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CHINESE
CHIMES

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“WHITHER?”

1930

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June

THE CHINESE CHIMES.

Dedicated to the proposition that the world needs more harmony.

Paotingfu, China - June, 1930.

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XX

WHETHER?

Several weeks ago we received from a friend in America a letter in which we found this question, "Is poor old China headed in the right direction?" Being Yankees we had thought to revert to our type and answer that question by propounding one for our Yankee friend to answer first: "Is care-free America headed in the right direction?" But it takes time for letters to travel to America and return so we have changed from "Yankese" to Chinese and compromised by deciding to jot down some of the thoughts that have occupied our attention recently and explain a little what we mean by our inquiry about America's destiny, leaving our friend, and other friends who chance to read this issue of the Chimes, to come to their own conclusion as to the direction in which these two sister nations are headed. Remember, however, that according to Einstein all direction is relative.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN CHINA.

As you are probably all aware, there is taking place in China another serious civil(?) war. (The question mark indicates our indecision as to whether to use "civil", "uncivil", or "personal") The fact is that Yen Hsi Shan (the so-called model Governor of Shansi) and Feng Yü Hsiang (the once-called Christian General) have united forces to oust Chiang Kai Shih from his lofty position as Chairman of the highest "Yuan" (committee) in the present complicated organization known as the Chinese National Government.

The "rebels" are making it a very personal affair and state that as soon as Chiang gets out, or is ousted, they will stop fighting. One might suppose that from all that has been heard from and about the "Kuomintang" (National Party) that it would have some say in such affairs but the present situation reveals the important fact that the militarists are still in control of China and like other living beings they are face to face with the important problem of self-preservation.

What will be the outcome of this struggle? Don't ask us. Will Yen, Feng and their allies be able to work together if they succeed in driving out Chiang? We don't know. We do know, however, that the political situation isn't the whole Chinese show. There are other factors and forces at work in China which are just as important as indicators of the direction in which China is moving as is the military situation, even if they do not occupy as much space in the newspapers.

ANOTHER YEAR'S WORK COMPLETED.

We have recently written an annual report of the work of the Paotingfu American Board station and our review of what was accomplished was to us an encouraging experience.

In spite of the fact that we had to cut down our evangelistic staff last year, because of shortage of funds, there were 225⁷ additions to the church roll by baptism and 509 by probation. We doubled our hospital staff of doctors by adding one. Our experiment of running a co-educational Middle School was most encouraging. We

were able to pay off over \$7000 Mex. on our school building debt and as this was more than came from America for the running expenses of the school it really means that the total cost of running a school of 500 students for the whole year was met by the student fees, contributions amounting to \$1380 Mex. from the faculty and a few more hundreds of dollars from friends in China. We can't do it again, however, for the salaries of the teachers must be raised and we can't ask them to contribute to the school as they did last year.

A gift of \$9200 gold from the American Board enabled us to construct a twelve-room recitation building that has been a great relief to the crowded conditions that formerly existed in the school. We wonder whether with \$9200 in America one could put up a durable and attractive brick building to accommodate 500 students for all their preparation and recitation work in a five-year course, provide a science lecture hall and a spacious rest room for fifteen teachers. That is what we were able to do in Paotingfu and we believe that if the donor could visit the building for one day she would be convinced that such investments in China at present are paying large dividends. There were sixteen girls and sixty-four boys in the graduating class this year.

But our satisfaction with the year's work in the school is not merely because we have a new building. In the spring there was a Christian Student Retreat held in Paotingfu for three days which was attended by about seventy students. Fifteen of them were from our school and after the retreat these fifteen, and some other students, organized a Christian Fellowship in the school which has since then been holding regular services of worship and discussion on Sunday mornings. At the last communion service of the year six boys and three girls from the student body united with the church and later some other students decided to become Christians and registered their names as enquirers. There have been three or four volunteer Bible classes during the year and the meetings of the C.

E. Society have been well attended by the students.

Remember that this is in a school that is registered with the Chinese Government which will permit no religious services or instruction. We have gotten around that difficulty by having the religious meetings in our missionary homes. This spontaneous interest in religion has been very encouraging to us and reports that have come from other places in China lead us to believe that Chinese students are looking to religion for a solution to their problems, and the problems of their country, as they have never done before.

HOW ABOUT AMERICA?

One reason why we raise this question at this time is that we have been getting reports from various sources that mission boards are forced to retrench because they can't get funds with which to carry on the work that has been started, say nothing of opening new work. Our funds from the American Board for general work purposes for the year 1930 were reduced 10% and we have been warned that there probably will be a further 5% cut for next year. We can't help wondering what effect this curtailing of gifts for work in other lands is going to have on America. So far as we can learn this reduction of mission funds isn't due to a lack of wealth, even among church people. There seems to be a good supply available for church buildings at home. Does it mean, then, that there is a lack of interest in religion on the part of American church members?

We once read a statement to the effect that the President of Brazil had expressed himself as believing that the reason why North America had progressed more rapidly than South America since the white man came to those two continents was largely due to the fact that the white man had gone to South America in search of Gold while the white man went to North America in search of God. Those two words have a marked similarity in print but when they represent the goal towards which a nation is headed they are as dissimilar as "up" and "down", "in" and "out", "forward" and "backward", "development" and "deterioration".

At the annual meeting of the Promotional Board of our North China Mission this spring no little time was spent in discussing the question of how we can meet the crisis in our work caused by the 15% cut that is threatening us. We finally decided (wisely, we believe) to appoint a special committee which shall make a thorough study of all our work and make suggestions as to where cuts can be made with the least possible loss to the cause for which we work.

It is only as one understands the economic pressure under which Chinese Christians are laboring that he can realize how difficult this problem of reduction really is. If sacrifice is a Christian virtue, and there can be no doubt that it is, we wonder who is most worthy of being called "Christian", - the American church member who can, but doesn't, help lift the heavy burden which rests on the shoulders of church members in other lands, or the ones who are bearing these heavy burdens. It is because we believe that the former class would really want to help the latter class if they knew the real conditions that we are going to tell you of a specific case that exists very near to us.

The principal of our Pekingfu American Board Middle School, Mr. Yang Sheng Wu, lost his father when he was a small boy. His mother, who has been our most efficient Bible woman for many years on a salary that a scrub woman in America would scorn, (at the present rate of exchange she gets less than \$5.00 Gold a month) has managed to raise and educate her three children. Sheng Wu, the eldest child had to borrow some money to get thru Yenching University but he did excellent work there and after graduation he was offered important positions with a much larger salary than we could afford to pay him in Pekingfu. He came to us, however, and accepted our offer of \$40.00 Mex. a month (at that time this was the equivalent of about \$20.00 Gold). Even on that salary he set to work to help his younger brother through Commercial College and it has meant that instead of paying off his college debt he has had to borrow more

money. Knowing that he could get work that would pay him more than we can afford to give Mr. Yang recently resigned from his position as principal of our school. The Board of Managers refused to accept his resignation and raised his salary from \$75.00 Mex to \$100.00 Mex. a month. This raise was also to be retro-active so as to mean a payment of about \$700.00 to Mr. Yang for back salary. This he said he could not accept. He even refused to accept anything above \$80.00 Mex. (the equivalent of a little over \$20.00 Gold at present) since that is the salary that the dean of the school is to receive this next year. The school still has a debt of \$3000.00 Mex. on its buildings and so long as that debt exists Mr. Yang is not willing to have his salary raised so as to enable him to pay off his own personal debts. We wonder whether church members in America would permit their Mission Boards to make cuts in their foreign work if they really understood what it means on the foreign field.

A SUGGESTION FOR BETTER UNDERSTANDING.

We feel confident that the present difficulty of raising funds in America for work in foreign lands is due partly to a lack of information of just what the real situation is on the foreign field. Newspapers play an important part in the information that the average American possesses regarding conditions in foreign lands, but newspapers do not present a true picture of things as they are. There are important movements taking place, and mighty forces for righteousness at work in China, which newspapers never mention.

How can a Christian in America, or a young missionary in China, find out what these movements and forces are? Our suggestion is that he subscribe for the Chinese Recorder. This is a monthly journal which is considered by such authorities as Prof. D. J. Fleming of Union Seminary, and Prof. Kenneth Scott Latourette of Yale, to be second to none among the missionary periodicals. We American "Boarders" have a particular pride in the Recorder because the Editor, Dr. Frank Rawlinson, is a member of our North China

Mission. If you want something to balance your mental diet that the newspapers feed you, and something that will provide real food for thought try the Recorder. It only costs \$3.00 Gold a year in America, and \$5.00 Mex. in China and is published at 23 Yuen Ming Yuen Road, Shanghai.

JUST AMONG OURSELVES.

But, of course, the Chinese Recorder doesn't carry much news of the private life of the staff of the Chinese Chimes, and some of our readers have, on occasion, expressed an interest in such matters.

About the most unusual phase of our life during the last year is our experience with thieves. Last summer at Peitaihe one came into our dressing room while we were asleep on the porch and carried away a good supply of our wardrobe. A few weeks ago some one broke the window of the Pretender's study and carried away a section of a filing cabinet in which money has sometimes been kept. The cabinet was broken open in the west garden and important papers were left on the ground. The cabinet was carried away but aside from that the only things we lost were some American dimes and some rare postage stamps which the younger members of the staff were saving for their collections.

Although our third experience with thieves was rather indirect, it revealed to us what the Chinese citizen is constantly up against for it is the type of disorderly conduct that occurs constantly. Fortunately for us, we fared better than most natives do. We loaned our bicycle to our cook so that he could ride to his home which is about 20 miles east of Paotingfu. On the road he overtook a soldier who was carrying a stick. The latter ordered the cook to stop and when he did so he was told that he, the cook, was a thief. "For," said the soldier, "that bicycle was stolen in Paoting-

fu and you must come along to the police station with me". There was nothing else to do so the cook had to do as he was told. (Remember that we have stated before that the militarists control China.) After being taken from one village to another they finally came to the home of a relative of the soldier. Here the cook has his hands tied behind his back and was made to kotow to the people standing around. While he was kotowing the soldier beat him with the stick which he carried. Fortunately, the cook learned there what the soldier's name was and where he lived.

On the way back to Paotingfu the soldier mounted the bicycle and rode away. That was the last of the bicycle but by going to the home of the soldier's father we were able to collect \$32.00 Mex. so our loss was not heavy. A new bicycle will cost about \$70.00 but since we had ridden the old one for more than four years it had already paid for itself.

We understand that there is a belief that misfortunes come in triplicates and we hope it proves true in the case of thieves.

AN EXPERIMENT WITH COLONIZATION.

In order to improve the economic condition of some of the Chinese families who live in the crowder area in which we carry on our work we arranged this spring for some of them to go to Manchuria as colonists. After we had secured free passage on the railways, and free food along the way we had to feed them (261 men, women and children) for ten days in Paotingfu, because the militarists commandeered the train on which the colonists were to travel to Fengtai, near Peking. We managed that all right and it really was a thrilling sight to see these families come in from the country where flood, war and famine have suppressed them for years, bringing with them their rolls of bedding and clothes and the few other personal belongings that they could comfortably carry with them. They had pulled up stakes from their ancestral homes and like Abraham of old were starting out to find a Promised Land.

We finally tired of waiting for the train that had been commandeered and bought half fare railway tickets for the colonists to go to Fengtai. From there free passage was secured and in order to help them on the way and after they reached Manchuria we sent along two evangelists. All went well so long as everything was being done for them but when they reached their destination the attractions of a frontier region disappeared and inspite of the fact that we had told them not to go if they were not willing to endure hardship for a few years they became so homesick that they refused to let the evangelists return to Paotingfu unless we sent up money so they could come back with them! In other words, the evangelists were held as hostages, so they telegraphed for the Pretender to come to their rescue. That was out of the question but he did go to Peking to see what could be done from there towards getting the evangelists released. Soon after he reached Peking another telegram came from Harbin stating that the evangelists had escaped from their captors, but had been obliged to leave their clothes and bedding behind. We are expecting them back in Paotingfu soon and shall be glad to learn more in detail of their experiences.

We have had letters from one family that went as colonists stating that the trouble was caused by a few women. The daughter of this family wrote that she had found an excellent position as a teacher, her father had a good job and as she expressed it the whole family felt as if they had reached "Heaven". We hope that those who were disappointed will show the real pioneer spirit and make good in this important section of the world to which millions of Chinese immigrants have gone during the last few years. We hope to get letters from the people whom we helped to go and in that way we shall know better whether to repeat the experiment again.

WHITHER?

We close, as we began, with the important questions

"Whither China? Whither America?" and although we do not attempt an answer we do recall that when Abraham made his famous journey he set out not knowing whither he went. As we have been mulling over these questions it seemed to us that it doesn't matter much where China and America are going, if they are going with God; but wherever they go they are headed in the wrong direction, if they are going without God.

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AN UNFINISHED PARABLE.

A certain nation went down from Antiquity to Futurity and fell among other nations which stripped her of political autonomy and left her in a state of financial weakness and economic depression.

And by chance there came down a certain sister nation, whose reputation for charity and helpfulness to weaker nations was of world renown. Although her wealth was greater than that of any other nation, her life had been established on a spiritual basis which taught that all nations are of one body and when one nation suffers the whole body suffers. When she saw the nation that had been left by the roadside she was moved with pity -----

A PRAYER.

O Thou who hast given to our nation more of the world's riches than to any other, and who hast placed us in such favorable circumstances among the nations of the world, that they have come to look to us as their model and inspiration, grant us wisdom, we beseech Thee, that we may so use all that Thou hast so bountifully bestowed upon us, that when the day of reckoning shall dawn, and we are called upon to give an account of our stewardship, we may hear Thee say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

Amcn.