-keeping, though he could not see it. No doubt the Committee had to give up something in order to do this work. He would remind them of the Legend Beautiful, according to which the good monk had to give up the vision of the Christ in order to go and do his duty. When he returned the vision was still waiting for him. If he had not gone to his work the vision would have left him. He was glad to move the resolution.

The Rev. Mr. Fleischer followed, and gave some interesting facts concerning book and tract work in Hunan, attributing the opening of Ning-hsiang, home of the notorious Chow Han, to the Society's tracts. He himself had not been able to produce any tracts: he was a freshman: but even a freshman could follow the example of Confucius, and be a transmitter, if not a maker. He rejoiced to think that, by selling the Society's tracts, he could help to bring the Chinese mind into contact with the minds of the great Christian teachers of China.

All these motions on being put to the meeting were carried unanimously.

The next speaker to ascend the platform was Mr. John Archibald. He said that the meeting was unique in that Dr. John and the Rev. J. S. Adams, the Captain and the Chief Officer were in their berths sick. Consequently the passengers and the crew had to navigate the vessel. He had asked Dr. John for a message to that meeting. The message read as follows:—

" My dear Mr. Archibald,

I regret my inability to be present at the meeting of to-day, the thirtieth anniversary of the Central China Religious Tract Society. From its establishment till now it has been my privilege to attend all its annual meetings except one. This is the second time for me to be absent. I have always felt the annual meeting of the Tract Society to be the meeting of the I do not think we have ever had a poor meeting, and the meetings have been growing in interest and enthusiasm year by year. The undenominational character of the Society has helped to make these gatherings specially It matters not to what body we may belong, we meet here as one in Christ and co-workers with God. It would be difficult to say who is who, but for the cut of the coat and the style of the cravat in the case of some among us. This is a common platform on which we all meet as brethren, and on which no other name is known than the name that is above every name. Most heartily do I congratulate the Society on the work of the past year. see that its circulation for 1905 was 2,565,524 publications. That is the largest circulation it has ever had in one year. I see, also, that its circulation since 1875, that is for the thirty years of its existence, totals 26,007,917 publications. When I think of this magnificent circulation, and of the area which it covers: when I think that its tracts are to be found, not in the eighteen provinces only, but in Manchuria, Mongolia, Siam, Tonquin, Australia, the Straits Settlements, California, British Columbia, Japan, Corea, and almost in all places where the ubiquitous Chinaman is to be found. And when I think that these tracts are being read by hundreds of thousands of people, and that tens of thousands are being influenced by them, I feel that I can thank God from the depth of my heart for the privilege of having anything to do with the history and work of the Society. I have been looking back these days on my long life in China, and I can say sincerely that there is nothing in it that gives me greater joy than my connection with this branch of the missionary work.

I have been thinking a good deal these days of the ease with which the idols are being dislodged, and the temples converted into schools. There was a time when it would have been dangerous for the officials to attempt such profanation of sacred things. Some great change must have come over the minds of the people, and the question is to what this change is to be ascribed. I ascribe it to the missionary teaching that has been going on during the past fifty years, and I have no hesitation in ascribing it in a large measure to the Christian literature that has been sown broadcast on the face of the land. The people's faith in the idols has been greatly undermined, and this will account to a great extent for the things we see to-day.

Then I have been praying for a great revival of religion in China, and one of the things that encourage me most in prayer is the distribution of Christian literature. Our Scriptures and tracts are in the homes of the people, and a limited knowledge of the truth is to be met with everywhere. Let a revival break out among the converts, at one of our mission stations for instance, it would be felt by the heathen all around, and would probably eventuate in large accessions to the Church. Our Christian literature has been preparing the minds of the people for a grand Christian movement in this land—a movement such as would astonish

the world, I think. Of all-the organisations now at work in China, there is not one that has done more than this Society towards the enlightenment of the people with regard to the folly of their superstitious rites and practices, and towards preparing their minds for such a religious movement as many of us are most earnestly praying for these days.

But we are only just beginning our work. Indeed I am feeling keenly these days, notwithstanding the vast amount of preparatory work that has been done, that we are at the beginning of everything. This is a most interesting period in the history of this great people. China is not only waking up, she is awake, and very much awake. The China that I found asleep on my arrival at Shanghai fifty years ago, is now all alive and going to school again, and is doing so willingly, gladly, eagerly. I have just been looking over something I wrote about China and the missionary work in China ten years ago, and it reads like ancient history. is perfectly true to the state of things as then existing, but it has very little application to what I see around me to-day. We are in a new China already. What an opportunity is opened up before the missions in China these days. is no reason why China should not be evangelized within this century, so far as China herself is concerned.

In the midst of this new life and development the Central China Religious Tract Society cannot afford to go to sleep. Our very existence will depend on our moving on in the line of the felt wants and deep cravings of the nation. We thank God for the past, but we dare not live on in it. We must go on unto perfection, and strive in every possible way to meet the needs of these new times. We want more tracts, and better writing. Our depot must be stocked with the best Christian literature to be found in the Chinese language. But I must write no more. I trust one result of to-day's meeting will be to deepen the interest of all the missionaries

at this centre in the Society and its work. Praying that God's blessing may be very present at your gathering.

I remain, dear Mr. Archibald.
Yours very sincerely,
(Signed) GRIFFITH JOHN.

Mr. Archibald, after reading the above letter, proceeded to make it a text for some happy references to Dr. John and his noble work. Speaking of the Society's Jubilee scheme, he ventured to think it no mean achievement to raise £1000 in one year. Never before in China had a Tract Society such reason for congratulation. It was a lot of money, but it was only a start. They had to raise another £1000 this year, and a similar sum next year, before their desires would be fully realized. He was sure there was no one who did not wish to see some fitting and substantial monument erected to Dr. John, on which his name could be named, and which would speak appreciation to all in time coming. sure that no one could suggest a better form for that monument than a building that would permit of the efficient carrying on of the Society's work. He was sure, too, that no one who considered the needs of the times, could mention any more clamant need than this. Finally, he was sure that those who had helped already, would help again, and would use their influence to get others to help. Mr. Archibald then moved: - "That this meeting expresses its gratitude to God at the progress of the Griffith John Jubilee Memorial scheme, and renews its appeal to all friends of Christian missions to help towards the completion of the same."

The Rev. Arthur Bonsey, of the London Mission, said it gave him much pleasure to second the resolution. He was reminded, at that late hour, of the man who had to speak on a certain occasion, and who applied to a friend for his advice. He represented that he was very anxious to leave a good

impression behind, and would like to know what he should speak about. His friend replied that if he would speak about three minutes; he would be sure to leave a good impression behind. In the meeting that morning, they had been reminded of the growth of the Society by the presence of the representative of the daughter Society, and also by the presence of a speaker who could give such interesting information about the spread of the truth in the very city of Chow Han. It was a fact of immense importance that, in the place from which the blasphemous anti-foreign literature of 1891 originally emanated, there is now a fully established and successful Christian work. While seeking to do honour to their President, the Committee were anxious to provide for the carrying on of the work with more ease and efficiency. That was the meaning of the proposed new building. hoped most sincerely that funds would be forthcoming so that Dr. John might have the joy of seeing the scheme brought to a happy completion.

On the Chairman putting the resolution to the meeting, it was carried with acclamation.

Bishop Roots said it was late, but he would venture to keep the audience a few minutes longer. The Bishop referred to the enforced absence of two of the Society's leaders, Dr. John and Mr. Adams. They thought of them first as Christian men, but not only that: they thought of them as leaders in their own Societies, as leaders of divisions of the army of the Living God. Reference was then made to the progress in material things that is being made by the China of to-day. But more significant still was the Chinese renaissance. By one decree the old systems had been swept away, and in a manner that had no comparison in modern history. Just as significant was the rise of the national spirit in China, which he was glad to see, even as implied in the American boycott. The Bishop went on to speak of the

existence and development of a Chinese Christian Union. They might not like it, but they might stand within and continue to direct if they would. There was a great need for a literature that would stand for all that was good in the old, and reach out to all that was good in the new. The Society must have the Griffith John Jubilee Buildings without delay. They owed it to themselves that, having put their hands to the thing, they must see it through. It had to be a visible sign of the existence of the Society. It behoved all to see that from that day forward, they did their best to carry the scheme to completion.

The Bishop's speech brought to a close one of the most successful meetings yet held by the Society, and one left with the impression that the Central China Religious Tract Society is a real and important factor in the Missionary Enterprise of China, and with the desire that its aspirations after increased work and influence might be fully realized.

[&]quot;The teaching of history shows that the best remedy for the evils, ignorance, and sufferings of China, is Christianity. What Christianity has done in other lands it can do in this. And one of the many means of bringing Christianity to all classes of the Chinese is this Society. Who can tell what a winged and miraculous power the publications of this Society possess? They find an entrance where no human voice can reach."

J. P. Donovan, Esq.,

Annual Meeting,

The Colportage Work.

The Colportage Department aims at bringing the publications of the Central China Religious Tract Society into the homes of the Chinese people, by making grants of books to Christian Workers who act as colporteurs under missionary superintendence, the proceeds from sales being retained by the men as part wages. Eighty three Colporteurs were employed during 1905, and circulated 264,832 books and tracts.

The district at present worked by the colporteurs contains about fifty walled cities, besides innumerable small towns and villages. TWO FAMOUS PILGRIM GENTRES, the Mung Lan Mountain in Hupeh, and the Nan Yoh Mountain in Hunan, come within the sphere of work. THE COLPORTEURS WORK WITH ENCOURAGING RESULTS AMONG THE PILGRIMS. Were funds forthcoming the sphere might be indefinitely enlarged.

Wherever colportage work has been vigorously prosecuted, the power of idolatrous superstition has been sensibly weakened. Many conversions have resulted from, and the existence of not a few churches may be traced to, this agency.

The smallest contributions will be gratefully received.

£10. Os. Od. will support a colporteur and supply him with books for twelve months.

£3 0s. 0d. will supply a worker—already partially employed by a Bible Society or Mission—with colportage literature for a year's work.

HELP IS URGENTLY NEEDED.

Donations may be sent to :—

The Agent,

Central China Religious Tract Society.

Hankow, China.

List of Bonations to Jubilee Fund.

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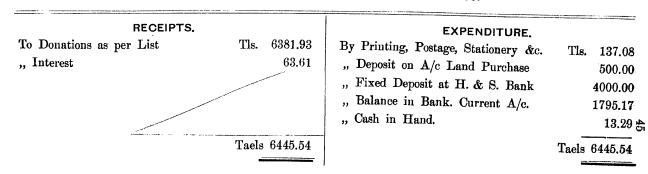
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