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BUILDING TOGETHER— ACCORDING TO PLAN

ACCORDING TO PLAN

“I will build My Church”

A recent survey of the work of the
CHINA INLAND MISSION

CHINA INLAND MISSION
LONDON, PHILADELPHIA, MELBOURNE
CHUNGKING

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ACCORDING TO PLAN

By the General Director, Bishop Houghton

It is heartening to a soldier, attacking some enemy strong-point, effecting a landing before dawn on a hostile coast, struggling through an impenetrable jungle or defending a lonely outpost against impossible odds, to know that his general has a plan, that the labour and the wounds are *not* in vain, since he is fighting as a unit in "a mighty army" whose movements are controlled and concerted by one who knows what his objective is, and what are the means by which it can be effected most speedily and completely.

In so far as that plan is hidden from him, the soldier's one supreme duty is obedience to the authority over him. But obedience, if it must be unquestioning, need not be unintelligent. He is never left without knowledge of the immediate objective to be attained, and there are times when the broad sweep of the plan of a master mind is revealed to him, and the small operation in which he is engaged is seen in relation to the great whole.

"According to plan"—the words almost provoke derision because they are so frequently used to explain retreats which have become necessary through the success of the enemy's plan! But on a certain day I saw them in their true setting in relation to the Divine government of the world, and the Divine conflict with "the world rulers of this darkness." They are found in Eph. iii. 11 which, literally translated, reads: "According to the plan of the ages, which He made in CHRIST JESUS our LORD."

GOD from eternity has been working according to plan. He has set before Himself a deliberate purpose. Unresting, unceasing, He orders all things according to the counsel of His will. At this point in history, what can be ascertained of GOD's plan? If it be conceded that the founding of the China Inland Mission was part of the plan, then at this point in the Mission's history what is our part in the plan. When the world's best brains are

being devoted to post-war planning, can we discover what the function of the China Inland Mission should be—according to God's plan—in post-war China.

During 1943, and particularly at the meeting of the China Council of the China Inland Mission held at our headquarters in Chungking, October 18th-30th, I seriously believe that a pattern was shown to us, and that the Council findings represent, not the collective wisdom of its members, for we were all very conscious of our lack of wisdom, but—in measure at least—a revelation of the will of GOD. It was not that we hammered out a policy for the Mission, but that He showed us the lines among which He is working, and we may be co-workers with Him.

It has often been suggested that the words of James in Acts xv. 14 outline God's purpose for this age—that He is visiting the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His Name. It would be equally true to quote our LORD's own words, "I will build My Church," as an expression of the Divine plan. Speaking very generally, I suggest that in the past (and in 1944 the Mission enters upon its eightieth year) the China Inland Mission has been used for the quarrying and shaping of individual stones in the temple. We have been more at home in Eph. iii. 8 than Eph. iii. 10. To us has this grace been given to proclaim among the Chinese the Good News of the fathomless wealth of CHRIST. But the eternal purpose—the plan of the ages—which GOD purposed in CHRIST JESUS our LORD is that *now* the full sweep of the Divine wisdom is to be displayed to angelic rulers and authorities in the heavenly sphere—how? Through us as individuals? Yes, in measure. Through such groups as the China Inland Mission? Yes, in measure. But mainly, primarily, *through the channel of the Church*, the Church which is His body and through which, in a sense, He is being completed.

When Hudson Taylor founded the China Inland Mission in 1865, there was no sort of witness for Christ in any of the provinces represented at the Council by their

superintendents, with the single exception of Chekiang. How could our pioneers work "through the channel of the Church" when no Church existed? But to-day there are said to be 125,000 Christians in the churches founded through the China Inland Mission. If there is a Church, and if the Church is central to GOD's purpose in this dispensation, ought we not, as fellow labourers with GOD, to be working through it?

During 1943 the Rev. R. E. Thompson, Regional Director for our northern area, was travelling in Honan, Anhwei, Chekiang and Kiangsi, holding missionary conferences and meeting Church leaders. When he returned to Chungking in September—I myself arrived from England in May—and we conferred together, we found that the LORD had been leading him to recognise and emphasise, in every district he had visited, the centrality of the Church, the fact that CHRIST is building His Church, and calls us to labour with Him. In fact, many of the applications of this principle to our work in general had already been put into effect in these provinces. Surely it was "according to plan" that Mr. Thompson made this journey and stated this principle while simultaneously I was preparing to lay it before the China Council in October.

The following pages will show to how great an extent the churches are ready for such an emphasis. Our part is to co-operate with them, ever more closely and more humbly, in evangelism, in Bible teaching, and in the training of Chinese workers. Just as the most careful planning and co-ordination is required for any offensive action in the present war, so as to bring men, equipment, and armies to bear at the right spot and at the right moment, so we pray that the Church in China, and we as a sort of Foreign Legion making our contribution to it, may be knit together and trained for the spiritual warfare, for the pulling down of enemy strongholds, for the exaltation of our victorious Lord.

There is evidence in this report that the Church is by no means what we desire it to be, and what God plans it

should be—a glorious Church without spot of defilement or wrinkle of age. But I think that in 1948 we missionaries discovered that *we* are far from what we would wish to be and still further from what our LORD intends. As we humble ourselves before Him who brought us here, and whose miracle-working power sustains us physically and spiritually, we pray that we may be equipped by His Spirit to contribute to the upbuilding of His Church.

That the Church in China desires this co-operation, and will desire it for a long time to come, admits of no doubt—provided always that we are men and women constrained by love, desiring to share with the people of China, not the Gospel of GOD only, but our very lives also because they are dear to us. To such missionaries—teachers with the spirit of learners, leaders with the spirit of servants—the whole of China is open as never before.

If the time is coming when the *number* of new missionaries required in China must begin to decrease as Chinese workers undertake the tasks formerly performed by missionaries, it is equally true that those who come, provided they are of the right spiritual calibre, will find a door of opportunity wider than their predecessors ever knew.

During visits to North America and Great Britain in 1941–3, I spoke frequently of the evangelistic opportunity among the educated classes, their extraordinary readiness to read the Scriptures and to welcome intercourse with Christian people. Occasionally I wondered if I was beginning to yield to the temptation of exaggeration—one of the besetting sins of deputation speakers! But I have returned to find that the reality goes far beyond what I pictured.

Among contributing factors are the examples of the Generalissimo (now appointed President in place of Lin Sen), and new goodwill towards Britain and America since the abolition of the unequal treaties and the full recognition of China as the leading power in the Far East, the new openness of mind (partly the result of suffering)

that is characteristic of the thousands of exiles from other provinces now living in west China. But none of these factors can account for the invitations which our missionaries are receiving, and of which they are taking joyful advantage, in schools and universities, amongst Government and military officials and the younger staff in banks and offices. The Spirit of God is abroad, and a general spiritual awakening may well be very near. Two nights ago the Vice-Minister of a Government bureau in Chungking said to me: "I am not a Christian, but I believe our country will never prosper unless our people have faith in God. After the war I predict a very great advance for Christianity in China."

If it is a miracle—a work of God, that He has opened a door for the Word, it is also a miracle that He continues to open His Hand and supply our needs. Prices were called "fantastic" at the beginning of 1943, but during the year they doubled or trebled again, until it is commonly said that \$100 has not the pre-war purchasing power of 10 cents! Meanwhile, the pegged exchange enormously reduces the value of foreign currency. Small wonder that it was a year of financial stringency—the wonder is that we are continuing to exist at all! The missionary, who was commonly, though mistakenly, regarded as amongst the wealthy classes, is now relatively poor. Five years ago we could live far more cheaply in China than in the home countries, but now China is one of the most expensive places in the world, i.e. for "foreigners" who receive their remittances from abroad.

How was our need met—for none of us has starved and none of us is in debt? Partly by an astonishing increase in contributions from every one of the home countries. Partly by the sale of non-essential belongings at luxury prices. No profiteering is involved, since the purchasers are certainly not the losers by the transaction! Partly by personal gifts from Chinese sources, both in money and in kind. We do not advertise our needs, but since it became generally known that their missionary friends had ceased to be "affluent," it has become

common for Chinese churches or individual Christians to provide travelling expenses and entertainment for visiting missionaries or to make occasional gifts or thank-offerings.

I do not suggest that there has not been straitness, necessitating stringent economies. But what matters is that we should learn how to suffer want as well as how to abound, and that in both experiences we should be utterly content with our FATHER'S ordering. As members of His family, we take our portion from His Hand, and thank Him, not examining too narrowly the intervening links—the warm generosity of friends in the home countries partly neutralised by the artificial rate of exchange, the almost insuperable difficulty of equitable distribution here in Chungking (since the very latest figures of commodity prices in various provinces are out of date long before the remittance can reach them), and the steady rise in the cost of living (varied by periodical and *unreasonable steep* rises). The basic facts of the situation are that GOD gives us what we need, and what GOD does not give us we do not need.

This report is prepared at our emergency Headquarters in Chungking, and I am without the material for a careful comparison of the income received in the various home countries. But in every country there was substantial increase as compared with 1942—as if our loving FATHER asked us, “What would you expect to see? Would it not be a considerably smaller income, as heavy war taxation, and the rise in the cost of living made it impossible for My stewards to give as they would desire? Now open your eyes and look at these figures. Many have given more, and not less—larger gifts at greater cost. Now will you trust Me for 1944?”

One point of special interest is the inclusion of the first amount from the Union of South Africa. My wife and I spent about three weeks at Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban in the spring and the Rev. J. H. Robinson arrived in April, and has been travelling there in the interest of China and the gospel ever since. In September

a Council was formed in Cape Town, and thus an additional "home country" has been added to the familiar three.

With regard to the funds actually received in Chungking (not reckoning all that was disbursed at home, and the £1,000 per month contributed by Great Britain through the Foreign Office to the Swiss Government towards the needs of our members in occupied China) the broad and astonishing fact is that the whole total amount in Chinese currency reached the colossal figure of \$14,712,972.88, more than twice the total for 1942.¹

The total income for 1943 was as follows:

	<i>Sterling</i>	<i>Gold Dollars</i>
Received in Great Britain	£97,489	889,956
" " North America	87,029	848,116
" " Australia and New Zealand	20,870 ²	83,480
" " Union of South Africa	455	1,820
" " China (including bank interest and gain on exchange)	11,842	47,368
	<hr/> £217,685	<hr/> £870,740

Money received by Associate Missions is not included.

Average exchange for 1943, in round figures:

£1 = G.\$4 = A.£1 5s. = \$108.6 (Chinese).

It is customary to mention two other figures—the total number of missionaries on the field and at home, and the total number of baptisms recorded for the year. The former cannot be given with complete accuracy, because we are without news from associate centres in occupied Europe, and the latter are completely unreliable, for various reasons. Returns from Free China are incomplete, and there are no returns at all from the occupied zone, where, none the less, there is evidence that the Spirit of God has not left His Church. Moreover, as our goal is

¹ It should be noted that from May onwards the Chinese Government allowed a special supplement of 50 per cent. to be paid on foreign currency intended for missionary organisations, and 100 per cent if the money was to be used wholly for relief purposes.

² £26,087 15s. 3d. was the amount actually received in Australian currency.

attained and the churches pass more and more completely under Chinese control, many do not recognise, or are inclined to overlook the obligation to send figures of baptisms to the headquarters of the "Foreign Legion." (On the other hand, there is a striking tendency on the part of the churches in each provincial district to draw more closely together and to establish organisations for mutual helpfulness though not for centralised control).

As far as we know, the total number of members and associates of the China Inland Mission was 1,210 on December 31st, 1943. For five members and one associate, it was the year of their departure "out of this world unto the Father." They are sorely missed in the provinces where they worked, for it would have been difficult to find a more valuable group than these. Was that why they were needed elsewhere? Their lives on earth, and the moment when they were to leave us to be "with Christ," were planned in perfect wisdom, perfect love. Here are their names, and their years of service in China:

A. Trudinger	47 years
F. G. Snow	33 years
Mrs. A. B. Cooke	25 years
Mrs. S. Hoyte	20 years
Mrs. C. G. Edwards	15 years
Miss E. V. Dahle	7 years

One further note remains to be added. All the records in this booklet are of work in Free China. They come from no less than eleven provinces, and thus emphasise the extent of the territory where our ministry is permitted to continue. No large areas have permanently changed hands during 1943, and no missionary evacuations have been necessary. In Honan, Anhwei, Chekiang, Kiangsi and Yunnan we are maintaining work on the fringe of enemy-held districts. Others of our number are specially exposed to danger because there are important airfields in their neighbourhood.

But what of the occupied zone? The vast majority of

the 134 C.I.M. missionaries there¹ are concentrated in Shanghai and Weihsien, Shantung, where also our Chefoo School continues to function. Our headquarters at Sinza Road, Shanghai, is a training centre for recruits from Japan. A few elderly missionaries are living at the Missionary Home in Tifeng Road, and enjoy freedom of movement—amongst them Mr. and Mrs. Hoste, both exceedingly frail. In the Civil Assembly Centres (or concentration camps) conditions vary from fair to bad, but the organisation is good, and through the kindness of some of our associates Red Cross parcels are sent in to supplement the somewhat meagre and very monotonous diet. Services and Bible classes are held, and if we may judge from letters, our friends are in good heart. There has been much sickness, but it is noticeable that all the deaths recorded last year were in Free China.

Early in September the Chefoo Schools, concentrated at Temple Hill, were moved to the great Assembly Centre at Weihsien, Shantung. It was a deep disappointment to the parents in Free China that a British repatriation scheme, intended to include all children separated from their parents, did not mature. But in September an American scheme was actually carried out, and on December 1st the repatriation ship carrying a China Inland Mission contingent of eighteen adults and thirty-one children—there were also five children of other missions who had been interned with the Chefoo Schools—docked in Jersey City. Over 120 children still remain in Weihsien. A few were reunited to their parents in the Shanghai camps in December.

News in letters from Weihsien—a great compound housing about 1,800 internees, including the majority of “foreigners” in north China—is uniformly good. The food, which was inadequate at first, seems to have improved; the School is functioning part-time; and, best of all, a work of God is proceeding, especially amongst

¹ There are also ninety-four associates of the Mission in occupied zones who are continuing their work under restrictions, but are not actually interned, since the majority are of neutral nationality.

the older boys and girls. It is for this that we have prayed continually, and there is abundant evidence that our prayers are heard.

Our SAVIOUR went to Calvary "according to plan." Herod and Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles and the people of Israel, accomplished after all, only what GOD's hand and GOD's counsel determined before to be done. Economic difficulties in free China, restrictions, privations, possible danger in the occupied zone—all may be attributable to the power of the ENEMY and yet play a predetermined part in the accomplishment of our FATHER's plan. When we weigh the sufferings of this present hour against the infinite cost of our redemption, or against the eternal weight of glory, we are ashamed that we should ever be impatient or fearful. Rather we rejoice, and wonder at the grace which has set us here in China in this Day of GOD, and has even shown us something of the pattern which we are to follow. The angelic rulers and authorities in the heavenly sphere can already see more clearly than we can how the many-sided wisdom of GOD is being displayed, in China as elsewhere, "through the channel of the Church." CHRIST loved the Church and gave Himself for it. The disciple is not above his MASTER, and we ought to lay down our lives—that is why we are here—for the upbuilding of the Church in China.

FITLY FRAMED TOGETHER

1. CO-OPERATION WITH THE CHURCH

By R. E. Thompson

The journey from which Mr. Thompson draws his material was one of the outstanding events of 1943. Most certainly it was "according to plan" that these missionary conferences were held, and our desire for humble, hearty co-operation was explained to Chinese leaders in all the churches visited.

"To break down all dividing lines—to carry out God's great designs."
—OXENHAM.

DURING the year 1943 I had a unique opportunity of studying the progress of "God's great designs" in Free China. The first nine months of the year were spent in constant travel. I visited thirty-seven centres of our work and took part in eleven missionary conferences as well as conferences with the Church leaders. In that period 6,500 English miles were traversed and nine provinces visited. Wonderful times of fellowship with the Church leaders and fellow missionaries remain a happy memory, a gracious evidence of the oneness of life and purpose to be found throughout the churches.

Missionary conference. The speaker for the evening is not the visiting Director, but the local Chinese pastor, the son of a Chinese evangelist. He has been asked to speak to the group as a fellow worker. After his first introductory remarks, his face glows as he speaks appreciatively of the brothers and sisters who have come so far to bring the gospel to China. Soon he is solemn, as he has many things to say which he fears may not be easy for us to receive, of counsel and advice to all who desire to be truly one with this great people. He assures us that the missionary is welcome and declares his confidence that we are all one in CHRIST JESUS.

The great province of Honan is visited while still in the throes of terrible famine. What sights meet the eye. Starvation and death are abroad in the land. Here the gospel of God's Grace has found an acceptance greater

than in most parts of China. The people are hard-working farmers, many are desperately poor, and illiteracy is common. Co-operation with the intelligentsia, with whom we appear to have more in common, may be easy of accomplishment, but these poor country people of the soil—can there be any sense of oneness with them? Come to the Sunday morning service. Here they are in their workaday clothes. What numbers of them. We move in and out of the crowds and note the happy expressions, the words of warm welcome, and there comes over us a sense of oneness. Yes, there is a common life in CHRIST and a common hope of glory. These are our brothers and sisters.

A few of the leaders of the churches in Honan have been asked to meet me. We are to have tea. The two rather better dressed gentlemen, with markedly intelligent expressions, are the honorary pastors of the large churches in the city. These men for years have given of their best to the Church. It is a pleasure to meet them. There are others present who have the interest of the Church deeply at heart. The purpose of my visit to Honan is explained. Our deep desire for co-operation with these men in the building of the Church is expressed, and finds a hearty response. We are soon discussing our programme of meetings and itinerary around the province. Prayer follows that GOD'S rich blessing may rest upon the Missionary Conference.

While on a visit to our East Szechwan field, I had the pleasure of attending the ordination of two young missionaries. It was an impressive service. Archdeacon Ts'ai assisted Bishop Bevan, and, in the presence of Chinese and missionaries, these men were set apart for the ministry, which would call them into co-operation with their Chinese brethren who had been set apart in a like manner.

You will not want to miss the splendid ordination service held during my stay in Fowyang, when two pastors and two elders were ordained. Mr. Dunn, the Superintendent of the province, and I had the pleasure

of assisting Pastor Wu in this most solemn service. As these men were set aside for the ministry to which they are so evidently called, our sense of oneness was deep, and as we joined the senior pastor in the laying on of hands in the Name of the LORD, commissioning them to preach, our hearts were filled with thanksgiving.

In all my travels there is no place where I had a deeper sense of oneness with our Chinese brethren, or witnessed closer co-operation in service, than in Anhwei. On arrival, Pastor Wu was present with a hearty welcome and a pressing invitation to take the Sunday service the next day. During the days of conference, our dinner hour was turned into a useful hour of fellowship, as three pastors and two elders joined us. After the meal an informal discussion of Church matters followed with these men of spiritual experience who had seen the work of GOD grow under their hands. No sense of difference in race or colour was felt in the knowledge of our oneness in our common LORD. Deeper and fuller co-operation in our common task was what these men longed for. I shall not soon forget the warmth of appreciation and the pressure of the handshake I received from Pastor Wu when I expressed our desire as a Mission to be more one with them in our great task of building the Church.

You must attend a Sunday morning service at Fowyang. A large church building situated on the main street is a centre of much activity. The ground floor of the building is full to capacity, at least six hundred people are present. A well conducted service proceeds. At the close Pastor Wu has an announcement to make. There is a small group of believers in the country which desires to build its own place of worship. They have already started, but owing to the high costs of materials they are finding it difficult to complete the task. Will the mother Church co-operate and give towards this worthy cause. The Pastor asks Miss Han, the Bible Woman, to explain more fully, as she has just returned from a visit to this group of believers. This she does with enthusiasm. Now the pastor is ready to record the names of any who

are prepared to co-operate. In less than half an hour the blackboard is covered with names and the sum of \$2,800 has been contributed. It is only three weeks since this Church gave to another country cause in a similar way. In this district there are eighty small groups of believers and amongst them there is a delightful spirit of co-operation.

I think you have been introduced to everyone. It is a pleasure to meet so many men with such a deep concern for the work of God. They are the leaders of the churches scattered over quite a large district. The purpose of their coming together is to discuss problems related to the fuller organisation of the churches into a union, so that the work of God may be more effectively carried out throughout the whole district.

The Chairman is conducting the meeting in an admirable fashion and the Secretary with skill is making notes of the discussion and the decisions made. Several missionaries are present and from time to time they express an opinion or the Chairman seeks their advice and counsel. The burden of the discussion appears to be the need for more Bible teaching throughout the churches. The outcome is the organisation of a short-term Bible school to be held for three months. The question arises: Where are the teachers to come from? All eyes turn to the missionaries who are recognised as teachers of the Word of God. Yes, the churches will send an invitation to two able missionaries, asking them to take over the teaching responsibilities. And so in many parts of the land in united gatherings the work of God is planned.

As we passed from one Church centre to another on the long journey, we gathered missionaries and Church leaders together for prayer and fellowship and for the discussion of the problems related to their work. Now, in many of the churches such gatherings are being held month by month. Prayerful planning has become a practice. It is not now the missionaries' work or the Church's work, but *our* work. Missionaries and Chinese

are united in the conduct of Sunday schools, home meetings, evangelism and Bible classes.

What a splendid crowd of young people we have here! Yes, this is the young people's meeting held on Sunday evenings. A stirring address has just been given and the meeting has been thrown open for a season of prayer. How earnest these young people are. They are pouring out their hearts to GOD; the stream of prayer goes on for forty minutes. There appears to be a burden on everyone's heart. Yes, a missionary across the river in the hospital lies critically ill, one who has laboured amongst the young and is loved by all. As you listen to the prayers, you will be able in some small measure to estimate the completeness of the bond, even the love of CHRIST that binds hearts together in this land.

We shall enter through the back door of the church. The front doors are near to the street and have been closed so that quietness may be maintained. The believers have gathered to remember the dying Love of their LORD. The ground floor of the church is filled with fine old country people, business men, students, missionaries and Church workers. The pastor in his quiet, delightful manner leads the service. As we take the emblems of His redeeming Love, all realise GOD'S Spirit is amongst us. The love of CHRIST is shed abroad in our hearts in new ways, and He who alone can break down dividing lines and carry out GOD'S great designs is working according to plan—His plan.

2. MISSIONARY CO-OPERATION—IS IT STILL DESIRED?

By H. A. J. Lea

IN CHRIST there is neither Jew nor Greek. The Church in China must be built primarily by Chinese, but Chinese builders not only need but truly desire the co-operation of Westerners, "who are wise to win and help souls." Of such there can never be too many. But Western prejudices must be nailed to the Cross, and we must be Chinese to the Chinese.

ON a rainy Sunday afternoon I stood chatting with a Chinese fellow worker. Our talk concerned the Church which GOD is calling out in this land and its future work.

“Do you think there is going to be any need for foreign missionaries after the war, or any work for them to do?” I asked. He hesitated, as I have seen many another do when asked this question, and then said slowly: “Y-e-s, there will still be the need; the harvest is plentiful and those of us who have given ourselves to whole-time service are all too few. There is certainly a place for missionaries in the years to come, but,” he added, “only if you have a spiritual contribution to make.” “Do others think the same?” I continued, and once again he hesitated before replying: “Well, it depends on their previous and present relationships with missionaries. Some have been embittered by experiences they have had.” He went on to tell of instances, and of a letter received only two days previously from one who counts not a few missionaries as his closest friends, but who recently, because of some unpleasant experience of the red tape of a mission institution, is seriously wondering whether the Church in China would not be better left to itself.

I sat talking in the city of Chungking with a university student, and our conversation turned to the days after the war. “Do you think there will be a place for us out there then?” I asked. “Yes, I think so,” he replied, “but on one condition: in the past many of you have come out with a superiority complex, and unless you can come here free from racial prejudice, then you come in vain.”

One day, as I spoke with a Chinese pastor, he passed on this criticism, which he said was fairly prevalent: “In the past the countries of the West have often not sent us their very best men, and the Church out here needs them. Let them above all be men of the highest calibre spiritually.”

Whether or not these three expressions of opinion are fully representative, they are some of many criticisms which must be faced ere we embark on the glorious days of opportunity that lie ahead. They come as a challenge which is both humbling and stimulating. In the past the call of GOD came and the missionary leaving his native land came to China to labour, just where he lived; but

now, when GOD's call comes, and it comes still, for the need is as pressing as ever, it is to labour under very different conditions. There exists in this land a Church, the channel through which GOD in the future is going to send forth His light, and if the missionary is going to find his most useful sphere of service, it is going to be in the ranks of this Church. "Send us men and women" is still the Macedonian call of the Church in China. "Send us those who because of their experience can help us; those who because of their burning zeal as evangelists can toil with us in leading young lives to Christ; those who because of their gifts as teachers can help us train a spiritual ministry; and those who, above all, because they have Abundant Life can by the Dynamic of the HOLY GHOST reproduce this life in others. But do not let them be men and women who are too opinionated to put to one side their own ideas and plans; or who are too Western to crucify self in order to understand the mind and ways of the East; or who are too stereotyped denominationally to fit into a Church that is feeling after a form of its own, and does not want to be coerced into going any other way save where it believes the Spirit is leading."

There lies ahead, for each worker from a foreign land, the wondrous privilege, if he is willing to sacrifice, of working together with his Chinese brethren in the expanding and strengthening of Christ's precious Church in this land, but he must not forget that word, "sacrifice." Sacrifice for the modern missionary is taking on a new content. No longer does it necessarily mean, with perhaps the exception of border work, that he is the centre of a staring crowd, or spends long hours trekking on foot over dusty roads, or has to put up with numerous hardships in backward cities, for civilisation is fast making this country in material things more like Western lands; but it is in his soul that he will have to discipline himself. Whereas, previously, for the most part, it was a physical sacrifice, now it will be one of the mind. His thinking, his affections and his friendships with his Chinese brethren

are going to be of the utmost importance. As never before the missionary must learn, on the one hand, that he is a guest out here, and yet on the other, how to enter into the closest fellowship with the people of this land.

A missionary had gathered with Chinese fellow believers for the communion service. The singing wasn't good; several amens and exclamations of joy were particularly loud, and sometimes out of place; the Communion table in the centre was littered with books, and also had someone's scarf lying across the end; the service was most informal and lacked much that would have made it in any way like the kind that he had learnt to love in his old church at home, and it all began to worry him. What could he get out of this? And then he decided, at all costs, not to let these things rankle, or in any way hinder him from entering into the fellowship of the meeting. And as he forgot his prejudices, and sought to be one with his brethren and sisters, he found too that the real joy which was theirs had become his also and made him more than ever one with these of a foreign land whom CHRIST had redeemed. Had he shown by the least word or action any disapproval, had he felt that this was the time to try to "put them right," how great would have become the gap between him and them! Weeks afterwards, perhaps months, in the course of conversation which is born of mutual regard, will come the opportunity to suggest, here a little, there a little, that some things might be altered. Though as leader no longer, there is for the missionary a deeper ministry ahead, that of a friend, who loves what they love, and, forgetting that he is a foreigner, finds all the work that he wants amongst those whom he has learnt to appreciate and who appreciate him.

My thoughts go back to the Twickenham Rugby football ground. I see again the glorious try scored by the wing three-quarters, and the fearless tackling of the full back which more than once prevented the other side from equalising, but it was the unseen, unsung work of those in the second row of the scrum that really won the

game. GOD grant to each missionary who is privileged to be working in the Church in China to-day the grace of shoving in the second row. No matter where the front row leads him, no matter what the pressure from behind, his is the joy to forget he is a foreigner, and glory that he is in the thick of the fight—a welcome member of the team.

3. NEW VISION IN HONAN

By Phyllis V. Thompson

At the Honan missionary conference our workers saw a vision of CHRIST as their Life, of CHRIST building His Church, and of the part which they might take in construction according to His plan. Now they are building with new heart and new hope.

“BREAD! Bread!” The moans of hungry beggars lying by the roadside, and of abandoned children pitifully calling for their parents mingled with the hum of conversation in the busy shopping centre as the missionaries threaded their way through the crowded streets. The famine! Like a great grey monster of death it was sucking the life and vitality from the people; there was just one universal problem faced by the pale, anxious-looking, weary multitudes. How could they keep alive during the weeks that still remained till harvest. And as the groups of missionaries gathered for conference with one of the Mission Directors from Chungking, many of them overdue for furlough, all of them conscious, to some degree, of pressure from the inevitable repercussions of a world war, and daily witnessing the suffering of the starving people amongst whom they lived, it seemed that the time was inopportune for the mental and spiritual effort that a readjustment of existing policies, and the opening up of a new era in missionary activity, would involve. But, as later events proved—it was according to plan.

There was no formality at the Conference meetings, but a frank facing of facts. “To what purpose are the wheels going round?” asked the Director, wagging his pencil as he sat on the edge of the desk and faced the

audience of missionaries. "What are you aiming at in your churches in Honan? It seems to me that the churches are like a courtyard filled with material that hasn't been put together. There's the material all right—but it needs building."

The time was come; the time that the LORD'S house should be built.

The problem of how to build was discussed. How were the large, often unwieldy congregations to be organised into orderly, spiritually intelligent churches? How were the oft-times weak city churches to be made strong centres from which vigorous life could flow to the smaller country out-stations? And how were these country out-stations, often run by just one leader, who held everything in his own hands, to be converted to the congregational form of Church government which was the acknowledged Church polity in the Honan China Inland Mission field? Material for building there was, the result of faithful, self-sacrificing missionary labour over many years; and the forty-odd missionaries who gathered for the Conference, nearly half of them young workers in their first term of service, received the commission to build together that material on which other men had laboured.

It was not a new commission. Few of those who gathered had not received it before. But the unsolved problem with many of them had been how to do it; and as the plan for the accomplishment of the task was unfolded to them, they saw how a rather vague dream could become a practical reality.

"The form of Church government in Honan seems to be simple congregationalism," announced the Director in his lecture. "The churches are local units, governed by the Church members themselves, not by an ecclesiastical body. Deacons and leaders are elected by the Church members, by vote. And your main job now, as missionaries, is to *train those leaders*." Suggestions were made for the formation of committees in which the missionaries would co-operate with the Chinese leaders for the direc-

tion of work in the counties for which they were responsible. Methods of organising cottage meetings, evangelistic meetings, Sunday schools and Bible classes were propounded and discussed.

"And your job," reiterated the Director, well acquainted with the missionary urge to evangelise, preach, teach and *do*, "is to train the Chinese to do this work, and to lead these meetings—not to do it all yourselves!"

The weakness of some of the city churches came under review, and it was decided that some revision of missionary methods was necessary. Owing to the great need, it had been the custom for missionaries to distribute their energies over a wide field. In summer and winter, their activities would be mainly in the cities in which they lived, but in the spring and autumn they would set off for visits to the country out-stations, holding Bible schools, phonetic classes, or doing evangelistic work, often over a large area. It was suggested that more permanent results would be obtained by sustained and concentrated effort in limited spheres, directed to the building up of local churches and the training of Chinese leaders. The vital importance of strong city churches was emphasised, and it was decided that quite a number of missionaries should, after consultation with the Chinese leaders, concentrate wholly on city work for a period; and, later, devote time and sustained effort to the establishing of the smaller country congregations.

To further the Mission's aim of building a Bible-loving Church, three men missionaries and three Chinese workers were set apart to hold monthly Bible schools in the stations of the four districts in which the Mission was working, thus making possible a regular course of Bible training for those who could not, for economic and other reasons, go to Bible school.

Had the Conference begun and ended with the consideration of the task, and discussion of plans for its performance, the missionaries might well have felt unequal for what lay ahead. But the Director had not

only come with a commission. He had a message. And as the missionaries returned to their stations, to face what was for many of them a new phase in their missionary life, greater than the consciousness of their insufficiency and inexperience was the reassurance that in them dwelt the Spirit of One who said, ". . . *I will build My Church.*"

4. NEW VISION IN ANHWEI

By J. H. Kane

Here is a joyful report of the work of God at the North Anhwei missionary conference. Writing seven months later, one of those present says: "It was just like another conversion, only more glorious than the first. . . . Life has been different ever since."

It was a war-weary, battle-scarred group of missionaries that gathered in Fowyang on Saturday evening, April 30th, to attend the first North Anhwei District Conference in seven years. Mental strain, physical danger, and spiritual conflict had each left its mark. In addition to "the care of all the churches," there have been six years of war, with its indiscriminate bombing, prolonged blockade, and economic disorder. As though that were not enough, even Nature added its quota, for last year we had famine; this year, floods. For most of us furlough is overdue, but cannot be granted. Annual vacations are a thing of the past. Even a short period of rest between seasons is impossible on one's local station. Lack of language on the part of newer workers not infrequently created problems and paved the way for misunderstanding. Paucity of senior workers meant premature responsibility on immature shoulders. An almost total lack of supervision threw junior workers on their own initiative, not always with happy results.

In such circumstances, is it any wonder that some workers had come to the end of their tether? Others were still going hard, but were for the most part beating the air. A few were making progress, but in the wrong

direction. This business of being a missionary was proving a tough proposition. The battle was going against us, and we were losing ground. Offensive campaigns had gradually deteriorated into defensive manoeuvres. Our "blitz," begotten in ignorance and launched in zeal, had petered out. What strength remained was spent in maintaining our own spiritual life rather than in attacking the citadel of sin. Morale was low, we had lost the initiative; and defeat stared us in the face. Elijah under the juniper tree had nothing on some of us; and if the truth were told, we should have fled long since to Tarshish had we but found a boat at Joppa!

Then came the conference. Mr. R. E. Thompson, our Regional Director from Chungking, accompanied by our newly appointed Superintendent, Mr. G. T. Dunn, breezed into the compound in time for supper on April 30th and the meetings began the following day. For many months we had talked, prayed, and all but dreamed about the conference. Nor did the LORD disappoint us, for it turned out to be the finest conference many of us had ever attended, either at home or abroad. There wasn't a dull moment; council, conference, and committee meetings followed one another in rapid succession.

The opening day of the conference was set aside as a day of prayer in preparation for what was to follow. On the ensuing days we had lecture meetings, when the Regional Director spoke most illuminatingly on such important topics as "Field Administration," "Missionary Work," "Formation and Function of the Church," and kindred subjects. There were discussion meetings, when the interest was so keen that even the dinner bell failed to call a halt. There were business meetings, when the more mundane things of missionary life clamoured for attention. There were report meetings, when each worker was required to give an account of his stewardship. Besides these, there were private interviews, personal testimonies, and special meetings with the Chinese leaders.

Extremely helpful as these features were, the soul of the conference was the two-hour devotional period each morning. It was there that the LORD met us and talked with us face to face, as a man talketh with his friend. It was there that we were led to recognise our "besetting sin," the root of all evil, the source of all sorrow, the cause of all failure—sheer unbelief. It was there that we were initiated into the simple secret of perennial power—"looking unto Jesus." It was there that we were introduced, many of us for the first time, to the startling thought—"the *struggle* of faith." Morning by morning, with thoughts that breathed and words that burned, our beloved Regional Director developed with ever-increasing power the main theme of the entire conference, "Consider *Him*," until our hearts burned within us and our eyes grew moist with tears. Verily he showed us, as the English merchant on a visit to St. Andrews said of Rutherford, the loveliness of CHRIST. Over and over again we sang the conference hymn:

Consider Him! Let CHRIST thy pattern be;
 And know that He hath apprehended thee
 To share His very life, His power divine,
 And in the likeness of thy LORD to shine.

Say what you will, those were days of Heaven on earth. But what are seven days out of seven years? We would fain have lingered longer, but duty called and time forbade. In one respect at least, conferences are like calamities, which, the negro preacher informed his audience, "come to pass"—not to stay!

The above is a feeble description of the things we saw and heard on the mount. One thing remains to be told—the descent to the plain. That the conference itself was an outstanding success was the unanimous opinion of all who were privileged to attend. But did it stand the test of time? Or, to use the common parlance of the newspapers, did it enhance efficiency? Did it increase production? Did it contribute to the final victory? In a word, did it produce results?

I think it did. On August 27th the Fowyang Church

organised a Work Promotion Committee, which faced the facts, acknowledged the defeatism of the past, and unanimously agreed to resume all the activities that for one reason or another had been allowed to lapse. Sunday School, Bible Class, Prayer Meeting, Evangelistic Bands, House-to-House Visitation—all have been enthusiastically revived, and continue to function.

Mr. George Steed, writing from Hwokiu, where the Church is not yet ten years old, rejoices in the formation of a similar Work Promotion Committee, and the spontaneous adoption by the Church of the policy laid down by the conference.

Mr. Cyril Hunt writes to say that immediately upon his return to Shucheng, he delivered four messages on "The Church: Its Life and Work," as a result of which the Chinese leaders have shouldered new responsibilities and assumed unprecedented financial obligations. A graded Sunday School has been organised; and latest word from that centre tells of great blessing in the annual meetings.

Last evening Mr. C. O. Springer dropped in for a visit and regaled us with tales of progress in connection with the work in the Taiho district. A leaders' conference was held in August, at which time Mr. Thompson's plan for the establishing of independent churches rather than the multiplying of innumerable out-stations was endorsed. Since then a special Promotion Committee from the city Church has been visiting the out-stations, emphasizing Church truth, appointing deacons, settling problems, and, where they are ready for it, converting the out-stations into self-supporting churches.

Judged by its results, both in the lives of the missionaries and in the work throughout the field, there is no room to doubt that the North Anhwei District Conference was according to plan. The Captain of the LORD's Host knew the weakness of His forces on this front and sent His reinforcement just in the nick of time.

5. EIGHTY-FIVE YEARS IN BUILDING

By E. A. Kohfield

A good piece of construction work has been done here. It would stand without our co-operation; yet in Bible teaching work, especially amongst the women, missionaries still have an important ministry.

WITHOUT going into the eighty-five years' history of the Wenchow Church, suffice it to say it is an indigenous C.I.M. Church. It has been so for nearly ten years. Scarcely ever is any appeal made to the Mission or missionary for help or advice. It is of interest to note that the Church's budget has swollen from a mere \$800.00 annually in earlier years, to \$300,000.00 for the current year, and, heavy as it is, the Church is making its own plans and shouldering its own burden.

Some have asked, and we, too, have questioned, "Does the Church need or even desire any further Mission help or co-operation?" In their own words, we have it thus: "We have taken the full load of Church government from off your shoulders, now give us all your time for our spiritual benefit." Thus there is an invitation and an open door for the ministry of the Word without the cumbrance of Church affairs and finance, however important these may be. That the Church desires our help can further be seen by the fact that throughout the year invitations come from all parts of the field for special services, Bible teaching and preaching. The attendance is always good and much appreciation is shown.

Accepting an invitation, we set out together with the Pastor. The morning is bright and clear and we have just begun our journey. Being quite near the sea, the incoming tide defies the current and bears our quaint little river craft upstream. We soon leave the main channel and follow a branch that leads back into the hills, but even here the high tide pushes us on. After several hours we arrive at "Dang-chiaë," one of our out-stations. Happy,

smiling faces greet us as we step ashore; these are the Christians that have invited us for the services.

Several days have elapsed and we have had a good time; it is now Sunday morning. The Pastor has examined a number of candidates and there is to be a baptismal service. It is only 8 a.m., and the Christians are already arriving for the service. The number steadily increases, and we find groups here and there, some praying, some singing and others just chatting. The hour for the service has come and the church is seated to capacity with several hundred present. The service is now under way and the congregation is singing lustily, "O happy day that fixed my choice," while the Pastor leads the group now to be baptised out to the baptistry. The more curious follow the main scene of action, but the bulk remain seated and continue singing. A prayer is offered and the newly baptised are committed to their Heavenly FATHER's care, and then the service continues.

The Pastor is preaching this morning and he has chosen for his subject the story of the rich man and Lazarus. In his very fluent way, he tells the story beautifully. He describes the lowly life and death of the beggar and leaves him at last in Abraham's bosom. He proceeds to tell how the rich man lived, how he took ill and died and was taken in great pomp and glory to his final resting place, but, "He awakened in hell!" Here he pauses briefly and says, "Brethren, this might have been the plight of us all but for the love of GOD in our Western friends to bring us the gospel." We are touched with this expression of appreciation of the gospel and of our services. The rather lengthy service finally draws to a close and the friends exchange farewells and make their way over footpaths back into the hills and to their homes throughout the countryside. We again board our little craft and make our way back to the city.

We have been home but for a short time, and the Pastor's luggage is prepared for another similar journey. We should have gone, too, but illness detained us. This invitation came from an out-station where "ill

dividers of the Word" have been undoing the work. There are many who are young in the faith and scarcely established in the Word and thus are easily swayed one way or another. This is a recognised fact throughout the field and is at present one of the greatest problems of the work. Therefore, even though the Church is indigenous and can carry on alone, there is a field of service open to the missionary in which he can render a further valuable help to the Church—namely, that of a Bible-teaching ministry. There are, of course, other spheres of service, but we mention only the foremost.

"In connection with the women's work," writes Mrs. Worley, "there is still a keen desire for the ten-day Bible schools. This year Miss Taylor and I have been able to arrange these schools in eighteen different centres. The out-stations have not only carried the ordinary expenses of light, firing, etc., but have helped liberally with the missionaries' travelling expenses. One man walked fifteen miles to the city to escort us to his out-station, which was reached by rather an awkward route. Christians from another centre left at 2 a.m. on a winter's morning to be sure to meet us at the launch arriving at 7 a.m. The preachers and the Church leaders consider that these schools are absolutely necessary for the development of the women and girls. At each school a decision meeting is held. At one hill out-station ten said they had decided for the LORD at these meetings during the past three years and gave very bright testimonies; lying, cursing, attending theatricals had been given up, and there was a new joy in attending church services.

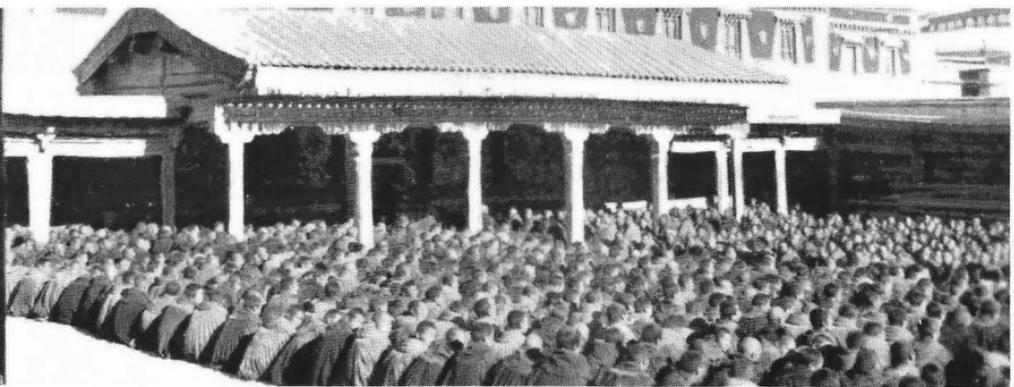
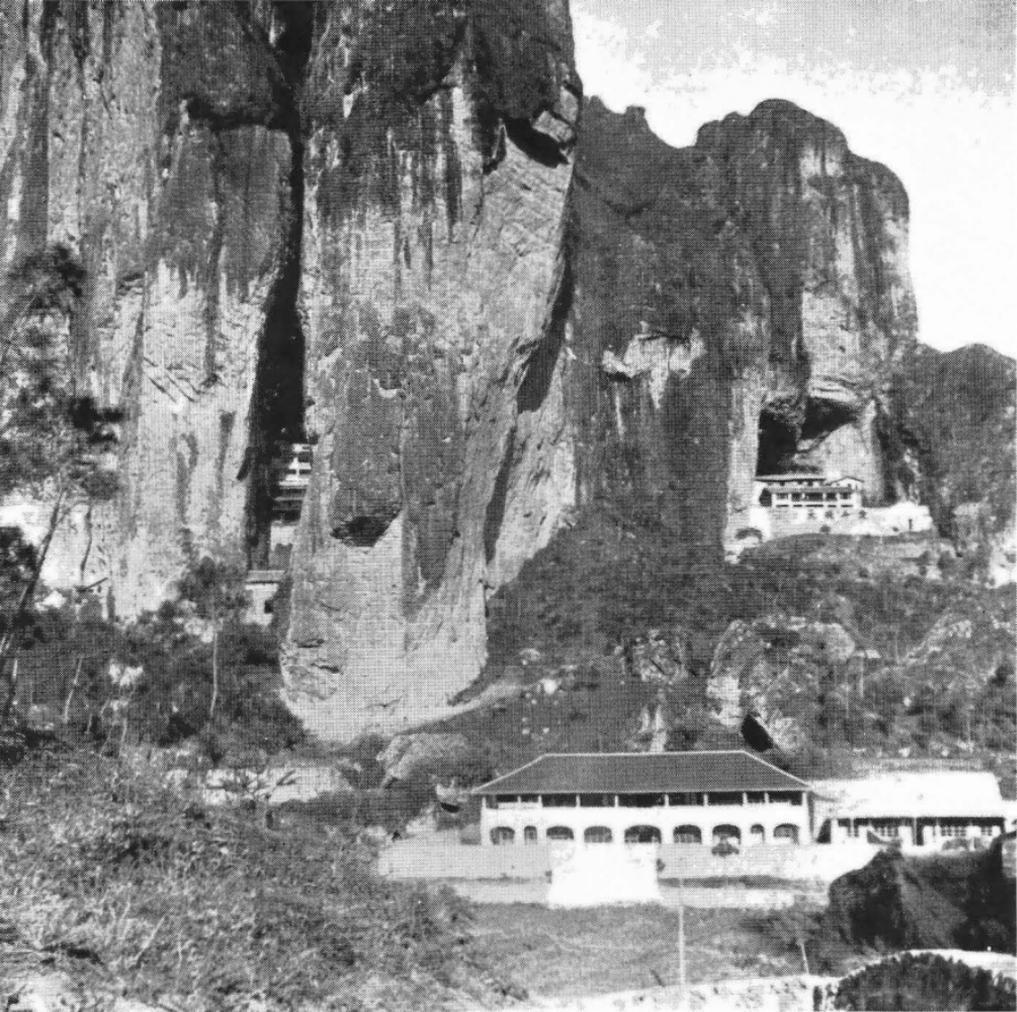
"Amongst the new believers who attended this year was Mrs. Ao, seventy-one years old. Her mother had been persecuted for many years by her husband. He used to make all kinds of excuses to hinder her from attending services, but she said, 'You can shut me up in the house, but you cannot "dig out" the gospel in my heart.' Now her daughter and granddaughter, who realise they were the subjects of many prayers, have believed and attend the city services regularly."



Above: BIBLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

Below: ON THEIR WAY TO A D.V.B.S. (DAILY VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL)





Above: TEMPLE BUILDINGS SHELTERED IN THE ROCK

Below: A TIBETAN LAMA ASSEMBLY, KUMBUM

In connection with the school in the city, now under Miss Moler's care, a former student recently brought in a thousand dollars as an expression of appreciation for spiritual help received in one of our C.I.M. schools. He was much concerned about others, that they too should have the same advantages of a Christian education. The question has been asked regarding the Church taking over the school work, and the reply was that, as to finance, they could probably carry the work, but they preferred to have a Mission worker in charge. I believe it is apparent that, however independent the Church may become, they are in most cases willing to co-operate with us, and in many places there remains to us a profitable further ministry to the Church. I would not leave the impression that the teaching ministry is altogether neglected by our Chinese brethren, but rather that we can still assist them much in this ministry.

6. RECONSTRUCTION OF A RUIN

By L. T. Lyall

Mr. Lyall tells the story of a resurrected church at Anshun, Kweichow. More than once the gates of hell have seemed to prevail against this church, and the adversary has left scarcely one stone upon another. But He who calls the things that are not as though they were has used His servants, Chinese and missionary, in the task of reconstruction. Writing on January 25th, 1944, Mr. Lyall says: "I wish I could add a postscript, but this belongs to 1944. From January 2nd-9th we had a visit from Calvin Chao, Dr. Peter Yen of Shansi and Paul Shen, and there were all the signs of a real work of the HOLY SPIRIT; conviction, confession, restitution, and reconciliation followed by earnest prayer for the fulness of the Spirit to live lives more glorifying to the LORD."

EASTER DAY, 1943. A large if barn-like building filled to seating capacity with 150 people. Kneeling at the front were seven men and seven women—a local doctor, a professor of pathology, a salt official's wife, an ex-opium-smoking soldier, a lecturer in surgery, two medical students, a secretary in the Party Office, her old mother and the rest; they knelt as those who were to be responsible under GOD for the Church's welfare. Following this

solemn dedication ceremony, a baptism when twenty-two men and women confessed Christ. Was this not a Resurrection Church? Were not Chinese Bible classes attended by twenty to forty people every Tuesday night and the English classes by some fifty to sixty students, doctors and bank clerks? Were not prayer-meeting times too short to allow all who wanted to pray, even with the address omitted? And the street chapel—were there not many who, as the result of the nightly witness, were now preparing for baptism? Local young men, too!

Easter, 1941, had seen no such spectacle—only a barn-like building, the abode of bats. Resurrection anthems had not been heard then, for the doors were shut and no worshippers met. A handful of people kept up a service in the small Hospital chapel on Sundays—but no Church Bible Class, no Prayer Meeting, no Sunday School: in fact, no Church! The Church was a corpse. “You can’t organise a corpse!” Several well-intentioned attempts to do so had proved this truth.

This was what the missionary found when he arrived. His prayer for guidance had been answered in a letter from the General Director. “Here in Kweichow we have seen a picture of a great need. . . . Anshun, the second city in Kweichow with a large population in which the Church of CHRIST has never really found a foothold. . . . There are only five or six old members who have almost completely faded away.” A depressing and unattractive picture indeed. But as the letter was read there came the immediate conviction, up to then lacking when other projects had been discussed, that this was the call of God.

A year of uphill work with some encouragement followed, but Easter, 1942, still saw no organised Church; no Communion service, no leadership, no Church life! Week-night meetings were still held in the missionary’s sitting-room. The missionary carried all responsibility, even down to sweeping the chapel! Most people thought the Mission was just another foreign denominational Church and the missionary was auto-

matically the pastor. Some wondered why he did not do some organising. He, too, was anxious to see a real Church functioning, but there was one local Christian doctor who saw clearly the ideal of the local Church and well knew the distinction between the Mission and the Church. He felt the time had not yet come and to him the missionary deferred.

Joshua, the experienced general, reconnoitring enemy positions at Jericho, had to learn that in the heavenly warfare it was not to be according to human plan: man's thoughts, experience and wisdom must yield to the Divine wisdom and strategy. GOD had His plan for Jericho.

In November, 1942, twenty-four men and women were the first to confess the LORD in baptism in Anshun for a number of years. Tune in to the testimony meeting. An army officer: "I was billeted with one of the oldest Christian families: the faithfulness of the old Grannie in prayer and Bible study and her concern about my spiritual condition resulted in my conversion." A local medicine seller: "Everyone knows that since I heard the gospel at the street chapel and accepted CHRIST I no longer wrangle over the prices of my medicines and lose my temper." (His whole family has turned to the LORD, and theirs is a truly Christian home where daily worship is observed, the second son reading the Scriptures to his illiterate parents.) A medical student: "I once was suffering from typhoid: both Western and native medicine had failed to find a cure: death seemed certain when a Christian neighbour offered to come and pray for me. His prayers were immediately answered, and I decided to become a Christian." A lady doctor: "When my husband and I came to Anshun, we began to attend English classes; our interest soon turned to spiritual things. Recently I asked CHRIST to come into my heart." Another lady: "My husband is in the Army: my only child died as a result of his negligence: because I was no good in business, he deserted me. But in my distress I found CHRIST, of whom I heard in the Gospel Hospital."

Including these newly-baptised Christians, about seventy attended the first public celebration of the LORD'S Supper for several years. Here then was a group of believers: they gathered for worship, they remembered the LORD'S death, they attended meetings, but still lacked Church consciousness. Everything still centred in the missionary and the missionary's home.

Hitherto the missionary had plodded on single-handed and alone in the work. For eighteen months he had had no fellow worker. Now GOD was to do something new. One afternoon in December a young disabled soldier had arrived—to stay! A Kweichow man and a keen soul-winner, he soon found his niche in the street chapel: 1943 has seen the calling out of not a few local people through his ministry. March arrived and with it a letter: "As I have sought guidance, GOD has closed many other doors and is calling me to Anshun." This was a speaker from Shanghai who had visited us for a conference the previous autumn. To him the missionary gladly handed over his responsibilities, for was he not experienced in Church management and spiritually minded withal?

GOD'S time was near: in Mr. Shih's room a series of conferences was held, attended by the leading Christians. The missionary again explained: "The C.I.M. is a missionary society charged with preaching the gospel and raising up independent local Chinese churches. The missionary aims to surrender entire administrative control to a body of Church leaders. The Mission has no financial responsibility to such independent local churches." Few had understood these things. Their implications were discussed. Those present accepted them. And so Easter Sunday was a Resurrection Sunday for the Anshun Church.

"Then cometh the Devil. . . ." Unspiritual individuals yielded to back-biting and tale-bearing. Dissension was abroad. At meetings to talk over problems, carnal passions were unleashed. The missionary went down with typhus. Mr. Shih left. How would the newly-

launched Church fare now? It bravely rode the storm. CHRIST was in the boat and there was a great calm.

New responsibilities were eagerly shouldered. All Church meetings were transferred from the missionary's house to the Church hall. Services were arranged for. Medical students took over the Sunday School. The Women's Meeting was taken over by the women themselves. Money was given freely into the treasury. A monthly Church paper was published. A gatekeeper was invited. Support was given to the street chapel evangelist. Prayer meetings and Bible classes increased in numbers and fervour. A register of members in fellowship numbering about 100 was drawn up. A group of keen students met for prayer daily in the Army Medical College in the face of persecution. The missionary found an even wider scope for ministry than before, now by invitation of the Church deacons. Deacons' meetings were also attended by invitation, the missionary being asked to regard himself as one of the deacons. Chinese and missionary witnessed shoulder to shoulder in the street chapel, in the Army hospital among soldiers and civilians, among the prisoners in the gaol and in the surrounding villages.

Many a conflict is the cost of progress and the campaign often seems to fluctuate, but "thanks be to GOD which always causeth us to triumph in CHRIST," whose plans must certainly be realised and cannot fail.

7. THE PLACE OF MEDICAL WORK

A. LANCHOW CITY CLINIC

By Dr. Rupert M. Clarke

Dr. Clarke shows how, according to plan, the need of a rapidly changing situation in Lanchow, Kansu, is being effectively met. The city clinic provides a wonderful opportunity for Chinese and missionary co-operation, and the upbuilding of the Body of CHRIST is the objective kept clearly in view.

ABOUT eight years ago it was decided that, owing to lack of foreign staff, the time had come to close down the City

Dispensary of the Borden Memorial Hospital; thus bringing to an end, temporarily, a hopeful piece of Dr. King's pioneering work. Thereafter there was no chance of re-starting this work until 1942, when we felt that we had adequate staff to tackle the job again.

The original site had long ago been sold, but new and far better accommodation was available in the disused Primary School buildings in the front of the church. The Church Council expressed themselves as delighted with the project, when they were approached, and gave us good rooms and their blessing. The usual delays of the East ensued, but, finally, on March 15th, 1943, the Clinic opened, with a quiet prayer for its efficacy in extending CHRIST'S kingdom in China.

Situated on the main street, close to the hub of the city—the Provincial Government buildings—and being in the front yard of the church compound, we hoped that it might be the means of introducing unbelievers to CHRIST, and “down-country” Christians to the local Church. At the same time we hoped that it might be a factor in cementing the fellowship between “Church” and “Mission”—so important in these days of strongly-felt nationalism.

Formal preaching to the Clinic-comers is irregular, as one or another has time to give to this ministry; but there are a voluntary Bible-woman, a Church-employed Bible-woman, and a Church-employed Evangelist, who are never tired of telling CHRIST to those who wait in the preaching hall before coming in to see the doctor. The first is a venerable and vigorous old lady, and quite equal to tackling the men as well as her own sex!

Besides these, we do our best to speak a word for CHRIST, when we are attending to the needs of the patients, and are ably assisted by the Chinese graduate nurse, who is gradually becoming more proficient in the art of speaking the “word in season.” The student class all know of Mr. Liberty's work, and we have a ready-made opening there. The educated “down-country” people mostly know some English, and often seem easier

to approach through this medium than through their own rather incomprehensible dialects. As to the local "Old Hundred Names," I must confess that I find them difficult to approach effectively, but there the Church workers are very much at home, and so all are catered for, even if not as adequately as we might desire.

We see all types, from the war-prosperous business man to the Sandhurst-trained Army officer and the American-trained top-ranking Civil Servant, down through their lesser ranks, through the hard-up school-teachers, the harder-up students, and right down to the truly pitiable conscripts, and the sometimes pitiable beggars, and try to adjust prices to the purse of each. Occasionally we charge too much, often too little, but the sum total has been the financial salvation of the main hospital at a time when very little of the Mission's general funds could be used to that end.

If this were all, the Clinic would be worthwhile, but as, from the exalted position of song-leader, I look around the assembled Sunday congregation, I often wonder how many have come through the influence of the Clinic work, and how many have come through the influence of the Church, as a great proportion seem to be Clinic-coming church-goers! Best of all, it is not unusual to hear Church leaders and others refer to the Clinic as "The Church's clinic."

As we face the immediate future, we seek that our hospital shall be run "according to plan"—GOD's plan, and He seems to be leading us in a path which we had not much considered before. Then it was necessary to run a fairly large hospital, to serve a needy public, and to make financial ends meet. Now, with the prospect of a considerably depleted foreign staff, we feel that the large Government hospital, recently opened, can cope with much of the public's demand for Western medicine, whilst the Clinic work can be relied upon, in the LORD's goodness, to see to the financial side. We feel, therefore, that the time has come quietly to get rid of the less fruitful Christians on the Chinese staff, and to work a

smaller establishment with those more fruitful ones that remain. Thus there should be a strong foundation on which to build after the war, when we trust that a larger foreign staff, or a more highly trained Chinese staff, may be available, and when, for a number of reasons, the work of the Government hospital is likely to be curtailed. We hope, too, to do work of better quality, though smaller quantity, than before: and above all we hope that all of us, Chinese and foreign together, will go on, more effectively than ever before, to make CHRIST known to, and loved by, those who come under our care.

B. MOBILE MEDICAL WORK

By Dr. Max B. W. Gray

Dr. and Mrs. Gray feel that their *métier* is not in the institutional work of a large hospital, but in more mobile medical service undertaken at the invitation of the churches in Eastern Szechwan. Once again much depends on finding a true basis of co-operation, but spiritual success depends on the LORD, the Giver of Life.

YOU will probably know that our work at present consists in going to places at the invitation of the local Church as a cross between a simplified hospital and a glorified general practitioner. We collect the people in by this work and then they (i.e. the Church) settle down to make CHRIST known among them.

Our spring campaign this year was not quite true to the above type. The Church said we were very welcome to come, but they could take no responsibility for evangelism. This would normally have completely precluded our going, but a neighbouring Church, still weaker in many respects, offered to contribute their Bible-woman—yes, I mean “contribute,” as they continued to support her for the three months. Then there were some members of the Northern Evangelistic Band free to come for varying periods for the men’s side. So we went and were amazed at the indefatigable way they preached and talked and visited from dawn to

dark and even did some "bottle-washing" when we couldn't get the necessary staff. They worked hard and had their reward—"souls for their hire." In fact, nearly every time we met for prayer (twice a week) they were able to tell of some new interested one, but almost every time they finished on the same lament—they were all from a distance, a day or more's journey away, with little hope of hearing again even if the Church had been reasonably strong. So we closed down a fortnight earlier than planned and went out into the country to follow them up. In one place we had three days' classes for a group of five or six who professed to believe—some as a result of our campaign a year previously and some as a result of this year's work.

Our autumn campaign has been very different—a strong active Chinese Church with many smaller churches in the country around and plenty of whole-time workers. It was quite a new field, however, as far as medical work is concerned, and we wondered if we could draw enough patients. Certainly during the first week or two they were very scarce, and such as came were mainly Church people. But suddenly one day the local magistrate's wife was taken ill, and when other "doctors" had more or less given her up, we were sent for and were able to save her life—always supposing she would have died otherwise, which I am not so sure of! This news went round the city like wild-fire, including the minutest details, the trouble, its danger, its treatment and even the amount they had paid us! Perhaps it was as well that the "danger" from which we saved her grew much in proportion with the "price" as it went round the city—otherwise this latter might well have put many people off, although in actual fact not a word had been said on either side about any money! Anyway, the result was that for the next month we were just rushed off our feet from dawn to dark and then turned many away. The next month or two we saw rather fewer patients, but were even more rushed as we had so many operations; four or five, or even six afternoons a week, it was just one big rush to get through

before the light failed, and there was a waiting list of twenty or more operations for a week ahead. And what came of it all? On the surface, at least, there was less response to the preaching than in any previous campaign; of the thousands who came we only know of two who showed interest. Yet it would be worthwhile for the sake of two!

This campaign thus claims many distinctions—far the best medical, far the least spiritual results of all our campaigns; the biggest number of out-patients, in-patients and operations and difficulties we've had anywhere! But meantime we hear two converts of our Tahsien Campaign a year ago were received this Christmas as candidates for baptism.

THE STRUCTURE RISING

I. STONE BY STONE

By T. E. Benson

The story of the founding of the Holy Light School at Shantung, near Chungking, by Mr. Ernest Yin, of the Ministry of Finance, has already been told. Through the services held each Sunday, and Bible classes in English and Chinese, all leading to important personal contacts, the school is a centre of spiritual light to a district studded with colleges of various types and with the homes of Government officials. Mr. Benson is loaned by the Mission for this direct evangelistic work, while Mr. Gordon Aldis and Miss Lily Snyder work in the School itself with its 160 boys and girls. The School has a very high reputation—I have heard it mentioned in terms of warm approbation by China's first lady. Its very success is a challenge to the enemy, and a call to prayer.

"Greeks want wisdom." 1 COR. i. 22.

"Some Greeks came to Philip . . . and appealed to him, saying, 'Sir, we want to see JESUS.'" JOHN xii. 20-1.

DURING the past few decades China has been rushed on to the world stage. The increasing pressure of world conditions, wider education and latterly her war sufferings have forced her from the semi-seclusion of centuries. She is still changing, materially, intellectually and, more important, spiritually. In every direction she is asking, "What?" "How?" "Where?" and is eagerly catching up in the race of progress. But we are here concerned with an aspect of her spiritual awakening. Of great importance is the fact that among her "wisdom-seekers"—the educated and official classes—are found "some" who "want to see JESUS." Below are given a few snapshots which suggest what is happening.

A Chinese Christian lady met Mr. F. on the bus. He kindly helped her with her children—the bus was probably filled like a sardine tin! Conversation started. He admitted that he had a Christian mother and was now himself anxious to hear again truths that he had once known. So one day, together with another officer from the Staff College, a Christian, he came to talk things over. "Are all religions the same," he asked, "all different

routes to the same goal?" "I've studied Buddhism and Mohammedanism, but have not obtained what I want—Buddhism is not comprehensive enough." "I started with a Christian background and now I'm coming back to see if Christianity can supply what I lack." "*How* do you believe?" Conversation turned more on "*what*" to believe and "*why*" believe—they naturally come first, but the "*how*" also came in. He was frank and in earnest and really seemed to enjoy the chat. He stayed two hours. He has now left here temporarily for special training, but a letter put him, we hope, in touch with other Christians—and we hold on for him in prayer.

One afternoon three guests arrived—what new problem might they bring "We are from X . . . , where a few of us Christians have started a meeting on Sundays, but we are not accustomed to preach; after giving our testimony, all we have to say seems to be used up! Can you come and help?" A real Macedonian call!—but with a difference, for these are believers from the Ministry of Education, which "for the duration" is situated in the country. A visit one week-end showed that things are well under way. The wife of the Minister of Education is well-disposed to the gospel, so it has been easy to find a meeting-place in the buildings of a kindergarten school—an excellent situation. There thirty to forty people meet each Sunday, and their leaders hope to extend the work and open a Sunday school. It is a great opportunity; here are "Greeks" indeed! At one meal every man at the table was a university graduate, while another time I sat next to an official who had studied philosophy at London University! Chinese or English could be used almost at will. That is the field, and now a missionary has been given a hearty welcome to go and live there for a period.

"When did you come to know the LORD, Mr. P.?" Quite a long silence, then (in excellent English): "As I listened to your testimony this morning I found that we had much in common. I too am a pastor's son and I too was inwardly opposed to the gospel as a boy. My parents allowed me freedom in the matter of baptism, but at the

age of seventeen I chose to be baptised, and since then the opposition in my mind has ceased. I continually feel grateful to GOD for His goodness, especially in the presence of lovely scenery or while listening to beautiful music, but I frankly confess that I don't know what ordinary Church people mean when they speak of 'being saved.'" Only a few minutes were left in which to introduce CHRIST as "the Way" before we arrived at his home for dinner. As I left after a delightful time with his family and two other guests, he said: "Next time we meet I will tell you, even at the risk of offending you, why I have never really 'got there.'" Mr. P. is the dean of a musical academy; he is also a leader in the "Church at ——" !

The above word-pictures form an up-to-date account of a spiritual movement. It may be noticed that there is no statement of "results," but then these are facts concerning a spiritual warfare, not propaganda to raise flagging morale. It is hard for those who are "rich" in any sense to enter the Kingdom, and it remains for us, by praise and prayer, to set free those whose faces are already turning Christ-wards. If we ask, He will do!

2. AMONG STUDENTS

By Mrs. A. Strange

In at least a score of cities, China Inland Mission missionaries are giving all, or part, of their time to most fruitful work among students. Mrs. Strange tells how university students from the Christian Workers' Band at Chengku, Shensi, conducted a week's conference for high school students at Yanghsien, when living stones were built into the spiritual temple. Is not the time ripe for the formation of an Inter-Varsity and Inter-School Christian Fellowship in China?

In the south of the province of Shensi, there is a small city called Yanghsien. Twenty miles from the main road, almost nestling by the side of foothills, with the River Han very close, it was unknown to the big outside China until the war, when there were two large high schools opened, one of them entirely for students from the war areas.

Soon after we arrived we began a Sunday Bible Class in English, and from the first the students responded. Numbers increased continually until the average attendance was between seventy and eighty. We took incidents from the life of CHRIST as our topics. Keen interest was shown and one day the break came. Two young men sent us a letter. It ran like this: "We do so love to hear these stories of JESUS CHRISIT, we admire Him so, we want to follow Him and serve Him. When can we come and learn more?" Four met us at the door with similar words: "Please tell us more of JESUS!" Yet another said at the close of one session, "I want to be a Christian. I must be a Christian." Many were the talks that we had with them, about their homes, their fathers, mothers and relatives, and about their greatest need—to be born again. It was wonderful to hear these newly-born souls pray. One boy was very relieved to know that he could pray in Chinese and that he didn't have to express his need to the LORD in English. Holiday-time was drawing near, and a Summer Conference was planned. We couldn't carry on alone. Who would help?

In the next city, Chengku, Mr. and Mrs. Contento were working amongst university students, and a band of young, enthusiastic Christian workers had been formed. Two of them had helped here with the Sunday services, and so we asked if they would be willing to come along and assist in a week's conference. They were delighted. Both of these young men, Mr. L. and Mr. T., had had Christian upbringing; the former, a quiet, steady young man, the latter, the son of a pastor in occupied China, more vivacious, and with such a remarkable knowledge of Scripture that we called him Timothy. When the boys and girls heard that they were to have a conference they were delighted. It helped to lessen their disappointment as others more fortunate than they packed up and left for the homes of relatives and friends.

The weather was very hot, so the services were held in the early mornings before breakfast, and in the cool of the evenings. First there was a prayer meeting at 5.30.

Once a young girl prayed, "FATHER, we do thank Thee for establishing gospel halls all over China so that wherever we go we have a home." This meeting saw followed by a series of talks on the Life of CHRIST by Timothy, in Chinese. These talks were translated into English at the next session with a free use of the black-board. After a short break reading of the English Bible followed, when we gave help individually with pronunciation, etc. In the evenings, lessons in Old Testament history were given by Mr. L.

Before each session there was singing in both English and Chinese. It was good to hear thirty to forty fresh young voices joining in the singing of C.S.S.M. choruses. Timothy, being very musical, taught them several hymns and anthems, and these special numbers were greatly appreciated.

Quite a number of students attending had had contact with Christians at some time or other in their life. Some were from Christian homes, others had been educated in Christian schools, while a few had a Christian relative who had sought to influence them, so it was truly prepared ground. To begin with, too, there was a small group of real Christians in the school.

Several asked for baptism, so on the last day of the Conference a special meeting was held for these. It was inspiring to hear six testimonies from keen, educated students. They knew whom they believed.

Next morning, Sunday, very early, a large group went outside the city down to the river-side. The glory and quiet of the new morning, the blue of the sky with its wonderful reflection in the water, and the green of the fields all spoke to our souls. At the request of the deacons, Timothy baptised the young folks. There was a hush on every spirit; even a few onlookers, to whom the ceremony must have appeared strange, never spoke or even smiled. The students sang in four parts, "JESUS CHRIST is risen to-day, Alleluia!" All hearts were filled with joy. One girl on the way to the river remarked, "O! what rejoicing there will be amongst the angels to-day!"

So the work ended. Ended, was it said? No, surely just begun, for dedicated lives couldn't but witness, and every Sunday night an open-air service was held by the same river, and testimony by song and word was given. The Sunday School was handed over to them, and is run very efficiently. The congregational singing has improved at least 50 per cent., and the attendance at the weekly prayer meeting went up with a bound. A Daily Vacation Bible School was entered into with great zest almost immediately, and a Student Christian Association was formed. They met once a week for Bible study and fellowship. Mr. L. has recently obtained an appointment in one of the schools and he loses no opportunity to witness for the LORD. Many are coming around through his witness.

Each evening during the holidays the folk came along, first for a game and then for Bible study. More are wanting to be baptised, though some have held off, through fear of ridicule. As for those who came out boldly for JESUS CHRIST, only eternity will reveal what the summer holidays meant for them.

3. AMONG WOMEN

We make no apology for printing three contributions from workers among women in Szechwan, Honan and Chekiang. In many churches they form the majority of the members, and though their "emancipation" is one of the most striking phenomena of the Chinese revolutionary era, the majority of them are still illiterate. Our women missionaries are seeking to co-operate with the Church, but the number of qualified Chinese women workers is still very small, and since few women, whether Chinese or "foreign," have the gift and the patience for women's work, the need for women missionaries in post-war China may still be very great. Mrs. H. G. Iliff writes of a comparatively well-developed "parish" in the Diocese of Eastern Szechwan; Miss N. M. Conway of Shekichen in the south-western corner of Honan; and Miss B. M. Lang of the Bible Schools for women which fruitfully occupy her time and that of Miss Eynon in Pingyang, Chekiang.

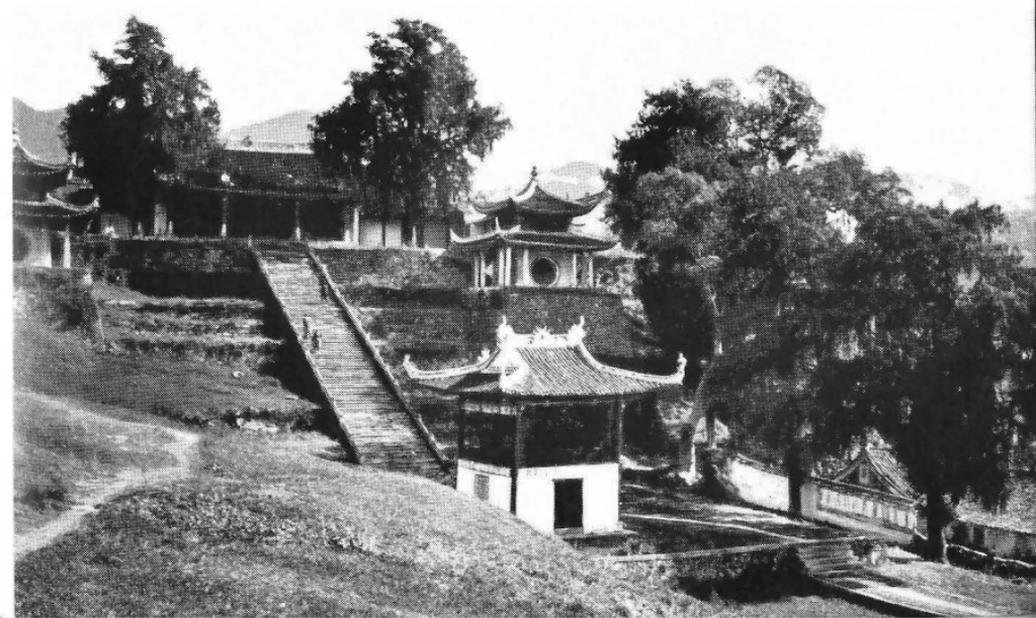
(A) *By Mrs. H. G. Iliff*

THE Chinese Church of to-day is alive to the fact that the women and girls of China need the gospel of our LORD and SAVIOUR, JESUS CHRIST. Chinese manners and



Above: A CART IN DIFFICULTIES, NORTH CHINA

Below: A SCENE IN CENTRAL CHINA



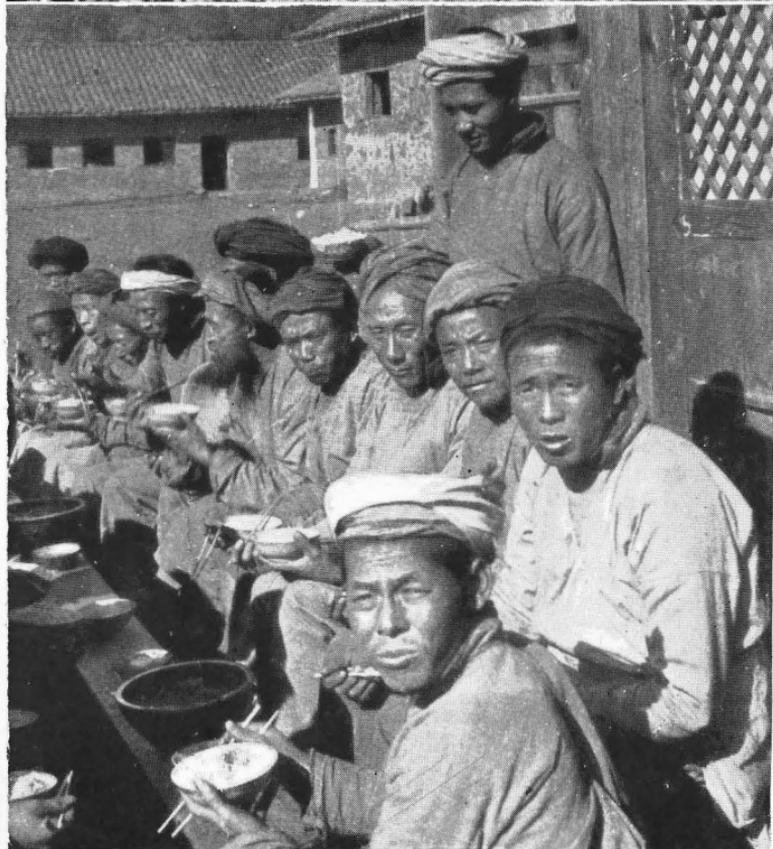


Above:

SEDAN CHAIR
TRAVEL IN
KWEICHOW
PROVINCE

Below:

NOSU TRIBESMEN
AT A BIBLE
SCHOOL IN
KWEICHOW



customs have changed a great deal in this decade, and in no place is this seen more clearly than amongst the women. The present-day modern Chinese girl, with her permanent wave, painted cheeks and disdain for all "old-fashioned" things, is very different from the "old-fashioned" lady with her bound feet and strict etiquette. But social reforms can only make outward changes; inwardly the heart is still the same. China's women are in great need of the SAVIOUR. How is the Church meeting this need and how does the missionary co-operate with her in the task? Co-operation means "working together." Praise GOD we are "workers together" with our Chinese sisters for the furtherance of the gospel in China. When GOD unites us in a bond of love, racial differences are of little account. One in aim, purpose and heart, we work as a team—not with the missionary leading and others following, but rather alongside to help and encourage.

For instance, throughout the year the front preaching hall is open twice a week. The Christian women volunteer to come and stand outside inviting people in. Inside, the workers, Chinese and foreign, are talking to those who enter. Interest may be at first very neutral. "Yes, I've heard of this doctrine, and if I believe I have been told you will feed me for the rest of my life." "No, no. That we cannot do, but the Heavenly FATHER looks after the sparrows, and He will look after you, too, if you believe in the LORD JESUS." "Jesus? Is that His surname? What is His other name?" "He is our SAVIOUR, and He can save you, too." "Can He really cleanse me from sin?" And so from the material we climb to the spiritual. Indifference gives place to interest and, in some, interest to conviction and conversion. "Follow-up" work is done by the missionary together with the Christian women. Not a few of our present Church members have been won in this way. We are "working together" for the salvation of the lost.

In short-term Bible Schools the Church is also taking the lead, though grateful for all help and advice from the

missionary, who may have had deeper spiritual and more practical experience than the average Chinese Church member. At the committee meetings held previous to the school, the problem of finance is often very pressing. Can we afford it? Will the women come and will they be able to pay so much for board? At one of these meetings, Mrs. Cheo, the mother-in-law of the Chinese Pastor, suggested that Matt. vi. 33 should be believed. "We need the Bible School, can we not trust the LORD for the rest?" One after another the seven members of committee volunteered to see to this and that—one to buy coal (no easy task in wartime), one to superintend the kitchen and buy vegetables. The missionary was asked to take some of the teaching classes, while the others would be responsible for the remainder. There was a large deficit at the end of the school. What about Matt. vi. 33? During the testimony meeting when one after another followed the Psalmist and told what God had done for her soul, it was borne in upon us to tell of the deficit and ask for prayer. After a season of prayer some took the lead in coming up to the front and giving what they called a "thank-offering." In fifteen minutes the deficit was cleared except for \$20, and this came that evening in a letter from a Christian woman thirty-five miles away, who had been hindered from coming, but who wanted to send "a thank-offering for blessings received in her home." It is a joy to be working together with these women for the building up of CHRIST'S Church in China.

The old days of the missionary planning an itinerary entirely on her own are over, and now systematic visitation of country churches is arranged by the Church. Twice a year a representative meeting of local leaders is held, and work for the ensuing half year thought out. If anyone, Chinese or foreigner, has proposals to make, these are put before the members and discussed. As we go from place to place holding classes for Christians and evangelistic services for unbelievers, we are conscious that the Church members are behind us in prayer. In one

market where the outlook was difficult, and we felt up against all the powers of evil, there was a sudden change. On our return to the city, we found that some women had had that particular market laid on their hearts for prayer just when we were there. These women did not know the way had been uphill, but they had felt the urge to pray, and prayer had changed things. How good it is to know that it is not only at home that Christian women are praying, but that our Chinese sisters are also praying for the conversion of their fellow countrywomen. Thus we are working together in prayer.

Last autumn two new workers joined our ranks in the women's work. Both are keen Christians who have just finished Bible Institute and are now stepping out on "active service." Naturally, their practical experience is small, and they are very glad to have the help and advice of the more experienced missionary. We are working together with the Church in the training of those who will be future leaders in women's work.

In 2 Cor. i. 24 we read, "Not that we have lordship over your faith, but are helpers of your joy." The Church of China needs us and wants us, not to "have dominion" over the Christians, but to be humble fellow workers with them—sharing their joys, sorrows and hopes; strengthening and encouraging them; praying with them; and toiling together for the salvation of China's women.

(B) *By Norah M. Conway*

SOME years ago, in the great national upheaval of 1927-8, there was a temporary evacuation of missionaries from nearly all stations in China, owing to the intense anti-foreign feeling. During these two years God led the leaders and members of the C.I.M. to compare their methods of work with God's plan for His Church as laid down in His Word. The result of this time spent in prayer and study was a decision to work according to God's plan, and so the Statement of Policy was formulated and sent round to all stations of the Mission. Thus

when our party in 1928 arrived in China and reached the Language Schools, the emphasis was all on co-operation with the leaders of the then existent Chinese Church, and the necessity for us to take a humble place amongst them, working either alongside or, in some instances, under their guidance and planning. After the preliminary two-year period of language study and work under senior missionaries had expired, two of us were sent to an old Mission station three days' journey overland, and told not to take responsibility out of the hands of local Chinese leaders, who were all capable young men between thirty and forty, but to do evangelistic or teaching work amongst the women of smaller country churches where they had never had the advantages and help given to the central Church. We did no local work except what the central Church asked us to do. This plan we have endeavoured to follow throughout the intervening period, with the result that churches which previously were entirely dependent on Mission support, both financial and otherwise, have now become entirely self-supporting, self-propagating and self-governing. An account of a trip made last year will also show that this has not prevented a happy spirit of co-operation and fellowship in the work. Methods of church government vary in different districts, and, as this was a Congregational district, the tendency, when financial help was withdrawn by the Mission, was to lapse into entirely separate independent efforts, only linked by a common spiritual bond. Thus it was necessary to approach the leaders of these country churches, and find out where and how they would like our co-operation. In the Mother Church of Shekichen, the previous senior missionaries had greatly appreciated the value of phonetic script in obtaining a Bible-reading Church. The attention of these country Church leaders had naturally been focused on this method of work as a good foundation for their own local churches. I consequently received invitations to hold phonetic and Bible schools of three weeks' duration in their churches, and then from there

to villages in the surrounding district, where there were groups of believers. Some of these country Church leaders realised the fact that unless their illiterate Church members were taught to read, a future Church could not hope to be very steady. The appearance amongst them of many itinerant preachers of varying shades of orthodoxy found them an easy prey, thus causing their leaders to think seriously about the spiritual dangers surrounding them. For this there seemed no other remedy than to teach them to read their Bibles and give them a good grounding on the foundation truths of the Word of God.

Last year, on receipt of an invitation to Tanghsien in our southern district, being ignorant of their local geography, I requested Mr. Pan, one of their leaders, to make out an itinerary for us, so that no unnecessary time or money should be spent in travelling. I started out with two new workers and landed in Tanghsien, the central Church, which has about thirty out-stations. We held a combined Bible and phonetic school, praying that the LORD would prepare a local Chinese fellow worker to accompany us when we left for the country places. Mr. Pan kindly arranged for a young Christian widow, Mrs. Chang, to accompany us throughout the trip. As in previous years, the custom had been to take our own Bible-woman, who in my case had been a trusted prayer partner and an efficient teacher of script, besides being a splendid personal worker, who knew her LORD and loved to make Him known to others, the decision to work in co-operation with only *local* help required a real step of faith, and it was with much fear and trembling that one set forth with a new fellow worker on this round of short-term phonetic and Bible schools. However, the LORD abundantly rewarded us, and little Mrs. Chang proved a true friend, and was much loved by the people. Although not prepared to take meetings, she helped in every other way and made a good and patient teacher of phonetic script. For those of you who are unacquainted with the term "phonetic script," let me explain that this

is a national system to enable the illiterate to read in two or three weeks, thus proving a valuable asset to us in our Church work. Some people think teaching phonetic script is child's play, because it only takes an educated person about an hour to master the forty symbols and their combinations. But, believe me, teaching it to simple country-women who have never had a day at school is a real wrestling match with the devil (who is naturally unwilling for anyone to read the Word of GOD), with inferiority complex in them and, lastly, with one's own natural impatience. Nothing but love and patience, untiring effort, unceasing prayer-backing and tactful encouragement, can keep them at it and see them through to their desired haven—a New Testament in hand, which they can read for themselves. Of course, one had regular classes with them on the life of CHRIST and foundation truths twice a day, evenings being usually devoted to local evangelistic effort.

Our good friend, Mr. Pan, arranged for each place to send a cart to meet us and take our luggage, and to provide firing for us locally. Indeed, they usually brought in an abundance of personal gifts, such as sweet potatoes, eggs, vegetables and once or twice even meat. Thus I worked it out that these gifts practically supported little Mrs. Chang, so that her help meant no extra financial burden for us. We had no travelling expenses throughout, and when we finally returned to Tanghsien, their central Church, they presented us with a further gift to cover the travelling expenses for the home journey to Shekichen. This might seem a small thing to most of you, but to those of us who have been privileged to work in this district for the last few years and always had to pay our own way, it was a real thrill to see this growth in grace. Also Mr. Pan's kindness and sympathetic understanding of our position won our warm appreciation, for he arranged for our mail to be sent out at least once a week by special messenger, there being no post offices in any of these villages. The account of this trip has been written because it was one where co-operation both in work and

finance was the happy experience. On other trips we have had carts provided between various villages visited, but we met the initial and final expenses going and coming ourselves. However, when I tell you that when first visiting these places some years ago, one was expected to provide the fuel and lighting for all attending the School, you can imagine there has been some transformation in their thinking throughout the years! The war has greatly assisted to this end. Since that above-mentioned trip, we have had Miss Lü, a gifted young Chinese worker, amongst us, and it was my privilege to be her fellow worker for a short period in this district, where the LORD led her to give deep teaching on God's Plan for the Church. The leaders were very receptive, and there has been real fruit from her work in the changed attitude of other churches, who now give largely towards, and share in, the work, in a way they never did formerly. One little church recently sent us a gift of \$200 towards the personal expenses of the missionaries, saying that they had only just realised what a debt they owed the missionaries according to Gal. vi. 6, "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things," and this was their first effort in this direction. Others of our Chinese leaders have assured us that, should the Lord cease to provide for our maintenance through the usual channels, they would shoulder this responsibility and would never see us starve. All this has been very precious and shows a real change of attitude and growth in grace, showing also that God has Himself been working these things in their hearts, according to His plan as set forth in His Word, and also according to the plan which He led our Mission leaders to formulate almost sixteen years ago.

(C) *By Bertha M. Lang*

WHEN I first came to this district twenty-one years ago, women's Bible schools were much talked about and prayed for. Then the time came when I was to have a

more active share in the work. Short-term Bible schools need planning, and for weeks—yea, months—before we go out, we seek to know His plan for us. We have been talking it over, my fellow worker and I, and during the twenty-one years only once has a Bible school been planned and not held. That was because there were bandits on the river on which we were to travel. Ten, twelve and even fourteen Bible schools are held in a year. We've had bandits; we've had epidemics; we've had air-raids, but they have always come at a time when the planned Bible schools have been finished. Yes, the women's Bible schools have been held "according to plan," and we rejoice at the LORD's goodness to us. Disappointments and discouragements we have had by the bushel, but the blessings and encouragements have been by the ton!

She came to the meetings one day, a young, well-dressed woman. She couldn't read. She heard singing and decided to see who was in the chapel. A tract was given to her—three sentences of a prayer. She sat with the others and memorised it. We left the place and forgot her, apart from praying for those who had recently heard. Several years later, while I was leisurely walking up a hill, someone called, "Teacher!" We didn't recognise her, so she explained, "You were at a certain village and invited me to come in and listen. You gave me a short prayer. I still pray that prayer, but I've forgotten the second line." She was told what it was. She walked up the hill more quickly than we, but before she got to the top she called again, "I've forgotten that second line again; will you repeat it once more? I'm so dense." She walked on and I can hear her yet, repeating that line over and over again.

We are always glad when girls in their teen ages come to the Bible schools. Some years ago we were having meetings in a tiny village. Only about a dozen women and girls attended. Of that group two were specially interested. They couldn't read and they knew no Bible stories, but how they did study! They were mere

children—perhaps thirteen years of age. After that, whenever there were meetings, you would find them among the first ones present and always the same—eager to study and listen. Within a few years they definitely took their stand for the LORD—one of them could read her New Testament through. While a wee mite, she had been engaged to a non-Christian. In due time she was married. One day I visited her unexpectedly, for I heard she had grown cold. When I arrived after dinner she was in bed. Her room was not swept and her hair was untidy. How upset she was to be found thus! She didn't tell me her story while I was in the house, but she escorted me on my way home. "It's so hard to continue steadfastly with the LORD in a non-Christian home. My husband is only seventeen [she is nineteen] and he still goes to school. All he is interested in is tasty morsels to eat, and gambling. He won't let me read my Bible. This morning I quarrelled with him and have not eaten anything all day. How can I stand it?" Such was her story. Poor child, for child she was! I exhorted her and asked her what she would have done had the LORD come unexpectedly. Somehow the thought of the LORD finding her thus set her thinking. Since then she has been baptised and is one of the keenest young women in her Church. Humanly speaking, it was not worth while spending ten days with about a dozen people. But, looking back over it now, one feels it has been in His plan for two lives at least.

A refined, quiet, pleasant-looking woman is Mrs. Wu. When we first met her over fifteen years ago she had a sad expression on her face and looked a sick woman. We listened to her story and marvelled at the leadings of the LORD. She had been desperately ill and they were poor. How many doctors attended her we cannot remember. One day an old Christian from one of our churches was asked to visit her. He sympathised, but also told her that her present suffering was nothing compared to that which she would have to endure if she didn't accept CHRIST as SAVIOUR! She had never heard the way of salvation

before, but hers was a heart prepared by the LORD, for she soon became a real seeker. A Bible school was being held in the district some months later and since she had partly recovered her health, she attended the meetings. It was a joy from the beginning to teach her, not merely to read, but to understand the Scriptures. The LORD has prospered that home, not only spiritually, but financially, for by her patient consistent Christian life she has won her family for the LORD. More than once during these last years has she come to us and slipped a gift into our hands and gently whispered, "Buy something extra for yourselves." She is one of whom we can truly say, "I thank my GOD upon every remembrance of you."

Non-believers, girls in their teen ages, women in the prime of life, and old women have been blessed and saved at these Bible schools. Well do we remember one dear soul of over fifty. She was told of the meetings. The lessons were on the sufferings of CHRIST. She saw a picture of CHRIST on the Cross, and after class she stood alone before the picture with tears falling down her cheeks. Her one remark was, "He suffered like that for me and I didn't know it before." She became the wife of one of our preachers and her ministry has been more effective than her husband's. Surely these Bible schools for women are part of the plan.

4. INDIGENOUS BUILDING

Here are records covering three areas where the work of God is growing by spontaneous expansion, or, to retain our building metaphor, where our LORD is using simple Chinese believers to build His Church. If it is true that every Christian should be a witness, then every living stone should to that extent become a builder! The gospel comes *to* them, not in word only, but in power, and then *from* them it sounds out to the whole district. "Evangelism is the task of the Church, and not merely of individuals within it, still less of Christians from other lands through whose ministry the Church has been established." These stories from Suanhan in Eastern Szechwan, from Tuchang, Kiangsi, and from Wenling, Chekiang, are a commentary on that sentence.

A. IN SUANHAN, SZECHWAN

By F. A. Skinner

SOMETIMES on summer evenings our attention has been held by mountain fires. They have been deliberately made by farmers who were burning out new tracts of land in preparation for the planting of the next season's crops. As one patch of fire died down we looked to see another area caught and consumed, and we wondered where it would spread to, and where it would end. It is with something of the same interest and eagerness that we have watched the Suanhan parish during the last few years. Because in it are men in whose hearts the fire of GOD's love burns, and because they realise that our LORD's last command is upon them, we hear again and again of new fires, of the Holy Spirit doing His first work of burning in new districts, of men and women turning in repentance and faith to our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Among the firebrands the Holy Spirit has used in this work is a man who two years ago became the "voluntary" pastor of the parish. He is now old, and his physical strength is rapidly failing, but he has the same spirit as Henry Martyn, and he intends to burn out for God. So whenever fresh work begins he is to be found in the front line, inspiring by his example, teaching and advising the new converts. Another is a man whose spiritual history is akin to that of the Indian *sadhu*, Sundar Singh.

More than ten years ago he received the call to launch out in faith as an unsalaried evangelist, and through many vicissitudes he has remained true to it. Poverty, loss, criticism, sickness, have been unable to turn him from his calling. Truly the seals of an apostle are upon him, and from his initial work a number of churches have grown up. It is concerning two of these churches that have been founded in 1948 that this article is written.

Changchi is a little market forty *li* distant from the mother church of the parish. For years many prayers and hopes have been upon it, and occasional evangelistic efforts have been held. But no permanent result came until four years ago when two young women evangelists stayed in the market for a few days. Their visits resulted in the conversion of a leading man, whose changed life bore such a witness to the power of the gospel that others were led to know CHRIST as SAVIOUR. Periodic visits of the pastor and others led these men on, and a house was hired to serve as a church. One middle-aged man of patriarchal appearance made the great decision to follow CHRIST. This was a case of sudden conversion, and his first act on returning home was to destroy the family idol. Taking a chopper, he split it in two, and threw it on the fire. "What are you doing?" demanded his wife, who at that moment returned home. "If you are determined to serve your new God, then I am determined to serve my old one!" And, suiting actions to her words, she snatched the idol out of the flames, and with a piece of string she bound the two halves of the idol together again. An angry altercation ensued, the result being that the woman—demanding religious liberty—put back the idol on its shelf. "You shall have two years in which to make up your mind," said the husband, "and if you have not become a Christian by then we must live apart." When the question of baptism was discussed at the end of the year, and his name was passed on the grounds of his clear witness and consistent life, he personally refused, saying that he would wait either until such time as his

wife believes, or until the two years have passed. Ten men have been baptised and eleven others received as enquirers, and a new house—the gift of the first convert—has been dedicated as a church.

Kwantu is the third largest market in the parish, and is on one of the trade routes from Shensi, as well as being an iron-smelting centre. This latter fact gave us the long-desired opening for evangelistic work at the beginning of the year, for one of the Huangchinkeo members became manager of an iron foundry, and he invited the above-mentioned evangelist to hold meetings among his workmen. GOD'S firebrand did his work, for the time had come, and men's hearts were ready. During the day in the iron foundry, and each evening on the street, meetings were held, and the fire spread from heart to heart. Many put away their idols, and professed belief in CHRIST. In the iron foundry the superstitions of a thousand and more years connected with the lighting and tapping of the furnaces were discarded and in their place hymn-singing and prayers were instituted. The first news of this blessing came to us by some young fellows who made the journey of two hundred and sixty *li* in order to buy Bibles. Later some business men from Kuantu called on us for the same purpose, and from them we learned of the progress of the work. For some months the pastor made his home there, and shared with the evangelist in the work of teaching. In November thirteen men and women were baptised and nineteen others received as enquirers. Three of the baptised men live side by side on the street, and it is in their homes that services at present are being held. After the baptism service they invited us to a "holy meal." It was their own idea that a simple meal should be prepared to which all the Christians were invited, and that the meal should be partaken of in the same spirit as the baptism service—reminiscent of the Agape of apostolic days! So it was that the Kuantu Church came into being.

As we look through the darkness around, and see these points of light away in the distance, sometimes burning

fiercely and sometimes dying to a faint glow, so we sometimes wonder if the work proceeds according to plan. Yes! As surely as the farmer burns off his scrubland with set purpose, and within bounds, in order to make the land fruitful, so we believe the HOLY SPIRIT works in these regions, to the ingathering of a great harvest, to the establishment of CHRIST'S body, which is the Church.

B. IN TUCHANG, KIANGSI

By Minna V. Allworden

WITH hearts full of praise to GOD, we look back over the past year and behold His working. The Tuchang and Poyang Annual United Bible-study Conference was the first item of the year 1943. The Conference concluded with a church business meeting. Reports of the previous year's work were given, and the appointment of leaders for the twenty-eight places where regular Sunday services are held were made, Mrs. Pan was engaged and entirely supported by the Church as a fellow worker for the foreign missionary in the conducting of systematic Bible classes among the women. Eight such classes were held in the spring before the women became busy in their fields. One week was spent in each place, with an average attendance of fifteen women and six men. Children's meetings were held in the late afternoon, and Bible study for men and women in the evenings.

Not only was the Bible-woman engaged and supported, but, all out of a blue sky, the Church leader arose and announced on behalf of the church body their united desire and promise to provide the entire support of the foreign missionary in the event of home funds failing to get through!

Then last, but not least, came the beautiful suggestion of a North-East District United Conference taking in eight counties. If only you could have seen the enthusiasm expressed on all faces! "Fine," was the unanimous opinion, and immediately the questions followed: "Who? Where? When?"

Much interesting discussion was the result. Finally came, "Yes, Loping will do. It is the most central, delegates from all counties can get there easily, and the resident missionary there will be available to help." Two questions are answered, now— When? "Would July do?" "No, indeed; it is bad enough to run for one's life with the enemy at one's heels, but it is not the time for Conference. How will October do?" "It is not too hot nor too cold—not much bedding would be needed, and there is not much danger of bad weather."

On October 8th the long-anticipated eight-county Conference opened. The forenoons were given to Bible study and devotional messages, the afternoons to reports and discussion of the LORD'S work in various fields. Each field had its own representative speaker appointed who told of the expansion and declension of the LORD'S work in his area.

The final outcome of these discussions was the spontaneous suggestion, first of a United Preaching Band and, second, the opening of a much-needed Short Term Bible School.

The Band was formed immediately, and consisted of four men, one from each of four different counties. They went forth in faith, prepared to pay their own expenses. They travelled through eight counties, visited the mother church in each as well as some important branch churches in some of the counties.

The LORD set His own seal upon this step of faith. They were out for two months without a break, their food and travel were more than met by free-will offerings, and \$6,000 toward the opening of the proposed Short Term Bible School was contributed. One member of the Band, an exceptionally gifted Bible teacher, promised \$1,000 of the amount, as well as voluntary service as teacher in the Bible school.

The contacts made throughout the itinerary were owned and blessed of the LORD. Hundreds of Gospel portions were sold. Scripture texts were written in bold black, red or white characters on the walls of cities,

villages, homes or shops. The order of writing was, first, a question, such as, "What must I do to be saved?" and then the answer, "Believe on the LORD JESUS CHRIST and thou shalt be saved." Tracts were scattered and street meetings held.

In one county meetings were held for school-teachers and students. Around four hundred came each evening. In still another county no preparation had been made, but it did not take the Band long to put things into motion. Large sheets of bright red paper (the Chinese love red), were pasted up in the most important places in the city, heartily inviting school-teachers and students—in fact, all who cared to come—to an afternoon and evening meeting. About fifty arrived.

The HOLY SPIRIT was in the midst, and as a result thirty-eight handed in their names as interested enquirers within the three days. A Bible study class has now been commenced to establish these in the truths of GOD'S Word.

Spontaneous Church expansion has also been realised in the contiguous county of Yükan in relation to the rebuilding of their chapels. During the invasion last year, the enemy ruthlessly set on fire and burnt eight places of worship. With one exception, they were completely burnt to the ground.

The people had fled from their homes and many lost every earthly possession. With the retreat of the enemy, the people immediately returned to what once was home. In many cases they just constructed straw shelters, but what about the house of GOD? The cost of living had risen by leaps and bounds, but in spite of this fact the Christians at once began to plan for the rebuilding of their chapels. Five out of the eight are now either rebuilt or in course of building, and this almost entirely with Chinese money.

Furthermore, the churches have in measure begun to realise the financial situation of the foreign missionary, and, in order that their Bible-teaching ministry might not be curtailed, have often helped out in the expense of

travel by providing funds or a means of conveyance. They have also given half support to a Bible-woman to help in this most important ministry.

In this same county almost three hundred were baptised this year. Among those who thus followed their LORD were some from a neighbouring county where a new place of worship has just recently been opened.

Although there are those in these days of profiteering who are becoming materialistically minded to the detriment of their spiritual progress, there is a great company who, in spite of persecution, trial and severe losses by sword, famine and flood are joyously hopeful. They are looking not at temporary defeat, but forward to that day of final victory, when He whose right it is to reign will dethrone the usurper, and bring in everlasting peace.

C. IN WENLING, CHEKIANG

By J. Thompson

“Christianity is indigenous to all climates and will flourish in any soil.”—F. B. MEYER.

THE above statement is having practical demonstration in several places in China. The one best known to the writer is Wenling, Chekiang, but it is not claimed to be better or more advanced than many other places progressing along the same lines. The vigorous, spontaneous expansion of the Church in Wenling is manifestly in the Divine plan and is the result of a combination of causes.

1. GOD'S planning is manifest in the timing of the movement. Nearly thirty years ago a small group of Chinese brethren risked opposition and misunderstanding by boldly initiating a plan of self-support. Some of these men have gone to be with the LORD; others are still with us and are being rewarded by seeing the Church in its present flourishing condition. They were instrumental in getting the idea started in the minds of

others. It took definite shape, and the Church was ready to adopt it at the time of crisis during the years 1924-8. The initial planning was in good time for the flood-tide of enthusiasm of that period.

2. GOD'S Hand is manifest, too, in the type of men chosen by Himself. They are in the apostolic succession in that by popular estimate they were "unlearned and ignorant men." That *was* true of some of them at first, but a man taught of GOD is not unlearned and many have developed into instructed and efficient Christian workers.

The type of character is the secret of their success. GOD chose them because He saw them suited to the job—men of boundless energy and whose "faith" is proved by their "works" of activity. Day or night they are ready for any call for help in trouble or sickness. The "prayer of faith" for the sick is part of their ministry.

They are men of vision, not afraid to branch out and start churches in new localities. To give one personal experience. Nearly nineteen years ago some brethren wanted to start worship in their own village. They lived between the two old-established out-stations only twenty *li* apart. Thinking it was too near, I tried to dissuade them. Not a bit of it! One man gave ground; another, an old house. The work was started and it flourished. They later put up a building which, until it was destroyed by the Japanese, was the largest in the district. Undaunted, they have rebuilt, though at present on a smaller scale.

They are men with exalted and dignified ideas of what is in keeping with the gospel. Scattered over the district, on the plain, in the hills and right on the sea-front, in some places only one and a half to two English miles apart, are well-built, clean, well-kept places of worship. To-day there are fifty-three. With the exception of the city church, all the premises have been changed for larger ones and in forty cases the buildings are new, specially built as places of worship only. Many of them are of imposing size, capable of seating hundreds of people, with suitable outbuildings for kitchens and the

accommodation of guests. In no case has the Mission given more than a "token" donation for the erection of these premises and, in some instances, nothing at all because it was not asked for!

They are full of zeal and faith in the gospel of the LORD JESUS CHRIST to change the lives of men. The Evangelistic Band has "worked" the county many times and has extended its operations to neighbouring counties, where some of the new churches are situated. In this work, more especially of late, the Women's Band has played a leading part. It was just the time for intimate conversation. We were travelling in a canal boat. Our companion was Mr. Yang, one of the deacons of the Church where we had just spent a happy week-end, a prosperous farmer and head of a family. His face was terribly marked by the effects of smallpox in childhood, but the very joy of the LORD was shining through the mask of his disfigurement. "Mr. Yang, could you please tell me why you first came to believe in the LORD JESUS?" "Some years ago," he replied, "I was much better off than I am now. I was an ardent Buddhist. I never took vows but I was a lay-brother and used to assist the priests when they went to perform masses for other people. I knew the whole ritual by heart but my one trouble was that I had a craze for gambling (mah-jong). I had gambled away several of my fields. Devout worshipping of idols did not help me at all. At last some one said, 'Go to the JESUS Hall. They will help you.' I took the advice, I came to believe in the LORD JESUS and my desire for gambling is quite taken away."

3. On this next point I am diffident to write, but it is necessary to tell the whole story. For years before coming here, I had held strong views of the necessity for promoting self-supporting churches. Here was my opportunity to put theory into practice. We found the Church in a state of ferment and chafing against restraint. I had the full support of the late Mr. W. H. Warren in giving them a free hand and in encouraging the Church Council to go ahead with schemes for the advancement

of the work of GOD. The path has not been smooth and easy. There were mistakes and misunderstandings on both sides, but the vision remained clear—the one great object of helping the Church to enter upon her full responsibilities and privileges. It has all been God-ordered and He has helped us to a position of mutual understanding and trust. Difficulties still lie ahead. Prayer help is needed about the question of Church registration on which there is a difference of opinion between the leaders.

4. GOD'S Hand is in it in that the Wenling Church is a Bible-loving Church. Strong emphasis is laid on the necessity for Bible study. All the churches give freely for the support of Bible classes and Bible schools. New Christians are encouraged to learn to read. Bibles are not easily procured in wartime, but a considerable number are brought in by Christian junk-men plying along the coast.

On what plan is the indigenous Church being built? In the early days all our churches followed the lead given by the first missionary in the district. Now, no strict rules are laid down. We deal in general New Testament principles, pointing out that Old Testament ritual was a material picture of what the New Testament spiritual Church ought to be. The churches are free to adopt any form of Church order they may deem right.

Let us not be afraid of the word "indigenous." One meaning given in the dictionary is "belonging naturally." Should not this be our ideal? Exotics do not flourish. It is only after a plant is "naturalised" that it will stand the blasts of the local climate. Our own Western Churches are in this sense indigenous, and in many ways differ from the Oriental institutions of primitive days. The meaning of the Chinese word is "natural" or "local colour." The Chinese have an excellent translation of God's Word. May we not allow them to have a fusion of the primitive and Scriptural with "local" colour, without any intermediate, Occidental filter?

It may be asked, "What is the position of the

missionary in the indigenous Church?" We are co-workers and advisers. In the Church Council we hold no special office. Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer are all Chinese. As advisers, we are given a respectful hearing. Sometimes the advice is rejected; sometimes it is just the word needed to head them in the right direction. Sometimes we go out with the Evangelistic Bands, but it is becoming more and more evident that the missionary's task is to commit the Scriptural truth to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also. In the pulpit and Bible class there is abundant scope for the best that is in us.

5. IN THE QUARRY

A. THE HONAN BIBLE INSTITUTE

By Otto V. Schoerner

In establishing Bible institutes for the training of Chinese workers, our desire is that the Master Builder may quarry, and chisel, and smooth the living stones until they are ready to serve His purpose, to be fitted into their place in the great whole.

"If we had to open next term's work with only five or six students, we would not reckon that a school at all."

That is what we overheard a lady say in regard to the school with which she was connected. Yet that was all we had to begin with in September—five men to be exact. We feel it has been very worth while to teach these few, though we naturally desired four or five times that number. But we believe all this to have been part of His great plan for us.

Honan Bible Institute is only a little more than two years young. Its first graduating class of seven left only this summer to serve the LORD in the churches of various parts of this province. Mr. Gaussen, now our Superintendent, was in charge here during the beginning of the school. When our family fled from a station in the south of the province during an enemy raid last winter, we

never dreamed that the way led here to the Bible school at Chowkiakow; but so it was that we came here to take part in the great work of teaching and training young men for the ministry of the Word of God.

Besides the regular class work, the students are given opportunities to gain more practical experience by helping in the work in connection with the two churches here. Teaching Sunday school classes (a work still in its first stages in these parts), taking services in nearby country churches, street chapel preaching in two places during the week, as well as personal evangelism, all form part of the opportunities the men have for service. But a need was felt for more actual training, perhaps more supervised, besides the usual teaching. It was planned, therefore, that this semester students and teachers should go out at mid-term recess to hold special meetings in outside churches in this area. Since teacher Wang had to lead a long-promised conference in another place during this time, it fell to Mr. Greene and myself each to take a team, one of them reinforced by the zealous school cook, and visit several chosen places. All of us looked forward to this new venture with eager expectation.

With their bedding and extra clothing slung over their shoulders, the young men started off one sunny morning in mid-November, one group trekking fifteen miles south-east and the other twenty miles south to their first stopping-place. Others of us followed on bicycles. Although we were out less than two weeks, we felt that the experience gained as well as the opportunities to serve proved worth every effort put out. Just to mention one or two things. In one place some free-lance preachers arrived at the same time as ourselves. These very often consist of disgruntled Church workers, probably led away by peculiar or one-sided doctrines, who wander about preaching as well as singing an endless number of shallow songs or choruses, and depending for hospitality upon the kindness of country Christians. As the weather was unfavourable, these uninvited guests outstayed their welcome. Sensing this, one of them urged the other

to move on, especially since they were expected in a distant city to hold meetings. The companion was overheard by our hostess to say, "Don't be in such a hurry. The food here is pretty good." It is no wonder that one of our Chinese leaders called such people "free-lance eaters"!

The young men realised their shortcomings in a new way. One of them afterwards testified that the greatest revelation to him was that he was not a very good speaker; he was very expert in putting his audience to sleep. Others learned that some of their carefully prepared messages did not fit at all where the congregation was mostly dull and illiterate. They had an introduction to Church problems in newly established congregations and in churches of long standing, looking at them from a worker's standpoint. God willing, we hope that we may be able to go out this way at least once every term.

Owing to a number of causes, such as the awful famine this last year in Honan, floods of the Yellow and Sha Rivers and crop failures because of locusts in some places, students have not been many. Another reason is the lack of prepared men in the churches. Pray with us that GOD may call forth those whom He would have serve Him to come here for further preparation, and that this place may be a Bethel as much as a training centre for them.

B. A TRIBAL BIBLE INSTITUTE

By W. T. Simpkin

The gradual drawing together of believers among different tribes in eastern Yunnan is a thrilling story. In a sense the Tribal Bible Institute at Taku, Yunnan, is the corner-stone of the movement towards spiritual unity.

ON Christmas night at Taku, when the first twelve students who have graduated from the United Tribes Bible School received their diplomas, in the course of an address to the students, Mr. Metcalf said, "Before most

of you were born, we have been praying for a Bible school for the tribal churches of East Yunnan." How God has answered that prayer is the subject of this article.

In East Yunnan there are numerous tribes from among whom some thousands of believers have been won to CHRIST. At least ten tribes or sections of tribes are represented in the Church to-day. It had always been the hope of the earlier missionaries to see a Bible training institute opened to train native workers and Christian leaders, but always there were problems which seemed too difficult to be overcome. In 1937 a United Tribes Conference was inaugurated among the tribal churches. At the first meeting the subject of paramount importance, chosen by the tribal leaders themselves, was "A Bible School." The outcome was a unanimous request, sent off immediately to Mr. Fraser, then Superintendent of our work in Yunnan: "Please establish a Bible School at Salowu without delay." At last the tribal churches were thoroughly aroused to the need of further training for their future evangelists and Church leaders.

About the middle of the year a hopeful beginning was made at Salowu with about thirty students, though only a few of these were up to the required standard. During revival meetings conducted by Mr. Dan Smith blessing came to nearly every one of them. Some who had no definite experience of regeneration were truly born again, and a new spirit was evidenced in the classes. At the school "break-up" meeting at the end of the year several made a full consecration of themselves to the LORD. Alas! a much-needed furlough cut short a work which had begun to show such promise and a gap of four years ensued.

Meantime the United Tribes Conference had been pressing for the re-opening of the Bible School. At the meetings held at Laopa in March, 1941, an invitation was given to re-open the school at Taku, the centre of the Lisu work. School buildings and equipment, together with an assistant teacher, were offered, while twenty to thirty students were definitely promised.

In order to keep faith with these tribal Christians, Mr. and Mrs. Binks undertook to commence at Akumi, as we were not then free. They were not in good health and urgently needed furlough and rest, yet they gave two invaluable months to the Bible School. When we arrived at Taku and the School moved to its new home, we were met by fourteen students who had already experienced much blessing and were eager to go on.

The enrolment has steadily increased and up till the present some fifty-four students have been accepted, though the most we have had at one time has been thirty-seven. These represent five different tribes, and there was one Chinese student attending for a while. Of necessity all the teaching is given in Chinese, but it is very interesting to stand by and hear the various groups standing about and chatting in their own vernacular. Demands for war service or school-teaching or home affairs have been responsible for taking away a number, but we closed the year with thirty-two students. A year ago a very bright Miao student was taken to be with the LORD. It was a time of great sorrow and anxiety, yet out of it the LORD has brought blessing. At the service at the graveside one of the students gave a good message and an earnest appeal to any unsaved present. Later on a new student came from the same village as the student who had died. In our first interview he said, "While Chang Wen-hsin was alive I was content to take a back place and let him do the work. But now the LORD has laid a burden on me to come and take his place. So I have come to study and prepare myself to build up and care for our little local Church."

A feature of the Bible School work has been the training of quartettes. The tribespeople sing very well, and these students have learned to sing effectively in four parts. The first time a quartette sang a piece called "On Calvary" in the Taku Church, the Pastor was deeply moved. He spoke a few words in Lisu and three people responded to an appeal, two of them with tears confessing sin. Two years ago I took a Lisu quartette to

Laopa for the Tai Harvest Thanksgiving services. Their singing and messages spoke to many hearts and over twenty people were convicted of sin and backsliding. This year we received a letter from the Tai Christians asking us to send a group of students again for the harvest festival. This time we sent a Miao quartette. When they returned they came along to report. Their faces were beaming. The leader said, "A deacon was convicted of coldness of heart and made a public confession. Afterwards a number responded to an appeal to consecrate themselves to the LORD." Sometimes it has not been possible to send large groups out, but we have regular times when the students go out either in groups or in twos and threes. Some good work has been done by them. A week or more of Bible teaching has been given in quite a few different places; services have been conducted; a number of people have been converted, backsliders restored and believers revived and blessed. The mountain roads they travel are often arduous and dangerous. Two Miao students while out recently met robbers and lost all their possessions, amounting to about \$1,000 each. They wrote a letter saying that it was "only a little suffering," and they expected to meet that in serving the LORD. "Whether joy or suffering, it was the LORD's appointment, so we commit it all to Him." On their return to the Bible School the other students showed their sympathy by collecting \$500 to be divided between them. We have had two Lisu women students studying too. They returned from one trip with great joy to report the LORD's blessing on their work. "Four women turned to the LORD in our meetings, confessing their sins with tears." On another occasion when the students were out doing evangelistic work (owing to the illness of Mrs. Simpkin), one group returned to say that three new families had turned to the LORD, burned their idols and asked the students to stay a few days extra to teach them.

In class it has been a pleasure to teach these young

folk. The majority have been very keen. The answers to questions asked in class, and to calls for texts, have been swift and accurate, while they have not been slow to ask questions about difficult passages.

The Graduation Meeting was very inspiring. The twelve who received diplomas gave testimonies. Several testified to the LORD's faithfulness in providing for their needs while at the Bible School. Their parents were poor, but the LORD had laid it on the hearts of others to help. In most cases, too, their home churches had supported them to some extent, One gave a very warm testimony as to what he owed his own parents. Another said, "While I have been at the Bible School the LORD has given a vision of the lost and perishing souls in the villages around, and He has given me the responsibility of preaching CHRIST to them." One of the women students quoted a passage from Ezek. iii, and said, "The LORD has laid this upon my heart. I feel that He wants me to be a 'watchman' and to warn the unsaved for Him." At the close of the meeting an appeal was made for full surrender to the LORD, and a large number responded, both students and others present. The next day the Lisu Church held its Annual Meeting and decided to offer the four Lisu Bible School graduates a permanent position as evangelists if they are willing.

A big problem is the support of the students. This is largely undertaken by their own parents. Their own churches have provided some. For example, the Nosu Church have sent enough to pay the board of their own students. Apart from helping their own students, the Lisu Church has given very generous and prayerful support. The assistant Bible School teacher is a Lisu and is boarded free by the Lisu Church. The small sum sent by the Mission for him as an honorarium he has invariably used to support a needy student or for some other object connected with the Bible School. The students' own support has been a problem because of the rapidly increasing costs of food. Their faith has been tested, but the LORD has provided.

Another problem is the wide extent of the field. Those who live some days' journey away find it difficult to get supplies from their homes. Thus the Kopu and some Nosu who live at the other side of the East Yunnan field are pressing for the transfer of the Bible School to Sapushan for a two-year course. The suggestion is that after that it move again to another centre such as Salowu. This immediately raises other problems which are not easily solved, but we desire your fellowship in prayer that GOD's will shall be done in these matters.

It is the hope of two of the Miao graduates to go on to Bethel Bible School for further training. Financial problems face them, but they are looking to the LORD to open the way for them if it is His will for them to go.

As we look back over the past two years, we see problems solved, difficulties overcome, and we thank GOD and take courage. War clouds seemed to be gathering over Yunnan, but the LORD has largely dispersed them as far as we are concerned. In this secluded mountain village, overlooking huge valleys and deep gorges which run steeply into the Yangtze River, we have been kept in peace and quietness as though there were no war going on not so very far away.

What of the future? If the LORD will, we intend to carry on as students are forthcoming, and at a suitable moment move the Bible School to Sapushan or Salowu as required for the training of young people who, we hope and pray, will become workmen who need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth. Your prayers are earnestly requested that GOD will bless and prosper this work for His glory.

C. BY CHINESE INVITATION

By Kathleen Heath

The work which Miss A. K. Heath is doing on the staff of a Bible School evacuated from Chengchow, Honan (an American Southern Baptist Institution) is all the more interesting because she is there purely by the invitation of the Chinese Principal. If we are worthy, it is likely that in the future an increasing number of C.I.M. missionaries will be serving in connection with projects initiated, not by the Mission, but by the Church or by individual Chinese Christians.

“THE things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” Thus Paul instructed Timothy in his last letter, and thus in one way or another the Church has sought to ensure that the essentials of the faith shall be handed down by living instruction from one generation to another. Paul did not commit this work to an academic specialist, but to a busy pastor and evangelist, facing all the discouragements of Church life.

Pastor Wei (pronounced Way), the Principal of this Bible School, is just such an one. He was brought up an ardent idolater, but entered a mission school in order to gain a good knowledge of English as a stepping-stone to a lucrative position. Though he gave a nominal consent to Christianity, he was not born again, and became a versatile man of the world, only concerned with finding the quickest way of making money. But the SPIRIT of GOD arrested him in his career, saved him, set him free from the love of the world, and gave him a vision and a message. After graduating from the North China Theological Seminary, he devoted himself to the ministry in his own district, teaching, preaching and evangelising throughout an area covered by some dozen churches. For the past few years he has been Principal of the Bible School which serves that district. While this has necessarily somewhat curtailed his other labours, it has not robbed the churches of his ministry and spiritual leadership. Thus the students have the benefit of his practical and growing experience and are kept in close

touch with Church needs and problems in a way which should prevent their Bible study from being purely academic.

Like much else in this land at present, the school is an illustration of the fact that the life of a man or an institution "consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Over two years ago enemy activity made it necessary for the school to leave the very comfortable premises which it had previously occupied, and take refuge in a country church in the mountains, where most of the people inhabit caves. So we too live in caves, and one sometimes wonders why such a simple and satisfactory arrangement was ever abandoned! Bible schools situated in large cities often lay themselves open to the criticism that the students are taken out of their own environment and become used to a higher standard of comfort than they can expect in the circumstances to which most of them must return in this predominantly agricultural country. Our students are hardly likely to suffer in that way! The men students carry our water up the hill from quite a distance, and it is no uncommon sight to see the Principal out making paths or carting earth with the students. This is an invaluable example to them in a land where the large percentage of illiteracy accentuates the gulf between the manual worker and the student. On the other hand, our residence in the country does not deprive the students of opportunities of practical service, for we are in a populous district and within walking distance, of several organised churches and a larger number of out-stations. In these our students give valued help on Sundays, and at special times of evangelistic effort and other meetings.

Our equipment is as simple as our manner of life and consists largely of Bibles and note-books, with a kitchen for our physical welfare! The Principal resists any pressure from outside to include subjects other than the Bible in the curriculum, believing that therein we have all that is needed "that the man of GOD may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." A subsidiary

class for women not up to the educational standard of the main class teaches reading and writing as well as the Bible.

How do I come to be co-operating in this work in a district of which I knew nothing before, where our Mission has no work, and where I had no contacts? Just because, when we leave the planning to the MASTER ARCHITECT, He directs seemingly trivial decisions and events, so that the different parts of His design dovetail together to accomplish His plan. Through a chain of unexpected happenings I found myself at a summer retreat where Pastor Wei was a speaker, and before that retreat was over we both felt that GOD had given us the answer to our prayers; his for a fellow worker for the coming session, and mine for direction for the next step.

In the task of Church-building which confronts GOD's servants wherever the initial stage of pioneering is past, it is clear that our Chinese brethren, by means of their intimate knowledge of their own people, are equipped for Church leadership as we can never be, but a valuable ministry is ours if we may give ourselves to the building up of the Body of CHRIST through the ministry of the Word, and our influence in this direction is all the greater when the actual administration of the Church is in other hands. So East and West do meet, and gladly meet, using together the gifts which the Risen CHRIST has given, "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of CHRIST, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the SON of GOD, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of CHRIST."

6. AMONG THE TRIBES

The structure which CHRIST calls His Church is rising among aboriginal tribespeople in south-west China more rapidly than among the Chinese. Mr. E. W. Norgate is a newcomer to tribal work, and his impressions of the large Miao Church in Kweichow are all the more fresh. Mr. A. C. W. Crane has spent some years among the Lisu in western Yunnan—a remote mountain district on the Burma border which has suddenly become part of the “front line” in the war with Japan.

A. IN KWEICHOW

By Eric W. Norgate

THE writer should first of all present his credentials, lest it be thought that this comes from the pen of one who is an “expert,” with long experience among tribespeople. These are impressions formed as one has had a unique opportunity during the past year of observing, at close quarters, the fabric of the Church of the Big Flowery Miao, and anything written must be understood to refer to that section of this particular tribe located in western Kweichow.

If the reader were to travel about this part of the country he would no doubt be impressed by a certain peculiarity which exists in the building world. The foundation is put down, framework erected and the roof put on. These three fundamentals having been dealt with, all that is necessary to produce a comfortable, weatherproof house is the dressing and fitting of boards for the completion of walls and partitions. Here the peculiarity mentioned is often revealed—a few rough planks and poles are held together by mountain vines to serve as walls—not a very satisfactory arrangement, and the owner is satisfied with something far below what could be attained. He probably promises himself every year that after harvest he will call in the carpenter and have the job finished off in good style.

Roughly speaking, this appears to be the state of the Miao Church. Foundations were put down thirty years

ago, when the SPIRIT of GOD did a mighty work of grace in the hearts of these despised people, the framework of Church organisation was set up, and the roof may be likened to the continued work of the HOLY SPIRIT whereby, through varying channels, a nucleus, at least, of keen Christians has been preserved. However, to this day there are still too many rough-hewn planks and poles loosely connected in the structure—some, perhaps, “original rubbish” that seems to be part and parcel of mass movements, and some who have accepted a traditional religion from their parents, in both cases men and women who have accepted the outward form of a new religion without experiencing reality.

Let us examine more carefully the development, the attainment. “The river of GOD is full of Water,” and water brings *life* in all of its aspects. A comparison of the Christian and non-Christian tribespeople supplies a concrete example of this fact. The non-Christians are a dull, unprogressive, miserable sort of people with little interest in life or desire for anything better than that which they already possess. As the river of GOD has flowed through the mountains of western Kweichow it has been as a stream of intellectual and spiritual enlightenment—places of worship are scattered all over the area with a nominal Church membership of 5,000, young people are enabled to grow up in the environment of Christian homes and schools (where they learn the Chinese national language), a hymn-book and the New Testament in Miao script make intelligent worship a possibility to all, churches are organised and a number of workers are partially supported by the churches (a comparatively simple matter among a rural people in which the necessities of life are few and the workers are pastor-farmers, producing most of their own food from the soil). Yes, the LORD *has* done great things for the Miao people, and we *are* glad, but, while the objective of “every man perfect in CHRIST JESUS” stands, “there remaineth yet much land to be possessed,” or, to revert to our figure, much sawing and planing to be done.

How are we possessing the land? Building calls for carpenters, and carpenters need training. Apart from help given in periodical visits to different centres and advice generally given to the churches, the missionaries' main work at present is in the Bible School, where, for five months every year, young men are trained for the work of leadership in the churches. In 1943 students numbered twenty-five, four of the number graduating on the completion of the three years' course.

The key to the future is to be found among the young people—good pliable, workable wood and, praise God, there seems to be no lack of this material, for just on 300 were baptised in the autumn of 1943. Apart from the Bible School, the primary schools are producing Christians under the leadership of keen teachers. A memory of the work of 1943 which the writer will cherish is that of a Decision Meeting at the biggest of the schools just before the end of the term's work. A goodly number became new recruits of the army of the LORD, and their prayer-declarations must have caused the angels to rejoice.

A casual attendant at our Sunday meetings would, at this juncture, without doubt ask, "But what of the young women?" The girls, in their picturesque costume and hairdress, seem to be in a preponderance at all meetings. Few of them attend school nor, consequently, do they understand Chinese; most of them read the Miao script, but, in many cases, it seems that they cram sufficient to pass a baptismal examination and then rest on their laurels, if they don't promptly forget what has been learned! There is an abundance of these rough planks, and something more must be done if they are to become finished parts of a finished building.

So much for "internal expansion," if the term may be excused. But what of "external expansion"? Here is a big problem in which racial barriers have to be faced. The Miao are a conservative people, despised by their neighbours, the Chinese and Nosu, amongst whom the word "Miao" is a term of contempt. Thus a kind of

Jewish-Samaritan relationship exists. Most of the Miao have had equal opportunity of accepting the gospel, and there seems to be very little scope for expansion among the unbelieving Miao.

In conclusion: How shall we be able to complete the structure? "Not by might, nor by power, but by my SPIRIT, saith the LORD OF HOSTS." The foundation, the framework and the roof all seem to be sound—the need is for workmen of spiritual vision, power and courage to impart life, vitality and reality that every part may be fitted into a structure that shall be glorifying to God. The Miao Church lacks leaders—we can't create them, we can attempt to train men, but only GOD can give them, and the condition of that giving is known to GOD's children—*ask!*

B. IN YUNNAN

By A. C. W. Crane

It was the morning of the last day of June. The monsoons were upon us. Outside the pelting of the raindrops set up a roar as they lashed each other to the ground. It was raining as you have never seen it rain. The stream in the valley that slips away from where our village is perched was a boiling torrent, carrying before it anything that opposed its way. The morning was a drab grey, but by noon the rain had ceased, and the sun was endeavouring to show his face through the heavy mists that covered the mountains around.

The Individual. Teacher Jonah came in quietly and sat down; then slowly said, "Teacher, you had better get ready to run into a hiding-place, the Japanese are just over on the other ridge." In that moment it seemed as if all our plans and preparations for the coming Bible School crashed. Just ten days and we were due to commence, but now a flight into the jungle faced us. There was no time to think: we literally threw a few

belongings together, food and bedding. One and another of our hill brethren came in and carried off this and that to hide, and soon we too were fleeing into the jungle. It had all happened so suddenly, and all our plans seemed hindered and out of joint. Nevertheless, GOD meant it for good and for good it turned.

At our first testimony meeting during the Bible School, which commenced five weeks later, the LORD showed us how it was all part of His plan. At the time when the Japanese came Teacher Joshua was away in his district and sick with typhoid. As he lay hot and sick and distressed, his one trouble was, "Ah, I'll not be able to go to the Bible School. It will be weeks before I am strong enough to travel." But GOD, yes, GOD allowed the Japanese to come, and when school started five weeks late according to our plan, Joshua was in his place, thin and weak yet, but there according to GOD's plan.

Over the Burma border two cousins were busy with their rice-fields, planting the young rice plants. Each day they commented, "If only school started a month later we could go. But this year with all these troubles and Japanese so near we are late with our rice-planting." "But," said they as they comforted themselves, "maybe we can go next year." However, the Japanese came advancing over the border and school was late "according to plan," and those two cousins sat side by side in school with this testimony, "*All things work together for good.*"

Isaiah, son of a village leader over the border, and Jehu, a bosom friend of his, had planned to come to Bible School, too, but their villages were so near to Japanese positions they did not like to leave their folk. Isaiah's father had just escaped in a previous night raid. Besides, Isaiah felt he must take some of the responsibilities that lay heavy upon his father. A village leader between the lines of two opposing forces has a very precarious job. But the Japanese left those positions and came pushing over the border by mountain trail. They met with a disastrous defeat meted out to them by Chinese jungle troops. So in GOD's time and plan Isaiah and Jehu

came to school. These were the testimonies given from hearts full of joy.

The Church as a Whole. The Lisu Church is self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating. It is composed of companies of believers dwelling in separate villages but all united as one body. Each village has its own worship and deacons. From these village deacons is drawn the Church Council, which governs the work of the whole district. These last years since the coming of the New Testament their gifts to the LORD have steadily increased and their vision has been enlarged.

Beyond! But what of those without, the heathen tribes around? A missionary cried to the LORD and his cry was thus, "O LORD, out from a cleansed, filled and overflowing Lisu Church, reach out to the heathen tribes around. Let that overflow be so mighty as to bring many to the feet of JESUS." That cry we make our plan and we make it our cry too! Praise GOD, we are beginning to see a little of the overflow. One Lisu brother has gone as a teacher to the Lahu. Amongst this tribe are hundreds of believers needing help along the upward way. Many weak and erring ones have been brought back to a merciful SAVIOUR. Meetings before were hard and unresponsive when sin was preached. Now hearts are melting. Confessing, repentant ones are increasing. Truly there is a rising tide of blessing among the Lahu. Hold the flood gates open! Pray on!

Away over high ranges some ten days by horse trail is another tribe, the Liti. To this tribe the Lisu are sending a teacher and his companion. We look for such an outpouring of blessing that this advance into enemy territory shall be in accordance with His plan—"with no defeat and no retreat, but only *victory*."

Other tribes are waiting. Just this morning a Wa led into this little hut, where I write, another Wa, a strong well-built young fellow with finely chiselled features. But he was partly blind, and the light was failing fast. He wistfully turned to me and with those darkened eyes seeking my face he said, "Big White Man, make me see."

Something snapped within. Chords of sympathy and passionate desire sang a minor harmony. O for a touch with healing power! And yet have we not that touch, a greater power, a mighty dynamic, to make men see the glory of the SON OF GOD, who was anointed "to give sight to the blind?"

PREPARING THE GROUND

1. ON THE BORDER OF TIBET

By Floyd M. Larsen

There is no living Church in Tibet; scarcely even the nucleus of it. At Kangting, Sikang and in Tsinghai in the north, a tiny group of workers are setting themselves to prepare the ground for the building that is to be.

INTO the lamasery courtyard flowed a tide of brilliant sunshine, but the surrounding buildings were filled with cheerless gloom. A veranda, lined with prayer wheels, led to one of them, where the sullenness of the interior was relieved by the limpid streams of light which flowed from a few butter-lamps. Dusty banners, which hung from the ceiling, were covered with strange symbols, intelligible only to those taught in their mystic meanings. In dim recesses sat idols in glum silence.

Out of this sanctum issued eerie sounds: the incantations of a lama mingled with the measured beats of a kettledrum. I stepped in and walked towards the platform where, but for the slight movement of his lips and the hand which held the drumstick, he sat as motionless as the idols. Around him were ranged the drum, scriptures, prayer-wheel, a pot of tea, and a string of beads. His wizened face, partly hid behind a thin, shaggy beard, was the colour of baked clay, and looked as though it had been chiselled out of stone. Out of this living death-mask looked two dreamy eyes. Around him, in loose folds, hung his red robe.

I pitied this man, because it was so evident that he was but an instrument in the hands of some outside power. Sunk in deep contemplation, he appeared altogether oblivious of anything that went on round about. His face was a portrait of death—spiritual death. These are the impressions I received of him the first time I saw

him. I have visited him twice since. The first time we did not speak; the second we exchanged a few words, but the third visit was better. When he saw me coming he ceased his chanting and drumming, put down the stick, and invited me to sit down, and offered me tea. He conversed freely on subjects of general interest, but evaded speaking about the gospel when it was mentioned, although he willingly accepted a scripture portion.

A few minutes walk from this lamasery stands another on the slopes of the mountain which looks down upon Tatsienlu. There, behind heavy curtains hung in the doorway, devotees were worshipping when I paid a visit one day. In squat position, lamas rocked back and forth as they intoned prayers, while young novitiates did a simpler service by beating drums. Sunlight, which streamed through an open skylight, played upon silk scrolls which hung from the high ceiling. In strategic places were offerings of *tsamba* and grain. At the head of the hall mammoth idols, robed in rich silks and satins, smiled or frowned down upon men and women who were prostrating themselves full-length on the floor.

This is Lamaism in its sacred temples. But it is not confined to these ornate buildings; it is in, and part of, every phase of Tibetan life, so that Lamaism is practically a synonym for it. It enters the poor Tibetan home on the narrow street, and the black, yak-hair tent on the wide grasslands. It goes further and enters the hearts and minds of these simple people, sinking them in hopeless superstition and desperate fear, so that of the two indispensable things in Tibet—religion and buttered tea—the first is of far greater importance.

Not long ago I lived with a Tibetan family for a while, when I saw them pursue, with blind and unquestioning devotion, religious rites which would bring blessing and avert calamity. With the first streak of dawn they were up, and could sometimes be seen kow-towing just where their bed had been. The fire was lit to prepare tea, but prayer did not stop while doing it. The water-maid returned from the stream reciting a chant as she carried

the bucket of water on her back. Each day saw a pillar of grey smoke rise through the early morning mists out of a shrine where green juniper smouldered. Holy water, sprinkled on the ground, also lent its efficacy to the ceremony. At night, when darkness fell, butter-lamps on the altar were lit, and burned far into the night. During the day the man of the home would often tell his rosary, which he sometimes wore round his neck or around one wrist. Periodically lamas are called in to employ their skill in order to keep the family on good terms with avenging spirits. If illness or accident comes, as it did when I was there, or if business is to be transacted, divination is resorted to. Truly, these people are not without religion, but they are without GOD and without hope in the world.

Lately I have often called to mind the last words of Valignani. When he lay dying on an island off the south coast of China, he turned his head towards that large land and cried, "O Rock, Rock, when wilt thou open to my MASTER?" Four hundred years have gone by, and the Rock has opened. Now on the border where that land rises to meet the Roof of the World, GOD's servants are wondering when the Great Closed Land to the west will open. While we do not know when it will be opened, yet we know how it can be. GOD's method is, "Preach the Word." It is a known fact, and, moreover, a testimony to the power of the gospel, that lamas have expressed their fear of it, and have warned the people against listening to it, and threatened them if they do. Judging by the way this "Fortress of Asia" has defied and resisted any and all kinds of encroachments upon its territory, it may seem impregnable to some, but the gospel which has entered similar lands in the past can do the same here. This is our "sure and stedfast hope."

2. THE EVANGELISATION OF MUSLIMS

By G. K. Harris

This also—the preaching of the Good News to Muslims—is part of the plan. When will the foundation of a living Church be laid? The vision carries. Must not some lives be yielded up to this hard task? Must not men and women be found who “cannot be shocked out of loving” the self-satisfied Muslims of China? Mr. Harris writes from Sining, the capital of the province of Tsinghai.

THERE was nothing in his appearance to suggest an *ahung* (Muslim religious teacher) as he appeared wearing a rough homespun uniform, white felt hat and hemp sandals, yet on recognition he proved to be the caller of several months before. He had just completed his period of compulsory military training along with thousands of other *ahungs* and *mullas* (theological students). Exercise had done him a world of good. Far from the normal atmosphere of bigotry that pervades the precincts of the mosques, he had been thinking deeply about the relationship of his Quran to JESUS the Messiah. “How does it happen,” he began abruptly, “that if our Prophet supersedes all others, our Book ascribes to JESUS titles and offices far above those ascribed to any other man? Why, it says here,” he continued, reaching down my copy of the Quran and opening it at two places, “that the Messiah is the very Word of GOD and His spirit; and here, that He created birds and made them fly.” Thus began a golden opportunity, by the close of which we were no longer considering his Book, but found the answer to his query in the sure records of the gospel. Before leaving he pleaded to be allowed to purchase a dozen copies of the Gospels to give to his *ahung* friends for study.

The annual Day of Sacrifice, the greatest day in the Muslim calendar, was approaching. It commemorates the offering by Abraham of his son. We were reading the true record of this event in Genesis. A young Muslim

chemistry teacher, one of my three students in advanced English, suddenly exclaimed, "Strange, indeed, I have always been taught that Ishmael was the son offered, not Isaac." Thus the subject for discussion was raised by one of themselves. Two of these young Muslims have English editions of the Bible presented to them by friends in the provinces where they attended college. Only the other day an *ahung* borrowed an Arabic Chinese dictionary in order to study Chinese. A few weeks ago I sat in a mosque yard with two alert *mullas*. Apropos of a question raised, one reached down a pile of study books and extracted a well-thumbed science book in Chinese and phonetic, to show me a diagram of the solar system and the moon's phases.

Whether evangelism is aimed at Muslims educated in ancient or modern manner, illiterate farmers, clamorous restauranters or pedlars, women or girls in homes, children in schools, the sick in hospitals, or Muslim lepers, a concentrated effort is necessary. Our hearts were gladdened this year by the conversion of more of the lepers in the ward of the Borden Memorial Hospital, Lanchow, one of whom had strenuously opposed the gospel there for many years.

Our Mission has also a strategic plan for the location of a few special Muslim workers in the centres of largest Muslim population. With the exigencies of this year, with some special workers unable to return from furlough and with others in charge of stations involving almost full time given to non-Muslims, this plan has been somewhat in abeyance.

During this year my main assignment has been continuing the preparation on the new manual for the use of all missionaries in China who come in touch with Muslims. The matter covers points to stress and pitfalls to avoid. It is felt that the high cost of printing and time involved are warranted in order that every worker throughout our entire field may be helped in presenting the claims of CHRIST to Muslims and in arousing and enthusing each Church to a sense of its responsibility

for the evangelism of the Muslims in its area. Revival in any part of our field bears an intimate relation to the witness to Muslims, for just as the printed Word is enhanced by the testimony of a zealous Christian, so both of these rise or fall in value as the Chinese local churches in the vicinity of Muslims are spiritually wide-awake or slumbering. Our plan thus has in view the field as a whole. During the year Muslims who have heard something of the gospel in twelve other provinces have heard the message again in Tsinghai. One *ahung* from Pingliang, in east Kansu, who has come into this province, professes himself at heart a Christian; but, alas, he is not yet ready to make a break with the system upon which his livelihood depends.

Our plan, besides being comprehensive for the entire field, is also adaptable for changing local conditions. Former methods of reaching this field of Tsinghai, by using pack animals well laden with tracts and Scripture portions, have largely had to be scrapped for economic reasons. Recently, a new plan was tried. This involved very short daily stages, walking from stage to stage, carrying a pack of about thirty-five pounds of essentials, including a few well-chosen tracts and Scriptures. Opportunities on this first seven days' circuit were beyond expectation. Hospitality was readily offered in the most out-of-the-way places. Such a plan can be systematically followed throughout this field.

In an out-station of Sining, where Muslims are numerous, lantern slides were being shown on the life of CHRIST. The first night covered the message to the Crucifixion, which subject was announced for the following night. Contrary to what might be expected from those who universally deny that JESUS was crucified, the number of Muslims was augmented and not diminished on the second night. These watched and listened while the message of the Cross and Resurrection went home to many a heart.

This, very briefly, is the concentrated, strategic,

comprehensive and adaptable plan for the work of evangelism among the Muslims in our C.I.M. fields in China, and you who read this short article are privileged to join with those "at the Front" in making this a prayer-empowered plan for the days to come.

THE CONSUMMATION OF THE PLAN

IF we look beyond this age, in which CHRIST is building His Church—the Church which He purchased with His own Blood—we can only dimly discern the "shape of things to come." But this is crystal clear, that the Church is not an end in itself. It is in CHRIST, the Head of the Church, that GOD is determined to gather up all things in one, whether things in heaven or things on earth. Already He has set Him at His own right Hand, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, *not only in this age but also in that which is to come*; and He has subdued all things under His feet and set Him as Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body, the completeness of Him who everywhere fills the universe with Himself. "Now to Him who, in the exercise of His power that is at work within us, is able to do infinitely beyond all our highest prayers or thoughts—to Him be the glory *in the Church and in CHRIST JESUS* to all generations, world without end. *Amen.*"

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