Ta-Te-Tung

Dartmouth in China—A Symposium

By Charles E. Butler, secretary of the Dartmouth Christian Association, Dr. Edmund Meleney '09, Keith Drake '24, and C. E. Griffith '15.

It sounds like our old Dartmouth yell. At least so they tell us. Ta-Te-Tung, these are the Chinese characters which greet one in approaching a building on the campus of the Tung-Jen Middle School in Paotingfu, China. They call it Dartmouth Hall.

During the past few years a number of interesting reports and accounts by different people have come regarding an educational project in Paotingfu, China. It seems, that "Dartmouth-in-China" is the name designating the educational project in Paotingfu, North China, to which students, alumni and friends of Dartmouth College have been giving their support. It is not nearly so imposing as the name implies. It is not Dartmouth-in-Hanover reproduced in China. It is primarily concerned with elementary education and is co-operating in a system especially adapted to meet the needs of the country.

Dartmouth-in-China has grown and developed in the spirit and idealism of the Dartmouth-in-Turkey movement which started in 1913 when Robbins Barstow '13 went to Mardin in Asia Minor under the direction of the Dartmouth Christian Association. It was necessary to postpone work during the World War. Walter B. Wiley '18 re-opened the project in Anatolia College, Marsovan, in 1920 under the name "Dartmouth in the Near East." His term of service was cut short in 1921 because of civil war and the revolution in Turkey.

At this time it was suggested by the alumni committee of the Christian Association that Dartmouth lend her support to educational work in China. H. W. Robinson '10 and Mrs. Robinson had been located in Paotingfu (Bow-ding-fu) since 1916 as representatives of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Congregational). Previous to going to China Mr. Robinson had taught in the Mills School in Honolulu. Because of the imperative need for more schools in China it was decided that the Dartmouth Christian Association with its alumni committee should forward its gifts through the American Board of Foreign Missions to Mr. Robinson whose past experience had qualified him so thoroughly to co-operate with the Chinese educational leaders.

The first contribution of $300 sent out in 1921 built the rural school at Kao-I. Later contributions amounting to as much as $2135 in 1926 have been forwarded by the Dartmouth-in-China advisory committee, Professor E. B. Watson, Chairman.

Both the elementary and the Junior Middle schools are under the direction of Chinese teachers. Mr. Yang Chi Tsung is the principal of the latter and his educational methods and administrative ability have been very favorably recognized by the government officials.

H. W. ROBINSON '10 AND PRINCIPAL YANG IN FRONT OF DARTMOUTH HALL

His carefully planned curriculum, which cares for the body as well as the mind, made a favorable impression on the government inspector as the following quotation from his report will testify.

"The Tung Jen (Paotingfu) Middle School has a large and spacious compound. Its classrooms and dormitories are kept clean. Its playground is flat and well-equipped. The apparatus and equipment for the extra-curriculum deserve admiration and imitation. In the school garden, trees, fruits, flowers, wheat and barley are all planted, watered and well cared for by the students themselves as class work. It looks clean and beautiful. In the school bazaar, various kinds of stationery are bought and sold by the students, who have a pretty good chance to practice accounts and learn commercial knowledge. The library, the museum, and

the game room are open according to schedule for the students' physical and mental training."

In summing up his report the inspector states "the Tung Jen (Paotingfu) Middle School really deserves admiration and imitation."

DR. MELENEY'S DESCRIPTION

Writing in 1926 Dr. Edmund Meleney '09 of the Dartmouth Alumni Association of North China commended very highly the leadership of Mr. Yang, through whom the success which the school has achieved is in no small measure due. In his reports Mr. Robinson has given us a picture of Mr. Yang, a man with unusual educational gifts, and special training for Middle School work, who has given himself enthusiastically to his task so that teachers and students have been inspired by the example of the principal.

The story of Dartmouth Hall reads like the early history of Dartmouth College and its founder, Eleazar Wheelock. Just before the Chinese New Year of 1926, the military governor of the province called the Paotingfu students to his *yamen*, and gave them a lecture in which he warned them not to get mixed up with the "red doctrine" which was raging in the "celestial republic" at that time. In order to make his appeal effective the governor promised each student a gift of money, $4 each to middle school students. This amounts to nearly a month's board and the boys do not get $4 very often to spend as they wish. With characteristic shrewdness and insight Principal Yang told them of Dartmouth and the contributions coming from this educational institution in America. He asked them about combining contributions to build a hall which would serve as a dining room where all students could congregate for their school activities. The students voted to give more than half of their total receipts from the Governor to be put with $605 from Dartmouth and the hall was built and named Dartmouth Hall.

Paotingfu is the capital of the province of Chih-li, North China. It is about 100 miles southwest of Peking and 100 miles west of Tientsin. The surrounding country is a rich silt plain which is flooded periodically. The population is made up mostly of farmers. They are of a sturdy race and have produced a large portion of China's leaders. Three-fourths of the produce raised is consumed by the people of the province. This leaves only one-fourth available for exchange purposes. Paotingfu is on the trunk line railroad from Peking to Changsha, a very important inland center. Dr. D. Brewer Eddy states, "This is destined to be one of the richest trunkline roads in China."

During the troubled period of 1927-1928 the school continued its work under trying conditions. Keith Drake '24 writes of a very interesting visit at that time.

KEITH DRAKE'S STORY

It is not altogether peaceful in Paotingfu now, or wasn't, during my recent visit (1927). What bothers one most in China is the noises, which even in Peking send one, when he is fed up, away from the less native

DARTMOUTH HALL IN CONSTRUCTION

quarters and it will be understood what I mean by calling that party courageous when I explain a few of the more audible and noticeable goings-on as late as yesterday next to that place recently named Dartmouth Hall with the name done in three Chinese characters over the door.

Paotingfu, located fairly centrally in that part of North China which is south of Peking, is on one of the few railroads which luckily enough runs after a fashion. It is an outpost of the American Board Mission. One of its two "foreign" (meaning American) directors and one of its three American residents, a most plucky lot, is H. W. Robinson of 1910 class and through whom a post called Dartmouth-in-China has been established.

In the thirty-acre compound of the Tung Jen Middle School a big playground with five outdoor basketball courts, a soccer field (where I saw a good, tough game played), six tennis courts, and other equipment where the Chinese lads are required to exercise an hour a day is the most outstanding feature of what might be called the campus of the school. At the northeast corner are the boys' dormitories, where 450 boys from 12 to 16 years of age study and live. Also, there is Dartmouth Hall called *Ta Te Tung*, reminding one of *da-da Dartmouth* in the football yell. It serves as assembly hall and dining room. I heard them sing their "Dartmouth" song, the Chinese republic song, and the chopsticks clatter.

Other strung-out one-story buildings contain dormitories, the natural science, history, and other departments.

At the west end of the tract is situated the four homes of the American Board missionaries. All of these are empty except for one occupant, Robinson in one, for his family is in Peking per consular orders; Hubbard in a second, with his family in Peking, one hundred miles to the north, but more like five hundred with the present state of communications; and Miss Phelps in the third. These people are all illegally or daringly, as you care to look at it, here. United States consular orders from Tientsin and Peking are that all missionaries are advised to keep out of the interior and stay in the treaty ports or Peking.

It is in this connection that the American Board Mission took an advanced stand much criticized. Hubbard

wrote the document stating that since friendliness and the spread of Christ's spirit was the object of the American Board's station men they protested against the use of force for the protection of themselves in China's interior. Should they be endangered, captured, or killed as they expected, they requested in a manifesto that no military force, demands, or expeditions be made by their government, nor indemnities asked in case of their deaths. Robinson and others signed this. It was sent to Washington, diplomatic and consular officials in China, Senator Borah, among others, and the American Board offices in the United States.

Back inspecting his garden and his goats with Robinson I asked him what the buildings next door were. "That's Y. M. C. A. property," he said, "which we have been forced to rent to the military authorities. It's an arsenal now." At that I began to inspect the cabbages in a gradual, but rather sure path backing towards his house.

A little later I was at luncheon in Miss Phelps' dining room. One heard a frequent and steady blast from a steam engine's whistle. "What is that steam whistle blowing for?" I asked. Miss Phelps informed me that it was a train that kept up steam and had for weeks. I discovered what it was when Robinson and I took a walk. Stretching alongside the south of the wall was an armored train. The engine was fired always. A camouflaged truck, heavily armored and with three, if not four, heavy guns was next to the engine. Soldiers camped in intervening cars, and at the end was a lighter armored truck.

It was then that Robinson had to go to call on one of the two generals in Paotingfu to aid the Chinese secretary of the Y. M. C. A. to solicit subscriptions. As Robinson and I sat in a 'rikshaw about to enter the gate of the town we were forced in against the high wall by troops of gray soldiers just then marching from the town. They sang as they marched past.

I asked him what they were singing as they swung in poor order past, a queer gang in gray with yellow arm bands, tall unkempt-looking fellows, an occasional intelligent face, little short boys, some not more than 16 years old, not exactly chaps for roommates: "Why, they are singing something about the British and the French and the Americans taking advantage of poor China," he replied, after a pause. "They say we're not treating them squarely," he continued as he tried to catch and translate the words. He smiled rather wryly. It seemed as much a surprise to him as to me. "I can't get the rest of it." We called on the "young general," Chang Hsien-liang, now successor to the late Chang Tso-Lin, northern bandit ruler. He refused a contribution.

MAKING AN ATHLETIC FIELD

At supper that night Hubbard said he had been talking with Dr. Lewis, surgeon at the Presbyterian hospital across the town, who is the veteran of them all, having been in China during Boxer days. The station master told him today that reports have come up the line from the south that Shansi troops and Fengtien soldiers had a small battle last night.

IN THE MIDST OF CIVIL WAR

The point was that trouble had been expected south of Paotingfu for about a month. This was the first news of the possible opening of hostilities between Chang Tso-Lin's men and Yen, tupan of Shansi, but Yen had disowned the men saying they were former soldiers of Feng Yu-hsiang, the former Christian general. I noticed then as I went through the streets of Paotingfu that soldiers were all over the place.

The following afternoon we were playing tennis in the compound when we heard a new noise. It turned out that machine-gun practice was inaugurated in a lot some 200-300 yards west of the American Board compound. It continued each day I was there with a good session punctuating the sermon in the church Sunday. We discovered that morning that the armored train had pulled away and had gone south.

The day before my departure I found that the train schedule on the single track line to the north—the line extending south to Hankow, and this short distance down of 80 miles to Shanhaikwain where the new war was threatening—was interrupted because on Saturday two extra trains had been filled with the families of officers of the three armies in Paotingfu and were sent to Peking. There were other troop trains, on the single line, in both directions.

I marveled at these fellows. On Saturday Hubbard departed on his bicycle on a two-day trip to visit an industrial factory 30 miles south where he had to inspect the books.

When I lunched with Dr. John Lewis before my departure I told him that I thought they had lots of courage to stay. He and his wife are both in their 60's, and both as active as younger people. That morning she had organized a new group in the town which was going to form a new church.

"No one bothers me," Dr. Lewis laughed, but spoke seriously. "There are many Chinese who tell me that if we are threatened in this compound at any time they will hide us."

"But, there is no anti-foreign feeling. I am quite surprised. Even in June there really was none. I have remarked about it."

And then he told me how unsafe it was in Boxer days.

A DORMITORY

Then wherever he went it was not unusual to be stoned. Small children would stone him as he went by. It was most unpleasant for any foreigner anywhere then.

"But none of that exists today," he said.

As Robinson rode his wheel with me to the station I noticed that virtually every second gate had a troop flag sticking from it and soldiers quartered in the house and court.

"We can't tell about the future," said Robinson, as he saw me off, "so we're carrying on." And he rode back to teach his third Bible class that day.

Reports coming from Robinson have indicated a steady advance in the work of the school. Tung Jen was one of the first mission middle schools to be registered with the Chinese government and when the government inspector came to visit the school he gave such a favorable report to the provincial bureau of education that the chairman wrote a long letter to Principal Yang, congratulating him for having such a splendid school and particularly for having such a fine spirit between the faculty and student body.

Last year the school started on a new era in its existence in that it has this term united with the P'ei Chi Middle School for girls so that Tung Jen has now become a co-educational institution.

This union was brought about for two reasons: First, P'ei Chi applied for registration with the government but was not granted its request. This made a difficulty for the students, for if the school was not registered the graduates could not enter higher schools that were registered. By uniting with Tung Jen this difficulty was removed.

Second: The other reason for uniting the two schools was finances. Inasmuch as there was a large deficit in the girls' school last year and additional funds for the future were not available, something had to be done and the union of the two schools helped to solve the financial problem. Instead of having two separate faculties there is now one staff, and the expense for salaries is thereby considerably decreased. There are now 364 boys and 78 girls in the school, and during the short period that the schools have been united the experiment seems to have been a great success.

It is not the purpose of the school to become the largest middle school in North China, but we do hope to become one of the best. We aim for quality rather than quantity. We do hope, however, to increase our numbers somewhat, especially the number of girl students. There are several middle schools for boys in Paotingfu, but with the exception of the Presbyterian Mission Middle School for girls there is no other school in Paotingfu where girls may do middle school work. There is a government Normal school for girls, but it does not have very high standards and does not offer college preparatory or Higher Middle School courses.

With an increased number of students we shall need more buildings and the outlook is favorable for some help along that line. The American Board promised some money for girls' school buildings as soon as they are needed and plans have already been made for an eight-room recitation hall to be built this summer. It will be called Gould Hall in memory of Miss Gould for whom the girls' school was named. The name P'ei Chi will also be preserved by naming the present girls' school site "P'ei Chi Yuan."

When the boys' and girls' school became united Mr. Yang was asked to continue as principal but he consented to do so only on the condition that someone else be found before next fall to serve as principal. A board of managers has been appointed and they are making plans for another principal or for a board of control which will take the place of a principal. In any case, Mr. Yang will have an important place in the life of the school and he does not wish his duties as principal to be such as to make it necessary for him to sever the intimate contact he now has with the students.

The school motto is "Diligence, Frugality, Humility and Prudence" and those four words express to a marked degree the spirit of Tung Jen.

None of us who are connected with the school are blind to its shortcomings and we are conscious of much that still needs to be accomplished but we do take pleasure in the start that has been made and we believe that if the school continues another fifty years it will produce many more notable leaders in the Kung Li Hui and render much service to the New China that is now being born.

C. E. GRIFFITH '15 REPORTS

Another alumnus, C. E. Griffith '15, reports as follows:

On a visit to China last spring, 1929, I saw and heard that the country is passing through one of the worst crises in its recent history. The nationalist government has shown signs of real strength. One of the most competent observers, Lester K. Little, '14, now deputy-Commissioner of Chinese customs in Shanghai, told me that if the Nationalist Government can weather the civil warfare and a possible conflict with Russia, it is confidently believed that there is a real promise for stabilization and unification of China. The present government, despite every sort of disturbing internal dissention, is proceeding with nation-wide programs of reform and education which are bound to produce lasting benefits. Therefore, the maintenance of so valuable a

Ta-Te-Tung

DARTMOUTH ALUMNI MAGAZINE | MARCH 1930

Dartmouth Alumni Magazine

CONTENTS *for March*, 1930

Eugene Francis Clark — *Frontispiece* — 310
Editorial Comment — 311
Following Through—Another Year of the Fund—The Focus of the College—Scholarship Then and Now—Small Alumni Meetings
Dartmouth's Intellectual Life — 317
The Department of Sociology
By Estelle B. Wisely
Ta-Te-Tung — 319
Dartmouth in China—A Symposium
Dartmouth Takes Second in Magazine Competition — 324
Football at Dartmouth Since the War — 325
By Fanny P. Richardson
A Day in a German Camp — 329
Translated by Eugene F. Clark
An Interesting Chaata Letter *By Herbert D. Foster* — 331
How Carnival is Run *By Craig Thorn* — 332
Eugene Francis Clark — 333
February News of the College — 336
Following the Big Green Teams — 339
The Undergraduate Chair — 341
Books by Dartmouth Men — 344
The Faculty Finds These Books Interesting — 345
Letters to the Editor — 346
Alumni Notes — 348
Sundogs—News from the Associations and Classes

Newcomers Among Our Contributors

Reprinted from the Dartmouth Alumni Magazine Archive

https://archive.dartmouthalumnimagazine.com/article/19300301008/print