

WORLD DOMINION

The World Dominion Movement advocates Informed Continuous Co-ordinated Evangelism to reach everyone at home and abroad. Its basis is belief in the Deity and Atoning Death of the Lord Jesus Christ, the World's Only Saviour, and in the Final Authority of Holy Scripture.

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Stirring Times in Manchukuo

IS there any other part of the world of which it can be said that in one year it has had more railways built ; the greatest boom in real estate and city construction ; the largest number of churches built ; the greatest number of Bibles sold ; the greatest number of trains wrecked by political ' bandits,' and the longest period of spiritual revival in its history ?

In writing of Manchukuo, one is continually tempted to use the superlative ; its use would be quite in order regarding most things, good and evil, but the mind tires, and men become impatient when everything is described as the greatest, the longest, the highest and the broadest. Yet all activities in this country must be evaluated against the background of an extraordinary stimulation.

The secular press from time to time reports chaos, yet speaks of the building of over 2,000 miles of railway in difficult country in two years ; it reports the blowing up of a passenger train and the abduction of dozens of its passengers ; the wrecking of freight trains at the rate of three per week ; yet when one takes up a religious newspaper reporting on Manchuria, and reads that a record of Bible selling has been made and a record in giving by the indigenous Church has been reached, the bewilderment is likely to increase rather than decrease. It may be difficult to reconcile these things, yet these are but the record of what has happened and is happening.

If the visitor who has read all this is still confused, and not quite sure about the veracity of reports, whether secular or religious, let him investigate a little further. Let him take a trip down the railway line running from Kirin to Moukden, via Hailung, and he will be on the scene of the most spectacular contrast. Along that railway line throughout the year there have been massed attacks by bandits on cities, and in these same cities there have been large and beautiful churches in the process of building.

STIRRING TIMES IN MANCHUKUO

At the time of writing this article in September, a letter came inviting me to the dedication of a church built to the memory of Blind Chang of Hailung, while a second letter informed me that the city of Shanchengtsze had been entered and looted by bandits. This place is only half-an-hour's rail journey from Hailung, the scene of the dedication of the memorial church, and three-quarters-of-an-hour's journey from Tungfeng, where the Finnish Salem Mission one month later dedicated its large and beautiful church. Shanchengtsze itself was the scene of the dedication of a church in May of this year (1934). These churches are not edifices built up by optimistic mission Boards in the West in the hope that some day they may be used; they are churches built largely at the expense of the local Christians themselves.

Nor are these the only churches to be built this year in Manchukuo. New churches extend from Port Arthur in the south to the far north in response to the need for expansion. In each case they witness to the activity of the Spirit of God, who, in the midst of chaos on the one hand, and frenzied speculation on the other, has revived His Church and called it to go forward to greater things. In the spring of 1934 the writer visited a church near the borders of Mongolia which had actually been enlarged to twice its former size, at a time when for two whole years the entire countryside was cut off by 'bandit' forces, and the people were living in a state of siege.

If the visitor be still sceptical as to whether all this can go on side by side, let him pay a visit to the premises of the British and Foreign Bible Society at either Hsinking (the capital), Moukden or Newchwang. In Hsinking he will find himself in the midst of one of the greatest town-planning efforts of recent times. He will see stately buildings, in architecture a compromise between the East and the West, arising out of prairie land. There in the office of the British and Foreign Bible Society he will see charts showing phenomenal increases in Scripture distribution. He will be shown the monthly reports of the Society's workers from practically every section of the country, telling of

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perils by road, of siege, of plague and of flood and of war, and every day the reports end up with the note, 'Twenty copies of St. John's Gospel sold, thirty St. Mark's Gospel,' and so on.

This, then, is the story of the revival in Manchukuo. Not the revival that sweeps along suddenly with the fury of a forest fire, but the revival one would expect from a Christian community that has taken to heart the prayer of the Five Year Movement, 'Lord, revive Thy Church, beginning with me.' The most impressive thing about this revival has been the way in which it has communicated itself from one member to another. There has been little organized or conscious striving for results; it has been the fruit of heart searching in Bible classes, prayer, and the desire to hand on the Gospel, accompanied by the feeling of inadequacy which has led to the coming of the Spirit in power.

These Christians have formed themselves into bands and gone out to the villages or into the streets of the towns to proclaim the power of God. Bible classes have been formed in all sorts of places, in workshops and banks and schools. One of the large banks in Moukden has one such Bible class. It makes rather an interesting story of the way in which the Gospel is propagated indigenously. Some years ago a small preaching chapel in Moukden, belonging to the Scottish Mission, was sold unexpectedly. Some disappointment was felt at the loss of the site, for it was a good one and inside the walled city. Another site was impossible to obtain, and so with the lapse of years nothing was done. A bank had meanwhile been erected on the lost site. Three years ago the Chinese pastor of the East Moukden Presbyterian Church (which is a member of the Presbyterian Synod, but now altogether self-supporting) found his way into the bank through the conversion of a member of the bank staff. A Bible class to which most of the members of the staff came was in time started in this bank by the pastor. Subsequently all of the bank staff, thirty odd, asked to be baptized. They themselves were now anxious to pass on the torch and they subscribed

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among themselves enough money to open a new preaching chapel near the site of the old one, and to pay the salary of an evangelist to live there. This peculiar turn of the wheel of circumstance surely witnesses to the reality of the faith of the Church which inspires such action. This case is typical of many others.

The British and Foreign Bible Society has a staff of from 40 to 45 colporteurs in Manchukuo, who make a systematic canvas of the outlying districts under the direct superintendence of the Church Boards and Presbyteries. These men are preachers in every sense of the word, for they must sell their Gospels to the people, and only those who have tried it know how difficult it is to induce a Chinese farmer or merchant to part with the copper coin necessary to buy a Gospel. The colporteur must first make it clear that he represents the Church and then the potential buyer is interested. Next, he must show that the little book he is commending is worth the investment, and so a sale is effected. The work is often laborious, but these sales represent 'contacts,' a Gospel sold is a contact made with the Christian Church. This contact is often retained personally by the colporteur, until the man is brought into touch with an evangelist, and later with the pastor who will baptize him. Such are the methods employed by the Bible Society's staff, but the sales of these men only account for half of the Bibles sold. The other half is made up of Scriptures purchased by Church members, who take the books out on to the streets and sell them as a means of introducing themselves and their message to others. These are voluntary workers, and by their efforts the Church in Manchukuo is self-propagating.

No reference to the way in which the Church in this country is tackling the problem of self-propagation would be complete without reference being made to the Home Missionary Societies of the Lutheran Church and to that of the Presbyterian Synod. Both these denominations have their well-defined fields of what they term 'home mission work.' In both cases the regions are wild and sparsely populated, difficult areas to work from every point of view.

The Presbyterian Synod Home Mission has a large

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field in the far north in the wilds of Heilungkiang. Its field extends from the North Manchuria Railway in the south, to the borders of Siberia in the north. A staff of three ordained Chinese ministers is maintained at present. No foreign help of any kind is forthcoming. It is not generally known that the extremes of temperature are so great in this region that in summer, July and August, it is over 100 degrees, and in winter, from November to March, it varies from 20 to 30 degrees below zero. It is interesting to reflect that the average temperature during Captain Scott's stay at the South Pole was only 26 degrees below zero. Yet that little band of Chinese missionaries, with the Bible Society's colporteurs, carry on their work in such conditions and are almost always on the move. They have established Churches in as many as eight county towns, and have meeting places in the homes of Christians in as many other cities.

The home mission field of the Lutheran Church up towards the source of the Yalu River, is just as difficult. Under the shadow of the Great White Mountain, they have an area of missionary work where no foreign mission would open up work. They are so far out of the beaten track that the Chinese, when they go up there, talk of going over the 'edge of beyond.' But a Church is being built up, men are being saved, and the soul of the Church at headquarters in the populous areas is kept renewed by the spirit of heroism of its pioneers. Distances are so great that it is only occasionally that a representative of these home missions can make his reports to the Synods; generally they are made by proxy, as when the Bible Society's Chinese Secretary visits them, or some business man from these regions visits the centre.

Would that this record of the home mission work of the Manchukuo Church and of its successful witness to Christ might stimulate anew the vision of the western Churches, who, all honour to them, have in the past had a similar experience, but called it 'foreign' missions. Is it realized sufficiently, one wonders, that the uttermost part of the Heilungkiang home mission work is as far from Moukden,

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the seat of the Synod, as North Africa is from London, and if the difficulties of travel are taken into consideration the distance becomes even greater.

In the contrast of Light and Shade in Manchukuo, how great is God's goodness and all-sufficiency, when placed against man's darkness and need.

Pioneers in Manchuria

MANCHURIA—what visions it calls up to the old-timers! the men and women who, at home, will read the foregoing article. A vision of men and women who laboriously tilled the soil in pioneer days to plant the seed of the Gospel there and in Korea; dusty, bandit-infested roads; fields of waving *kaoliang*, ten feet high, in which the mounted robbers hid; acres and acres of soya bean and miles and miles of millet. A warm land in summer, bitterly cold and ice-bound in winter, but withal a pleasant and fruitful heritage of the mighty Manchus.

A cloud of witnesses—Carson, Hunter, Ross, McIntyre, the grand stalwarts of the early days—look down and thank God that they successfully planted a Christian Church in this great new kingdom which is destined to change the face of the Far East and affect the politics and commerce of the world.

A pathetic story told us by one of the 'old-timers' comes to mind: 'The cock crew, the signal for our early start in a springless cart, along rutty roads. In the grey dawn we passed a temple. A young lad was going in, and curiosity prompted me to follow. The atmosphere was chill. The interior, with its earthen floor and ugly idols ranged around the walls, was gloomy and forbidding. Two priests came forward, a short conversation ensued and the boy was told to kneel. Each priest then clutched a handful of the boy's flesh and stuck wooden skewers through it. They then put a donkey's saddle on his back and made him crawl on all-fours around the temple and *kotow* to every idol. He did so, and at each stop repeated four words, "For my mother's sake." His mother was ill and this was his sacrifice and prayer for her recovery.'

It is a high honour to be a missionary in Manchukuo in these days, and to affect, through the Christian Church, the destinies of an empire. The Rev. Dr. Fulton, of the Irish Presbyterian Mission, is now entering upon his fiftieth year of service in the field with the vigour and enthusiasm of a young man. In these critical times the experience of half a century is an invaluable contribution.