


# The School of Tyrannus

OR

*Reaching the Masses by* 

 *Preaching and Colportage.*

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IN CHINESE: "The Street Chapel Pulpit," or 200 Sermons for the Heathen; "The Illustrated Life of Christ" (with no picture of our Lord); "The Catechism of the Three Religions;" "The Pictorial Sheet Tract Series;" "Introductions to the Gospels," etc., etc.

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*The School of Tyrannus: or Reaching the Masses by  
Preaching and Colportage.\**

BY REV. HAMPDEN C. DUBOSE, D.D.

Acts xix, 9, 10.—“*Disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus. And this continued by the space of two years: so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the Word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.*”

THE scene presented to us in the text was at Ephesus, the principal city of Asia Minor and the seat of one of the seven churches of Asia. If we take the section between the Yangtse and the Hangchow Bay and consider Shanghai as Ephesus, and Soochow, Kashing and Sunkiang as Smyrna, Sardis and Laodicea, we shall have a bird's eye view of the field of apostolic labors on the continent where now we make our residence. At Ephesus Paul held a protracted meeting for two years and three months, or, as he says to the Presbyters assembled at Miletus, “Remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.” In this rich, powerful and voluptuous city, was to be seen the great temple, 420 feet in length and 220 in breadth, covering just half a block, and requiring a century for its construction: its majestic roof upheld by seventy marble pillars, carved by Grecian sculptors and presented by the kings of the neighboring countries: it stood, the grandest monument of heathenism upon the earth, one of the seven wonders of the world, where was enshrined the great goddess Diana, “whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.”

Paul visited Ephesus during his second missionary journey, but did not tarry. On his next visit he found a dozen Christians,

\*The Annual Sermon before the Chinese Tract Society, delivered in Union Church, Shanghai, January 24, 1897.

whom he asked, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" They answered, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." For three months he, the apostle to the Gentiles, laboured for the salvation of his own people and preached regularly in the synagogue, trying to persuade the chosen people that the Nazarene was indeed in truth the long-looked-for Messiah. "But when divers were hardened and believed not, but spoke evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them and separated the disciples."

Before this time, when the church at Jerusalem was worshipping in Solomon's porch, it is said that "by the hands of the  
**Miracles.** apostles many signs and wonders were wrought among the people, insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them." So now while he reasoned daily in the school of Tyrannus, "God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul, so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs and aprons, and the diseases departed from them and the evil spirits went out of them." Upon the apostolic banner were inscribed the words, "Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God."

The disciples at Ephesus were not simply a Christian brotherhood; they were an organized church or group of churches with their elders who ruled well, and when this body of Pres-  
**Organized Church.** byters afterwards assembled at Miletus to hear the parting words of him who had led them, once dead in trespasses and sins, into the grace of Christ, the scene was most touching; to behold the grey haired patriarchs kiss the weather-beaten forehead of the great apostle, and see the tears roll down their cheeks for the sorrow of their hearts that "they should see his face no more."

When we read the glowing words of the letter to the Ephesians—the most precious and loving, perhaps, of his smaller epistles—we feel assured the Augustinian doctrines there so clearly announced were the echo of the great sermons he preached in that mighty city.

We do not know why it was called "the school of one Tyrannus" or who Tyrannus was. We have no information whether it was a  
**Tyrannus.** Hebrew, or Greek, or Latin school. It is likely he was one of the noted teachers of philosophy at Ephesus, and his large hall may have been rented by the Christians and given to Paul for a preaching place. But what a change? Instead of lectures on Aristotle and Plato, or mornings with the Greek poets, the words of prayer and the voice of song were heard. The eloquent preacher told of a living

Saviour, and, in the power of his resurrection, offered eternal life to the citizens of this idolatrous city.

The sacred historian tells us he reasoned daily, not merely upon the Sabbath, or three times a week, but daily, like a doctor attending his clinic, or the merchant sitting at his desk.

**Daily.** He had his office hours. He was punctual in his appointments and regular in his services. The people knew where to find him, and at 11 o'clock and 3 o'clock if a stranger asked, "Can you, sir, tell me the way to the school of Tyrannus?" the answer was simply, "Follow the crowd."

His work was spiritual and nothing else. Paul might have opened a school of modern languages, for he spoke with more tongues than all the disciples—the greatest linguist that ever lived—but he preferred to follow the instructions of the Master, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded." In the synagogue he was disputing and persuading the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." Now it is said, "All they which dwelt in Asia, heard the Word of the Lord Jesus."? *Sweet employ to let men hear the Word of the Lord Jesus.* As the prophet proclaimed the Word of the Lord, the apostle heralded, "Hear ye the Word of the Lord Jesus!" His method of work was, with the Bible in hand, to hold forth the word of life. He reasoned with the gnostic and the agnostic; the atheist and the pantheist; the sceptic and the idolater! After prayer he conversed freely with those who sought the way of life. In this long residence he gave us the model of missionary work among the Gentiles.

Paul reached the masses by this daily preaching in his Gospel hall. Ephesus was the great metropolis, and both merchants and traders from the surrounding cities and provinces visited her marts. It was the Mecca of the West, and pilgrims by tens of thousands came to bow their heads at the sacred shrine of Diana, but learned in that school, which soon overshadowed the temple, of the mercy seat where they might kneel in reverent faith. Paul was at once the great Healer and the Great Preacher.

His ministry was attended with power. "So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed." Just as in Thessalonica it was said, "These that have turned the world upside down have come hither also." Or as in the temple at Jerusalem when one who had heard him at Ephesus cried, "Men of Israel, help: This is the man that teacheth all men everywhere."

But in this city, filled with crowds of astrologers, geomancers, diviners, soothsayers, phrenologists, fortune tellers, exorcists, witches and all that class who plied their lucrative avocations in the temples, markets and public places, on a certain day a strange sight was

beheld. What means this excited throng rushing through the streets? Who are these men with arms full of books passing by so quickly? Lo! those who have used "curious arts" are gathering their sacred scrolls in the public square, and amidst the shouts of the thronging thousands the bonfire illumines the heavens! Burning 50,000 pieces of silver! O! for that day in China.

Among the gifts so abundantly bestowed upon the apostle was the eloquent tongue. We have only synopsis of his great discourses left us, but they have served as models for pulpit orators since the Christian era. The grace with which he introduces himself to the audience, the adaptability of his speech, the hanging his theme on some felicitous circumstance, the pointed use of appropriate quotations, his masterly tact in presenting his arguments, the logic of his reasoning, the cogency of his appeals, the soul-earnestness of his manner, and, more than all, the transcendent claims of the truths he announced, fitted him for proclaiming salvation to the nations.

The text sets, before Paul the Preacher reached the masses of Asia. Missionary work may be grouped under two heads—the evangelistic and the personal—as our Lord both preached to the multitudes in public and taught His disciples in private. Or just as with the apostles: "And daily in the temple (the public) and in every house (the private) they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." If this evening we speak of the pulpit, we do not disparage the pastorate, if our theme is general evangelistic work, it is not to be inferred that we do not consider special individual work of prime importance, but it is not within the scope of our text.

When the Blessed Master offered Himself a sacrifice for sinful man and His voice was heard amidst the hosts of angels, "Lo, I come," He says by the mouth of His servant David, "I have preached righteousness in the great congregation."

The first assemblies of the saints were held under Moses "in the church in the wilderness." During a pastorate of forty years he continually gathered the people before the tabernacle of the congregation, and with a face that shone with the glory of God set before them the words of Jehovah. Especially, when just previous to His burial, He, once slow of speech, but now the old man eloquent delivered His farewell discourse, pronouncing blessings upon the faithful and denouncing curses upon the rebellious, do we behold the power of the pulpit conspicuously displayed.

During the time of the Judges the children of Israel assembled by tribes to hear sermons from men appointed by God. It is said of Samuel that he went from year to year in circuit to Bethel and Gilgal and Mizpeh. When "all Israel" were gathered at Mizpeh the people confessed their sins, and when in the

Church in the  
Wilderness.

Samuel.

exercise of his preserving providence, Jehovah "thundered with a great thunder upon the Philistines and discomfited them," the prophet set up a stone and called it Ebenezer. Afterwards at Gilgal the tens of thousands from the twelve tribes formally certified that his had been an honest government, the discourse was so pungent that the people cried, "Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God."

The Sweet Psalmist of Israel, the protégé of Samnel, who was taken from the sheep-cote to be ruler over God's people, sang, "Thy way, O! God, is in the sanctuary." "They have seen thy goings O God; even the goings of my God, my king, in the sanctuary." The habitations of God's people are dear to him, but it is said, "The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob." And where is it that men are converted? Listen to the sweet strains of David's harp; "And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her. . . . The Lord shall count when He writeth up His people, that this man was born there." "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!" At the great feasts the Jews assembled at Jerusalem by hundreds of thousands.

When we come to the prophetic era, Isaiah itinerated, walking barefoot three years through the land of Judah; and Jeremiah went to Egypt and addressed a great company of men and women. Elijah assembled the ten tribes on Carmel, and Ezra preached to the captives returning from Babylon. The people noted a prophet as a "holy man of God," and at his call met to hear the words of Jehovah that fell from his lips.

The Messenger who was to prepare Messiah's way lifted up his clarion voice in the wilderness, and it was a signal to the whole land to awake from its sleep, and John "spake to the multitudes that came forth to be baptized of him."

Of the Prince of Peace the patriarch Jacob 1700 years before spake, "And to Him shall the gathering of the people be." And what says the historian? "And there followed Him great multitudes from Galilee and from Decapolis and from Jerusalem, and from Judea and from beyond Jordan."

Could the houses hold the congregations when Jesus preached? Behold the four who "brought in a bed a man which was taken in a palsy?" They plead for room to let the sick be taken to the presence of the Master, but so dense was the crowd within and without, that they recognized the impossibility and resorted to tearing up the roof of the house! Why was the great sermon of Jesus delivered on the Mount? "And seeing the multitudes He went up into a mountain." When He gave the discourse containing

Jesus speaking to the Multitudes.

the seven parables why did He stand upon the head of a boat? It was because "great multitudes were gathered together." Behold the woman touching the hem of His garment! "Who touched me?" The disciples said, "Thou seest the multitude thronging thee." When the sight of blind Bartimeus was restored was Christ alone? The evangelist says, "He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great number of people." "What means this eager, anxious throng?" "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by." Why was it necessary for Zaccheus, who was little of stature, to climb up into the sycamore tree? It was because of the "press." If on one day there were four thousand, and on another five thousand, not including women and children, what was the size of those congregations? Behold the Christ riding into Jerusalem and the multitudes going before and that followed, crying Hosanna! Why did He say, "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest." The answer is, "And when He saw the multitudes He was moved with compassion." And what of the cross? "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." After His resurrection in one congregation there were five hundred brethren. If the missionary follows Jesus he must have the multitude to follow him.

The control of the masses by the man of Galilee has seldom been eclipsed in the world. Never did orator in Athens or Rome, London or Washington equal Him in holding spell-bound, from early morn till eve, the thousands who waited on His ministry. His voice, so clear, so majestic and so sweet, could be heard throughout the vast concourse, high above the wind in the trees on the mountain-side, or the dashing of the breakers on the seashore; and the wilderness and the solitary place rejoiced because of the words of wisdom, power, truth, pure love. The eloquence of Jesus is a theme worthy of classic hall and sacred tabernacle, and demands the special attention of the heralds of the cross in distant lands. Judea had been asleep for centuries amidst the splendors of the temple ritual, the doctors expounding the bare letter of the law—Oh! so cold and cheerless!—much as the Confucianists lecture in the temples on morality, when suddenly a great teacher arose and awoke the slumbering people of God as he unfolded the spiritual life of the kingdom of righteousness; and no journey was too long, or road too rough, that their ears might once hear the joyful notes of salvation from His lips.

And how do we find the state of the church in the time of the apostles? When Peter preached his first sermon three thousand of his audience were baptized; how many people were present? When the lame man was healed at the Beautiful Gate of the temple the thousands assembled for worship, or for

**Eloquence of  
the Master.**

**Apostolic Age.**

barter in the sacred courts, ran together to the apostles, and Peter preached again. Afterwards when the disciples were multiplied by thousands they assembled daily for preaching in the vast auditorium of the Eastern wing of the Temple, known as Solomon's porch.

The evangelist Philip upon the occasion of the first general persecution planted the banner of the cross in Samaria. He held great meetings, and the people, with one accord, gave heed "unto the things which he spake, and there was great joy in that city."

Antioch, the mother church of the Gentile branch of the followers of the Nazarene, is represented as the abode of prophets and teachers and of congregations baptized with the Holy Ghost; they were no doubt as strong in numbers as in faith and zeal.

Behold Paul and Barnabas at Lystra! So mighty was the impression they made that the wild cry was raised, "Jupiter and Mercury!" "Jupiter and Mercury!" While they were preaching, lo! a mighty throng appeared with shouting and clangor, led by a priest, with garlands to crown their heads and the blood of an ox to be shed in sacrifice! What silence as Paul preached on Natural Theology.

Or behold him at Athens standing amidst temples of Parian marble on the high-day of his missionary career, when theology asserted its superiority to philosophy; when the false had to bury its face in shame at the glorious light that flashed from the True; when heathenism with vice deified stood confronted by Christianity; and gods of stone were silent when Jehovah spake by the mouth of the great apostle to the Gentiles. And there were converts at Athens! Among them, one of the judges of the supreme court, and a celebrated lady, Damaris, by name.

Paul at  
Athens.

Again Paul preaches at Troy—from after supper till break of day—only stopping a few minutes to restore Eutyclus' life. It is said "there were many lights in the upper chamber," and is presumable there were many people.

Coming to ecclesiastical history, who are the great lights of the church but the mighty preachers who have enchained their audiences? Look at Chrysostom in his large church at Constantinople, and how the crowds on the Sabbath flocked to hear the sacred eloquence that poured from his golden mouth? Behold Luther! He preached: Germany was converted and a large part of Europe became Protestant! When the godly traveller reaches Geneva, is his desire first to sail upon the bosom of its beautiful lake or for his feet to stand upon the glaciers? Does he not first ask, "Let me see Calvin's pulpit"? And where was Wesley's power? The last century the Church of England had

Reformers.



lost the power of preaching: he raised his holy voice, and mighty assemblies were moved! Behold Whitfield at Moorfields!

The time fails me to speak of men like Spurgeon and Moody. Numbers of American towns erect large tabernacles to accommodate the audiences that assemble to hear the great evangelists. **Evangelists.** The power of the pulpit, with its hundreds of thousands of Gospel preachers, was never so great as to-day. In America at least three-fourths of the conversions, or perhaps a larger proportion, are doing the revival services. In our sister empire of Japan, where now not infrequently fifteen or eighteen hundred sit for hours in a hired theatre, listening to five or six speakers, we can at these meetings expect the Holy Ghost to descend with power.

Is not this the promise of the ascending Christ? "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you and ye shall be witnesses." "And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations." "The same came for a witness to bear witness of the light." "For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard." "To make these a minister and witness. Testifying both of the Jews and to the Greeks." "To testify of the Gospel of the grace of God." As a minister from Shantung, looking at a large street-chapel congregation which had listened attentively for an hour, said: "Well, I do not know which is the most important; to make converts or to testify."

The China Inland Mission flies the ensign "General Evangelization" at her mast-head. They have "one general and comprehensive plan for the evangelization of the whole of China: the aim of the mission being not to secure in a short time the largest number of converts for the C. I. M. in a limited area, but to bring about in the shortest time the evangelization of the whole empire, regarding it as of secondary importance by whom the sheaves may be garnered."

This is the governing principle of the medical work now carried on in China with its half-million patients per annum, and with few exceptions these patients go away with the medicine in one hand and a Gospel, tract or calendar in the other.

Along these lines the great Bible and Tract Societies carry on their operations. Paul opened the School of Tyrannus on the eastern shore of Asia Minor, but the "greater works" than even the apostolic era witnessed are performed in the western half of Asia proper.

"Freely ye have received, freely give" is their motto. They live for others. Their work is purely unselfish. The Tract Societies

dispel ignorance, but erect no school; they bring many souls to Christ, but organize no church; they disburse their benevolence with a liberal hand, but build up no denomination; "they labour abundantly, and other men enter into their labours; they scatter the good seed of the kingdom in the wide field of the world, and other hands gather in the harvests."

Working for others.

The Bible and Tract Societies stand with outstretched hand to aid every Christian worker. One who has resided for years in this patriarchal country, where the family relation is regarded so honorably, learns to appreciate the high value to be put on the heroic labors of a missionary wife. And the bond is closer in a heathen land, where in one cause are joined both heart and hand—the self-denying toil, the burning zeal, the undying love, as with a merry heart in season and out of season she aids the servant of the Most High in bearing the burden of the word of the Lord. This is the relation of the Bible and Tract Societies to the Church Boards, and as we see its good works—so beautiful to the eye—we can say, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord!"

Handmaid of the Lord.

When we look at the magnitude of the task undertaken by these Societies we catch a glimpse of the wealth of missionary enterprise. The National Bible Society of Scotland has put into circulation over two and one-third, the American Bible Society five and one-half, and the British and Foreign six and one-half million Bibles or Portions of the Bible; nearly fifteen millions in all. The Chinese Tract Society has, during eighteen years, issued about three million books and tracts. The Hankow Tract Society in fifteen years, ten and one-half million.

Magnitude of the Work.

The Presbyterian Mission Press in Shanghai in its early years, from 1844–57, printed nearly a million books. It now prints forty million pages annually. It is a safe figure to put down China colportage at forty millions, or one Gospel or tract for every ten of the people.

There is no country where paper and printing are so cheap as in China, and the printed page is a power in the land. What if Paul had had the press? The best missionaries in the land regard these Societies as an indispensable ally of successful evangelistic work. The Tract Society devotes its strength and resources to the creation and wide dissemination of the purest and most interesting Christian literature. They try to see that the books and tracts are prepared with scholarship, accuracy, and an agreeable facility of style.

The work of colportage in China a few decades ago was like the waters in Ezekiel's vision that issued from under the threshold

of the house of the Lord and flowed eastward, and when the man that had the line measured a thousand cubits, the waters were to the ankles ; and another thousand, to the knees ; and another thousand, to the loins—and that is the depth at this time—but yet another thousand cubits, and it will be “waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over.”

Colportage in the Middle Kingdom is on the rapid increase. I have watched with close interest the Bible sales from year to year.

*Increasing.* Ten years ago it was one-half million per annum ; six years ago, seven hundred thousand ; now, a million a year. The American Bible Society has published one and a half million Bibles or Portions of the Bible the last three years. The North-China Tract Society has recently doubled its sales. The Hankow Tract Society twelve years ago sold one-third of a million ; last year one and one-third million books and tracts.

The Chinese Tract Society commenced eighteen years ago, an infant in the nurse's arms ; now as light of foot as a wild roe this Asabel traverses Sinim's plains. Her circulation in 1894 was 280,000 ; in 1896 it was 634,000 ; that is, she doubled her business and 70,000 over. Her finance is in good condition, so when there is a wire from Chentu ;—“Martin's Evidences, 10,000 ; triennial examination ;”—in a month they are printed and shipped.

The book speaks of the Tree of Life. My native village is noted for the beauty of its princely live-oak—the Darlington oak—whose leaf does not wither ; its top arched like the sky above, and its wide extending arms affording refreshing shade ; it stands a giant amidst the forest evergreens of the Sunny South. The Chinese Tract Society is a tree of the Lord's planting, and as you sit under its luxuriant branches, try to see if you can count the leaves ? No wonder you exclaim, “Thousands upon thousands.” Yes over six million leaves upon the tree the last year, and “the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.”

To the thinking man there is no part of the British Museum so impressive as when he wanders down gallery after gallery and beholds the literary armies of the world, and at last walks into the Library with its circular shelves, tier upon tier, and beholds the spacious rotunda letting down the light from Heaven, he asks, “How many books in this Library ?” “Three million.” Three million ! well, let them be smaller volumes, do you know my hearers, that the Bible and Tract Societies annually distribute this Museum Library, and can China remain forever in the night ?

The American Bible Society has one hundred colporteurs, the Scotch Society one hundred and fifty and the British and Foreign two hundred.

Many of them travel on their boats by night and sell books by day, as the Master says, "Behold! a sower went forth to sow."

**Trials of the Colporteur.** He takes his stand in an open place, in an unworked town. The people gather around; he must control them with his eye, as a man does a tiger in a tropical forest, and when he retires he walks backward, keeping his eye on the men. He has to stand the taunts and jeers and scoffs of many who pass by. Again, in an unknown place, before he knows it, he is among a crowd of lewd fellows of the baser sort. He lives on the food the natives cook. If beyond the canals he sleeps on a clay bed in a Chinese inn. For weeks and months he sees no European. "In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers. . . in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness. . . in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger, and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness," they endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

But the joys in this kind of labor! The bright sunshine, the tonic of constant travel, the contented happy faces of the people, the merry witticisms passed among the crowd, the capital opportunity for mastering the vernacular, the surging masses in a new city and the rapidity with which they buy books, the interest with which many listen for the first time to the glad tidings, is both invigorating and inspiring. When the missionary finds that several hundred tracts can be sold in one day, it seems to be the most effective form of work he can do. Some months ago, summing up the Gospels and tracts I had sold, the number was found to be 200,000. I am often doubtful about my sermons, whether they are good or not, but these tracts were select ones, and surely some of them, as good seed, fell into good ground. This was done, here a little and there a little. Colportage is a converting agency.

**Converting Agency.** I will mention four instances that occurred in 1895. A minister near Ningpo says: "Twenty men and women have come to Christ by the influence of colporteurs." A missionary in southern Chinkiang says: "When asking the candidates where and from whom they first heard the Gospel about thirty replied that they had first heard it from the colporteur at some market town or village, or at their own door." Another writes: "Out of the seven churches near the Kaiping coal mines four have been opened through the labors of colporteurs." A venerable servant of Christ at Amoy writes: "Are you not delighted with the splendid work my men have done in the Hing-hwa district? Over 800 people brought into the church indirectly through them. That wonderful man—the preacher Hung Teh, by whose ministry this

awakening came about—learned the truth from the colporteurs.”

The influence of this class of workers, who preach as well as sell, is not to be judged by the number of Gospels disposed of. They are sent out as the seventy to announce the glad tidings that Jesus is coming.

The strangers present this evening noticed the courtesy shown them as they enter the portals of this sacred place; colporteurs are the ushers to the king's house on Zion's hill. Though some of the books are burned as paper written with the sacred character, yet well-thumbed copies of the Scriptures that have been kept for five, ten and fifteen years, are not infrequently found. The question has been asked, “I have read the New Testament, can you sell me the old?” What of these Bible readers? May there not be tens of thousands who confess Christ in their households, reject idolatrous rites and pray to the living and true God?

“The great wave of persecution that two years ago surged over the central part of China, has spread the knowledge of the truth and awakened in many minds a desire to search the Scriptures and see if this new doctrine be of men or of God.” From Kucheng's fountain the blood of the martyrs has been sprinkled over the Fukien province and by thousands converts were gathered in last year. We listen to the words of the Beloved Disciple, “Not by water only, but by water and blood.”

The Tract Societies come to a country filled with stereotyped mouldy classics, and dry moral essays—you read one and you have read them all—and furnish bright and attractive literature. Instead of the Imperial almanack, packed with idolatry and stamped by the government, they supply hundreds of thousands of calendars under the seal of Him who is the Lord of the Sabbath.

The Bible and Tract Societies at Hankow have entered a field inaccessible to other missionaries, the Hunan province, and scattered there hundreds of thousands of seeds of eternal truth. Just in the place where Chou Han has distributed far and wide his anti-foreign and infidel literature, the Spirit of the Lord has lifted up a standard against him. We bid these pioneers God-speed.

When I came to China five and twenty years ago there were seven thousand Christians; now seventy thousand. These the Chinese Tract Society supplies with bread. It hears the words, “Feed my sheep” and prints books and commentaries; it listens to the sweet voice, “Feed my lambs” and sends out its *Child's Paper* and pictorial series. It is in the first place the advance-guard with pick-axe digging out the foundations, and in the second, the mason with cement for the walls of living stones.

Would that the three thousand missionaries in the seventeen provinces, could be zealously effected always in the good work of colportage, and by this means come in touch with millions of their fellowmen, and also prove examples to the native church! Be light-bearers, not figuratively, but actually; always carrying Gospels or tracts wherever you go. Let the host of Israel know the strength and invincibility of its weapons, and arm itself to the conflict, taking in the right hand the sword of the spirit which is the Word of God, and as it is wielded with power it will flash the light of Heaven amidst the darkness of superstition and idolatry. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." In this well-watered plain how happy to hear the voice of the Master, "Blessed, thrice blessed, are ye that sow beside all waters." Unbelief desires to reap in the spring: faith looks to the autumn for the ripened harvest.

We are "to say among the heathen, The Lord reigneth." China has done her best to do without God. There are many signs of an intellectual ferment, and the literati are waking from the sleep of ages. But let us not mistake it—ours is still the religion of the despised Nazarene! Yet there is a spirit of inquiry, and men do read. As the shades of night are drawing round the closing hours of the nineteenth century, the sun of China's Bible and tract work is just rising in the eastern sky!

There was a man in the mission rank, who spoke the language as a native, had travelled through fourteen provinces and sold 300,000 Bibles or Gospels; far away in Szechuen, with **Mohlman** no medical aid in reach, but with two friends to cheer his dying hours, he passed from the labours and toils of earth. His body, inured to hardship and fatigue, was laid in the ground, but what an "abundant entrance" was given him into the palace of the King. The crown placed on Alexander's brow in the Kremlin, was but a peasant's hat compared with Mohlman's diadem, and as one from Shensi and another from Kwangsi arrives at the gates of the Celestial city, an angel flies from the throne and adds another star to his already flashing crown.

When the man of God beholds the forces of evil in this Satan-ridden empire he sometimes trembles! There was an awful hour in the life of Jesus. The Greeks had come to see Him, and when they stood in His presence, typical of the ingathering of the Gentiles, He said, "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily I say unto you except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die (as with many a Christian book) it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit. . . . Now is my soul troubled,

and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour."

"Father, glorify thy name." Then came there a voice that filled the spacious dome of the sky, so loud and majestic that some of the unbelieving said, "It thundered," and others whose eyes pierced within the veil, said, "An angel spake to Him."

"I have glorified it and will glorify it again."

Lord of nations, thou who didst glorify the Scriptures of the Old Testament by their fulfillment in the person of Christ, glorify now the New by leading the Chinese to see Jesus the Saviour of the world.

