

FORTY YEARS AGO AND AFTER.

DR. A. SYDENSTRICKER.

A FEW months after our arrival in China we received information that the Rev. H. M. Houston, formerly a missionary at our Hangchow Station, was returning. This made it necessary for us to be transferred to Soochow, since Rev. H. C. DuBose was going home on furlough. Mr. Houston brought with him the first physician that ever came to China in connection with our mission, Dr. Fishburne, who was located in Hangchow. The writer was largely responsible for his coming to the field, but in an indirect way.

Mr. Houston was a man of great force of character, and the work at the Hangchow Station took on a new lease of life and activity from the time of his arrival. Unfortunately he was somewhat of an iconoclast with reference to boarding schools, and under his influence the boys' schools, both in Hangchow and Soochow were closed. But day schools, pastoral work, and the general evangelistic work were emphasized.

When Mr. DuBose returned in the winter of 1882, he brought with him the Rev. S. I. Woodbridge. This made an advance step possible. So in mid-winter a called meeting of the mission was convened in Hangchow to consider the question of opening a new station. Nanking was selected as the most suitable center, and Mr. Woodbridge, accompanied by Rev. G. W. Painter, was assigned to this new station. On account of Mr. Houston's having to return to the States and because of Mr. DuBose returning furlough, the writer was transferred back to Hangchow in order to equalize the forces on the field.

But at the annual meeting in the autumn of 1883, the new station was transferred to Chinkiang and Rev. J. W. Davis, from Soochow, was appointed to assist Mr. Woodbridge in opening a station in that city. Mr. Johnson, a young missionary, who had come out in the meanwhile and had been as-

signed to Nanking, was transferred to Hangchow, and during the winter of 1883, the Rev. H. M. Woods and wife came to the field and were located at Chinkiang. Thus, our mission had three stations finally located.

Meanwhile, the writer and his bride, never having been accustomed to malarial localities in the States and having been moved back and forth between Hangchow and Soochow, felt the effects of the rice fields and the mosquitoes. So they were permitted to go to North China in order to recuperate. While there the writer, in the first place acquired some knowledge of Northern Mandarin, then regularly visited the cities and towns contiguous to Chefoo. We had intended to remain in North China and the home committee had agreed to this arrangement. But in the interior the mission had appointed a committee to visit the region north of the Yangtse, which was done as far as Tsingkiangpu. This being the case, it was suggested to us that, instead of remaining in North China, we come down to Chinkiang with a view to enter the then unoccupied field extending from Chinkiang to the Shantung border.

This suggestion seemed to be a very good one. So with the approval of the mission, we came down to Chinkiang in the autumn of 1886, and at once began to explore the region north of the river. This resulted in the opening a station in Tsingkiangpu the following autumn, occupied by Rev. H. M. Woods and family and the writer and family. At that time there were no stations occupied between Soochow and Chinkiang, only a few missionaries at Chinkiang, who were just preparing for work. North of the river the C. I. M. had a station in Yangchow mainly for the purpose of preparing single ladies for work further in the interior. At Tsingkiangpu the same mission had an out-station with a few Christians. But the whole

country from Chinkiang to Shantung was unoccupied, with the exception above mentioned, and no regular work had been attempted or begun. The Rev. A. G. Jones, of the English Baptist Mission, Chingchowfu, Shantung, had made one or two visits to Suchowfu and the Pichow district in the northern end of the province. When the writer visited those places in the autumn of 1886 and spring of 1887, he found about four baptized Christians in Suchowfu and a few inquirers in Kuanhu in the Pichow district. But Mr. Jones was very much interested in that region and later gave the little work he had begun over into our care, since Tsingchowfu was too far away for his mission to continue work there.

Thus, T. K. P., as it is called, was our fourth station. From there we worked both to the north and south. But we were a feeble folk. We had scarcely any native help and progress was slow and difficult. Very few were received into the church and of those few still fewer proved satisfactory. The writer itinerated from T. K. P. regularly as far as Suchowfu and Kuanhu chiefly, in order to visit and teach the few inquirers. But the growth was very slow, these few formed only a nucleus for the future. Many were the long, hard overland journeys that he made, accompanied by a faithful Chinese evangelist, granted him by the Shantung Mission of the Northern Presbyterian Church. Rev. H. M. Woods early began regular work in Huaiianfu, visiting the city twice a week. Meanwhile our force was increased by the arrival of Dr. Edgar Woods and Miss Emerson.

In the meantime other stations were being opened south of the river. But it would be entirely unnecessary to describe all the details of their history. The opening of the work north of the river was the more important and interesting because it was virgin soil and pioneer work, an attempt to occupy a hitherto almost entirely neglected part of the country. By the year 1900 the China mission

had about nine stations occupied. It was then decided that it would be best to divide the field into two missions, and subsequent history has shown the wisdom of this division.

The mission force had by this time, of course, increased very largely. But the native membership and the native working force was still far in the rear. The writer has always insisted that one of the most important parts of our work is to develop a native working force. For a number of years he spent a good deal of leisure time in training and teaching such young men as seemed to give some promise of becoming useful as evangelists, until the Nanking school was opened. But this school even to this day has not yet supplied all the Chinese force that is needed.

A year after the field was divided, the North Kiangsu mission had 100 adult members and only one or two Chinese evangelists. It was exceedingly difficult to secure satisfactory Chinese help outside of our own mission, from the fact that all men of worth were in demand in other missions.

The writer worked in the northern end of the North Kiangsu field for ten years; then force of circumstances led him to Chinkiang. At that time there were ten adult members of the church at Chinkiang station and only a small amount of Chinese help. One of the first things that we undertook was to prepare more Chinese for evangelistic work. But suitable material was difficult to find and our first efforts were not very productive. At that date there were in our whole North Kiangsu field only three or four out-stations. There had been a good deal of the general itinerating work done, but so very little had resulted from this. This was also very much the case in our Mid-China mission. This pioneer work, so much of which was done by our oldest living missionary, Rev. Dr. G. W. Painter in the Mid-China field, seemed to be necessary as a foundation

for further and more fruitful work. But the immediate results were very small and often very unsatisfactory. In those earlier years the time for

harvest had not yet arrived, and patient, plodding work, often under very discouraging circumstances, had to be done.

PRESBYTERY AND PRESBYTERIAL IN CHINA.

REV. HUGH A. WHITE.

LAST year Mrs. Winsborough, at the meeting of the Presbytery at Taichow, knocked out a spark unexpectedly. Nobody seems to have thought much about organizing the woman's work in connection with the native church. But the presbytery issued an invitation for the women to meet at this year's presbytery and organize, when, on second thought, it was seen that we had no local auxiliaries to organize, people asked how we could organize a presbyterial. But we Chinese have our own ways of doing things. The presbytery appointed an organizing committee of fourteen Christian women, to co-operate with the missionary ladies, build up locals and organize the presbyterial.

The presbytery was gratified to find decided progress in our self-supporting hospital at Funing. Citizens presented a "p'ien," i. e., a memorial tablet, in recognition of successful medical work done lately.

A number of knotty problems poked up their heads at presbytery. One case seems to call for a presbyterial trial. Others were settled chiefly by private work on the part of the presbyters.

An important move was in making plans through the presbytery's committee on education, to start a Bible class. All feel the need of better training for the workers, so we hope to get them together for two months this winter and teach them.

The delegates from the Taichow fields, with the exception of Anfeng, were unfortunately delayed by wind and high water, so they could not get to the meeting, much to the regret of

all present. Mr. Hancock, from Kuling, sent in reports for the committees he was on, and valuable suggestions for forward work.

Statistics were not completed. Even without the Taichow field, reports showed one hundred and twelve additions, 833 total communicants, and over Eleven hundred dollars in contributions.

The presbytery took an unequivocal stand on the Bible. An overture passed, calling on the Synod and the General Assembly to stand for the whole Bible and not unite with other organizations unless they stand on the fundamentals.

A special work of the Holy Spirit was manifested. Before the meeting prayers were going up that this presbytery might be used, maybe in some unexpected way, to bring about a spiritual movement in this field. In the examining of candidates, Rev. C. H. Smith took up the matter of fasting, and it was evident that the church had not thought much about it. In giving the communion on Sunday, Mr. Smith was moved to speak out of his heart about the sins and short-comings of the churches and Christians. Presbytery had already been closed. But a letter from Mr. Hancock, delayed by high water, arrived just during this service, necessitating another session of the presbytery, and then it was decided to make Dec. 12th a day of fasting and prayer, and to ask all the preachers, on December 4th, to preach on the subject of fasting. We trust that this will prove to be the Spirit's way of bringing the blessing.

Yencheng, China.