

THE CHINESE CHIMES.

Snap-shot Number.

Dedicated to the proposition that the world needs more harmony.

Paotingfu, China, November, 1928.

The shortness of the days-due not to the position of the sun, but to the numerous duties that are calling for attention-compels us to try a snap-shot, instead of a time exposure, if we are going to get anything to our distant friends before December 25th. This is good luck for the readers since you will not have to spend much time reading a long sheet.

The Pretender is snapping the shutter in Peking, or if we are to be patriotic and up-to date, Peiping, where he is attending to various errands and hoping to see our Japanese friend whom we have mentioned in the Chimes before, Dr. Iwao Awusawa. He is due to arrive in Peiping November 18 with Dr. Albert Thomas, Director of the International labor Bureau at Geneva. It is possible that he may go to Paotingfu but for fear that he would not get there the Pretender decided to time his trip to Peiping so as to be there November 18. He has to return to Paotingfu the next day and will be accompanied by Dr. and Mrs. Henry Hodgkin and Rowland Cross. As some of you know Dr. Hodgkin is a secretary of the National Christian Council. He is going to hold a "retreat" in Paotingfu and then go to several places in Shansi for the same purpose. He has held such meetings in other places in China and has a reputation for being very successful along that line, as well as along many other lines. The subject for the retreat in Paotingfu is Worship and we need help on that point. We are looking forward to the meetings and expect to derive much benefit from them.

Speaking of visitors reminds us that we have had several in Paotingfu this autumn who have brought messages that may be of interest to our readers. A few weeks ago Mr. Robert Service of the Y. M. C. A. National Committee visited us after having spent several days in the province of Honan. He was very favorably impressed with the experiments that Feng Yu Hsiang is carrying on in that place and we shall watch them with much interest. Everyone in Honan is urged to live frugally and promote home industries. No one is supposed to wear silk garments and Mr. Service reported that he saw only two people in the city of Kaifeng dressed in silk—they were both women. Many who were dressed in cotton wore on their arms bands on which were written the words, "I promise to buy native goods." This is one way of promoting the Japanese boycott and it seems to us a more sensible way than fining people for buying or selling Japanese goods, as is being done in some places.

Model tenements are being built in the cities of Honan and are given to poor people rent free. With each group of dwellings there is a large hall where the people meet for lectures and instruction in the principles of the new government. Every child between six and sixteen is obliged to attend school and classes are provided for older people who wish to get some education. Every family is required to weave cloth and various reforms are being pushed. A great deal of printed material is pasted on walls and in public places and three mottoes which appear at the entrance of the villages read, "Unbind your feet", "Bob your hair" and "Stop smoking opium".

All employees of the government are required to be up by six in the morning and anyone caught in bed after that time is given a black mark. Three such black marks may send a man to prison. We wonder how such "Paternalism" and "Imperialism" will be welcomed in Chinese villages where Democracy has prevailed for centuries but perhaps it is just what is needed to arouse the masses.

Mr. Service quoted someone who said that some people say that General Feng is no longer a Christian but he said that he challenges such people to name anyone who is a Christian if Feng isn't. Perhaps it depends on what one means by being a Christian. We sometimes wonder what it means and ask ourselves whether we have very much right for calling ourselves Christian. Certainly "idealistic activity" is common in Honan and the influence of Feng Yu Hsiang is being felt in a remarkable way. Taxes are high and business is poor but Mr. Service said that he talked with business men who told him that they do not object to paying high taxes so long as the money is used to improve conditions in the province instead of lining the pockets of some militarist. Civil and military officials are getting very low salaries but some of them said that because they live much simpler lives they are able to save as much or more than they did when they received larger salaries.

Another visitor who made a lasting impression in Paotingfu was one of her own sons, Mr. Chou Fu Keng. He is a returned student from America and is now with the American Bible Society in Peiping. He brought along some very interesting charts with which he illustrated his talks and we worked him good and hard. At a prayer meeting which was held in our home he gave his first talk and he remained with us for the night. The next morning he spoke to a Bible class of students in our boys' school which had just organized a week before. There were 38 the first Sunday and the morning on which Mr. Chou spoke there were nearly 50. After the morning church service, which was conducted by the girls' school students, Mr. Chou spoke to the Sunday school and a large number saw his charts as they passed out of the church from the first service. After lunch he first spoke in our city chapel and later in the Presbyterian city chapel. Finally he had the foreign service at the west suburb.

At this last service he had some of us guessing as to where he was going to lead us by saying that there are two experiments being tried in Paotingfu. He is a Presbyterian and worked in their city chapel in Paotingfu several years ago. Although I cannot quote him exactly he said in substance, "Here in this suburb you do not believe in registering your schools (our boys' school is registered and steps have been taken to get the girls' school registered). You believe in sticking to the old creeds and in holding the old forms of worship. This afternoon I attended a service in the Presbyterian chapel. It was the same old type of service that we had years ago. This morning I attended the church service in the south suburb at which the girls in the school put on a play. The people in that suburb have turned things over to the young people for them to try to find for themselves some satisfactory way of expressing their religious life. Sometimes the methods that are used by one group seem quite undesirable to the other group but no matter what method you use as you go about day by day doing your various forms of work you are trying to achieve the same result. You have found in Christianity something that helps you; you

believe that humanity is the same everywhere and therefore what has helped you can help the people with whom you work”.

He then went on to say that he had heard several missionaries say during the last year or two that they didn't know if they ought to stay in China since they were apparently not wanted. He said it isn't necessary for you to feel that you are wanted, if you feel that you are needed. If you feel that what you have found in Christianity can help the Chinese people it is not necessary for them to want you. Missionaries have never been invited to foreign countries. To be sure many would not agree with him on this point but we were interested to have him put it that way.

In closing he gave us some illustrations of present conditions that should encourage us. He said that a large number of the people who are doing things most worth while in China now are those who have been in contact with Christianity, whether they call themselves Christian or not. It really is noticeable how many such people are being given places of importance by the National government. Just recently the vice president of Yenching University was made vice minister of education in the National government.

A little later we expect to have two other visitors in Paotingfu, Mr. Harry Price and Dr. Miao, who are traveling for the Christian Educational Association, if I remember correctly. They are in Peking now and have just been in Manchuria. They report that there are interesting things taking place in Manchuria now and students are making demands which the government has to heed. Just recently the paper stated that an important official was removed from office because of the demands made by the students. Chang Tso-lin was able to hold down the lid while he ruled that province but the lid is off now and things are moving rapidly, whereto no one knows. Chang Hsueh-liang has been given an important place in the National government and he is trying to get that government to handle the problem of Japan's position in Manchuria. Trains have at last started to run between Mukden and Peiping again and with closer connections that part of the country will now probably play a more important part in the affairs of the nation.

Peiping is terribly depressed because of the moving of the capital to Nanking. Thousands of shops have gone out of business and many people are out of work. There are always many people on the verge of starvation here but according to reports conditions are much worse than usual this winter. The Salvation Army has opened porridge kitchens and other organizations have, or are going to do likewise.

I suppose that if we could get snap-shots of other parts of China we would find that all over the country great changes are taking place. Some people who view these conditions feel that things are slipping down hill, others feel that there is more reason for hope than there has been for a long time. The "San Min Chu I" (The Three Principles of Dr. Sun Yat Sen) are being studied and taught all over the country and in some ways it is used like a bible. Students are told that these principles can save China and many of them who don't know much about economics or international relationships seem to think that these principles have miraculous powers so that the salvation of their country will be an easy task. We are not quite so optimistic on that point, though we are glad to see how many of the young patriots of the country are being stirred deeply and have

almost a religious zeal with which they enter into the work of saving their country. There is much in the whole movement that savors of Russia but what does that matter so long as it gets young people to sacrifice their own interests for the higher interests of the country.

As a concrete example let us mention the principal of our boys' school in Paotingfu. He has always been a hard working Christian leader but this fall he joined the Kuomintang (The People's Party) and the effect on him has been very noticeable. He is now eating with the students, wearing the same simple clothes that they wear and taking pick and shovel to work with them in repairing roads and building playgrounds. He has given the school a motto of four characters which mean "Diligence, Frugality, Humility and Perseverance", and he realizes that words mean nothing unless they are made real through actual application in life. One day this fall the country magistrate called on us and we took him over to visit the boys school. We found the principal out in the street with a pick in his hands helping a group of boys to repair the public highway. I doubt if the magistrate ever saw a Chinese principal before doing such work and he showed a keen interest in the various departments of the school and spent more than an hour looking over the place.

We believe that this young man is but typical of many young Chinese leaders and we have to ask ourselves whether the Christian church can hold the highest loyalty of such people. Why has the church not been able to command the same spirit of industry, humility, frugality and perseverance? Should we not ask ourselves if it isn't time for the church to lift higher than ever the ideals for which Christianity stands? It certainly doesn't seem to us that this is the time for the church to sit tight or close her doors, rather it is time for us to press forward. If the Kuomintang can command loyalty we must do so even more; if they can command selfsacrifice we must renew our allegiance to Him who taught the real meaning of sacrifice. Meanwhile perhaps it will help us if we realize that much that is operating in China today is new; no one knows how long it will last. We have nearly two thousand years of history back of our movement.

This may seem to our readers more like a moving picture —taken with a stuttering camera —than a snap-shot; but if so it is all the more like the situation in which we live. New currents of life are in motion here, new experiments are being tried. The scene moves so rapidly and so irregularly that we hardly know what to think of some of the new sights and experiences. We are trying to learn to swim in the new stream and although we may have to move with the current at times we hope that when the tide has retreated we shall find that we are not far from solid ground.

Whether this reaches our readers early or late we hope that it brings to them the same gladness with which we send it out. We are glad that we can be together in our home again at this happy time of the year; we are glad to be connected with a movement that knows no limits of class, nationality, race or color; we are very glad that there is such a lull in the military strife in China as we again approach the birthday of the Prince of Peace.

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