

THE CHINESE RECORDER AND MISSIONARY JOURNAL

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Editorial

THAT one-half of the missionaries of three provinces were willing to drop their work and come together, many of them at no small outlay of time and money, to attend the West China Conference at Chentu last January, furnishes abundant proof of the high estimate which was placed in advance upon the value of this gathering by those most interested in it. That this estimate has been fully justified, is evidenced by the reports which our readers will find elsewhere in this issue. Missionaries of at least ten different denominations met together and discussed the most difficult problems of mission policy on broad lines, dealing chiefly with the main guiding principles of the work, and in nearly every matter reached practically unanimous decisions. Throughout the proceedings there was the utmost harmony. The Chentu Conference may be looked upon in the light of an adjourned meeting of the Shanghai Conference. At the later gathering the ideals of the earlier meeting were brought to a clearer focus in plans for co-operative endeavour which for comprehensiveness of outline and thoroughness of detail doubtless surpass anything that has ever before been accomplished in China. What the Shanghai Conference began, the Chentu Conference has carried on to a still higher degree of perfection.

statement which the search-light has presumably revealed. "There are no homes in heathendom. Even the word 'home' in the native hieroglyphics is made up of 'cover' and 'hog' which, when placed together, naturally signify a 'pig-sty.' No higher critic would dare to assail the correctness of this derivation." Now, though I am not a higher critic, I am bold enough to assail, etc. That derivation is an old 'chestnut,' good enough for a poor joke at the expense of China. Everyone who studies the radicals has made the amusing discovery. But it is high time that serious authors should cease resurrecting it for the benefit of foreign readers.

In the first place, the original meaning is not 'home,' but 'family,' as is proved by its use in the earliest Chinese writings. In order to denote 'home,' a dwelling, the addition of 室 is necessary. We have therefore to suppose the original inventor of the character to have been struck with the resemblance between his family and a litter of pigs and to have invented accordingly! I give him credit for a little more sense than to revile his family and every succeeding family for millenniums, though they all seem to have adopted the new name for themselves without demur!!

In the next place the *original* form of writing this character was not the same as now, a fact which amateur etymologists so often forget. Men like Dr. Giles give up Chinese etymology as a hopeless business. (See his preface to Dictionary, p. ix). But the 六書故 makes as good a guess at this word as possible. It says: 作家人所合也从宀三人聚一室之義也平古族字平譌爲家. Those interested should

study the original forms of characters as shown on bells, pots, etc., of the Shang and Chow dynasties, which are still preserved in various Chinese books on the subject.

D.

THE INDOOR AND OUTDOOR
STAFF IN THE KIANGNAN.

To the Editor of

"THE CHINESE RECORDER."

DEAR SIR: In the portion of the Kiangsu province south of the Yangtze, the cities of Shanghai, Soochow, Nanking, Chinkiang, Sunkiang, Kiangyin, Wusih and Changchow are occupied by foreign missionaries, and perchance also Tsingp'u by one lady. To give round numbers which are proximately correct and easily remembered there are about 360 missionaries, of whom one-half reside in Shanghai, one-sixth in Soochow and Nanking each, one-twelfth in Chinkiang and one-twelfth in the other cities. In the eastern metropolis are centred the great agencies and managing councils which either aid or direct a considerable part of the work carried on in the provinces. This is specially true of the literary and publishing departments. In the three great cities are concentrated much of the high educational work of the entire province, so we would naturally expect the number of bishops, directors and superintendents; presidents, professors and teachers; translators, editors and agents to be large. The facts correspond with the theory and probably five-sixths of the entire force belong to the indoor staff. The influence of the literature distributed among fifty million readers; the training of several

thousand pupils in the universities, colleges and schools; and the medical aid given annually to two hundred thousand patients has a beneficent and sometimes a saving effect. Also many of the clergy in these departments of work preach with power and unction on the Sabbath, and not a few ladies give hours to the instruction of the benighted women of Sinim, and these, both men and women, aid no little in the evangelization of the twelve millions of the Kiangnan.

Yet only about sixty men and their wives, including a small company of noble unmarried women, are left to bring the Gospel to the people of twenty walled cities, four hundred market towns and ten thousand villages. These are assisted by a goodly number of native workers, some of whom have been trained in the schools. Comparatively little work is done west of the Grand Canal. Truly a heavy burden rests upon the outdoor staff.

The congregations in the cities were never larger, and new churches more capacious in size need to be built, and the services on the six days should correspond more with the holy sanctity of the worship on the Sabbath. In the towns large tea-shops can be

rented for forty or fifty cents for the evening and throngs gladly attend the evangelistic meetings. In the hamlets the peasants gather to hear either the foreign or the Chinese preacher. The reports from the native helpers in regard to how the people gladly listen, seem to have a touch of Apostolic days. The converts and true inquirers move along the lines of self-support. The gates are thrown wide open.

Not only is the *every-day preacher* kindly received, but also the single ladies find great and effectual doors for the hard task of teaching country women. Oh, that the Ladies' Home Societies would embrace this opportunity!

The beloved wife, who for near six and thirty years has laboured much in the Lord, goes regularly to church with either husband or son ten times a week and has charge of the "woman's side" and the woman's inquiry room. The writer, since the day of his arrival on these shores, has never so fully enjoyed preaching in city, town and country as during the last fall. This "joy of the Lord" in speaking of Christ and Him crucified rather indicates sympathetic hearing on the part of the dwellers on this great plain.

HAMPDEN C. DUBOSE.

Our Book Table.

The object of these Reviews is to give real information about books. Authors will help reviewers by sending with their books, price, original if any, or any other facts of interest. The custom of prefixing an English preface is excellent.

A Brief Sketch of the Life of Jessie M. Johnston, for eighteen years a missionary in Amoy. By her sisters, Meta and Lena, with a preface by her mother. Published by T. French Downie, Warwick Lane, London.

The subject of this little book was, in many respects, a beautiful type of the great majority of lady missionaries in China. "A minister's bairn," cultivated and consecrated, she did what she