

Presbyterian Survey

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# MISSIONARY SURVEY



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OCTOBER, 1922

CHRISTIAN  
EDUCATION  
AND  
MINISTERIAL  
RELIEF



Graduating Class of Woman's Bible Training School, June 12, 1922, Chunju, Korea. (See article on page 763.)

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN  
AT HOME AND ABROAD



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## POTENTIALITIES

L. T. NEWLAND, *Kwangju, Korea.*

WHENEVER an exhausted runner comes in from the desert hills with a few tiny specks of yellow dust a hundred staid and corn fed farmers are ready to endure untold hardships in order to find the rumored gold. Let some one dip up a cup of ill smelling, greasy water from a seep hole in a rock and a dozen companies proclaim in blazing ads that there is a fortune to be made in oil and immediately countless frugal men and women give up their hard-earned savings in the wild hope of striking it rich. In fact men will go into every corner of the globe, upon the faintest rumor of hidden but potential wealth.

Let a hard-working missionary send back a report of an unprecedented evangelistic wave, of villages eagerly crying out for the living Word and the Church is too often only politely interested or treats the matter as an overflow of a zealous but prejudiced brain.

Let me just sketch three places, three potential gold mines, that I can see all the time so that you at home may know what you are missing.

Lying on a hillside overlooking a river is the old and aristocratic city of Hwa-jin. For some reason the officials of the old days lived there. There are great trees by the river side and great bamboo groves to the back of the village, but the greatest of all is the pride and self-complacency of these villagers. In Korea a tile roof is a true brown stone front, and is very scarce. Yet many of the buildings in Hwa-jin are of brick and with a tile roof and most of these are rest houses at once proving the wealth and leisure of the town. The Gospel had never made the least impression on this place, indeed it was an old town when America was discovered, so they felt no need of our childish prattle. I have looked at the place from a distance and often wanted to have a try at their old conservatism but the chance never came.

One rainy Saturday about two months ago while I was examining candidates in another church, a young man came into my room and after much bowing made his errand known. He had come from Hwa-jin to ask me to come to his village the next Sunday afternoon and start a church! We have learned not to be surprised at anything in these stirring days and I gladly promised to go. So the next day I watered my Ford and rode down to see them. A large crowd came to the road to meet us and then we went over the hill to the village. Over a hundred all told were out to the meeting, mostly young men, for the old school is as yet untouched. I spent over an hour with them and found they had already selected a room and were ready to begin work that day.

Needless to say I was delighted at this opportunity and promised to do the best I could. Of course they should have instruction every day until they learn what Christianity really means and this new enthusiasm should be conserved. Yet the best I can do is to give them part time of a man already hard at work in another new field three miles away. There is no doubt that such a rich field as this should be worked hard from the first and so I thought wistfully of a school with a Christian teacher and leader—the very thing they most wanted, but a tithe goes so quickly and Mission money allows for no adoptions outside of one's regular family of churches.

Two days after this I tied my car by the side of the road and went over to Nam San. I had never been there before but they had been calling for help almost six months. Here I found another large, important and intelligent village of more than 200 houses. They had heard of a little group that had been started over three miles away and upon investigation they had decided the Gospel was what they needed. They

too had a meeting room prepared and the leading men of the village met with me and asked me to begin the work from the following Sabbath on. I again promised to do my best, but what is that! No church within ten miles of the place only two little new groups each over three miles away that have, neither one progressed enough to have baptized members yet. For over a month I had to mark time and then a friend sent out some money for the work and now I have a man giving part of his time to this place. These two men have strategic points of over 2,000 houses or 10,000 people to reach. All of these villages are awake and ready to be taught, but as yet they do not know the Way and in their unsettled condition are very liable to either follow after the many false teachings that are rapidly spreading over the land or of falling back into cold indifference. 10,000 ready to believe on Christ and two men to carry them the news. Do you think these two men can do it? Could two of you do it? They should be instructed every day and urged to a rapid growth until the danger of spiritual frost is over, then they can survive the scanty attention we can give them. 10,000 souls holding out hungry hands for the Bread of Life and two mediocre Koreans to give it to them. Truly the Church at home applies literally to us missionaries, the promise that two shall put 10,000 to flight.

Just once again. A few Sundays ago I went three miles to another big village that has sent an official delegation into my home three times, many letters and several unofficial pleaders. They want a church and a school and I found on that Sunday afternoon over 200 out to meet me, 200 alert, modern and intelligent Koreans, the larger part of them with their hair cut which is a sure sign that they have cut loose from their old superstitions. They have proven their interest in Christianity by raising the money and getting through me a Christian teacher.

They need now some place to meet in and I hope their zeal will carry them that far too, but it is asking a great deal of a people with only a vague idea as to what Christianity is to pay for their teacher, preacher and building before one of them has definitely decided to believe on Christ. Yet that is what this place will have to do if a church is started there. Perhaps in the providence of God the grain will stand until I can get around to the reaping. Who can tell?

These are but outstanding instances, there are dozens of other places just as open and just as eager as these are, but apparently there is no way to reach them. I already have 32 churches to look after and my family has a way of increasing by twins and triplets which is gratifying but does not ease the responsibility any. I try to give them as good supervision as possible but the number of men I can use is limited and with the wise plan of giving at least a year's instruction before we admit to baptism, these leaders can instruct only a limited number of new converts. This leaves literally hundreds that have awakened from the coma of heathenism and for a time cried out for help to sink back into the sleep of death.

If these gold mines are not worked when the gold lies near the surface, a storm of sin and reaction is liable to bury them far out of sight under the debris of idolatry and indifference, so that there will be years of discouraging, heart-breaking work clearing off the ground again before we can find the treasure.

If it is the duty of the Church to go in and take the world for Christ and if she should be as diligent in the Lord's business as she is in bettering her worldly condition, it then seems that to hear of such wonderful strikes of spiritual gold and silver should loosen a perfect stream of workers and money for the great Fall rush into the gold fields of Korea.