

THE

Chinese Recorder

AND

MISSIONARY JOURNAL.

VOL. XVI.

DECEMBER, 1885.

No. 11

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE AND TIMES OF TS'AO TS'AO (曹操)

A. D. 190 TO 220.

BY REV. D. Z. SHEFFIELD.

(Continued from page 407.)

TS'AO TS'AO was now free to measure strength with his great enemy Yuan Shao, who with a powerful army controlled the northern portion of China. Ts'ao Ts'ao placed a low estimate upon the military ability of Yuan Shao, counting as much for success upon his indiscretion in plans of action, and suspicion of his subordinate officers, together with his self-confidence, as upon his own superior military stratagem. The army of Ts'ao Ts'ao had already occupied Li Yang (黎陽), in southern Chih Li, to resist the anticipated attack of Yuan Shao, when a conspiracy against the life of Ts'ao Ts'ao was disclosed, that altered his plans of action for the present. The Emperor, anxious to rid himself from the yoke which Ts'ao Ts'ao imposed upon him, had secretly communicated with Tung Ch'eng, the officer who had formerly called Ts'ao Ts'ao to the Emperor's assistance, intimating his desire that Ts'ao Ts'ao should in some way be disposed of. Liu Pei was invited to take part in the conspiracy. He has been justified in Chinese ethics for accepting the invitation to secretly turn against the man who had befriended him in the time of his extremity, by the uncertain logic, that he was acting in behalf of the Emperor against an ambitious and unscrupulous subject. Meanwhile Liu Pei had been entrusted by Ts'ao Ts'ao with an independent command, and sent against Yuan Shao, to give the finishing blow to his overthrow.

Instead of carrying out the instructions of Ts'ao Ts'ao, Liu Pei occupied Hsü Chou, and joined in league with Yuan Shao. The conspiracy of Tung Ch'eng was brought to light, and his own death,

PRINCIPLES AND METHODS APPLICABLE TO STATION WORK.

LETTER II.

BY REV. J. L. NEVIUS, D.D.

OBJECTIONS TO THE OLD METHODS.

THAT missionaries should at first seek and employ as many paid native agents as they can get, is most natural. They are anxious for immediate results, and home secretaries, and the home churches, are as impatient to hear of results as missionaries are to report them. No communications from the field seem so indicative of progress, and so calculated to call forth commendation and generous contributions as the announcement that native laborers have been obtained, and are preaching the gospel. While the missionary himself is for months or years debarred from evangelistic work by his ignorance of the language, a native agency stands waiting his employ. His circumstances and his wishes add strong emphasis to the oft repeated truism, "China must be evangelized by the Chinese." So urgent seems the necessity to obtain native assistants, that if such as he would like are not forth-coming, he is glad to avail himself of such as he can get. How many of us have thought in connection with some specially interesting enquirer, even before he is baptized, "What a capital assistant that man may make."

While the circumstances of the missionary furnish the strongest motives to induce him to multiply native agents as fast as possible, the circumstances of the natives naturally and very strongly lead to the same result. The dense population of this country, and the sharp struggle for existence which it necessitates, have developed in the Chinaman a singular aptitude for finding and using ways and means for making a living. The comparatively expensive mode of life, as a rule, absolutely necessary for foreigners, in order to live in China with any reasonable hope of health and usefulness, naturally suggests the idea to the native that so intimate a relation as that which subsists between a teacher and his disciples will in this case undoubtedly prove a profitable one. The Famine Relief work in the northern provinces, left the impression that foreigners have money in abundance, and are very ready to give it to those in need; and there are many about us now as much in need as some who received aid during the famine. It is not strange, but only human, that natives under these circumstances should see their opportunity, and make the most of it.

With these strong motives in the minds of the missionaries and natives, conspiring to the same result, it is not without excuse that we should have fallen into what I now believe is a serious mistake, utterly unaware of the danger and injury to the mission cause which ten, twenty or thirty years of experience have disclosed. In this opinion I am not alone; and it is a significant fact that those who hold it, are for the most part persons who have had a long experience on mission ground. To some these lessons have come too late to be of much service to them individually; but they will be none the less useful to those who are willing to profit by the experiences of others.

I fully recognize the fact that the employment and pay of native laborers is, under suitable circumstances, legitimate and desirable; as much so as the employment and pay of foreigners. Here however the important questions arise, *who, when, and how*, shall they be employed? These questions will come up for consideration in the course of this series of letters.

The following are some of the objections to what we have agreed to call the the "Old System."

I.—*Making paid agents of new converts affects injuriously the stations with which they are connected.*

A well informed and influential man, perhaps the leading spirit in a new station, is one who can be ill-spared. His removal may be most disastrous to the station, and he himself may never find elsewhere such an opportunity for doing good. I have in mind four persons who about twenty eight years ago gave great promise of usefulness in their homes in connection with our out-stations in Ningpo. While working with their hands in their several callings they bore testimony to the truth wherever they went, and were exciting great interest in their own neighborhoods. It was not long however before these men were employed, one by one mission, another by another, and the interest in Christianity in and about their homes ceased. It is to be hoped that they did some good in the positions which they afterwards occupied; but I have not been able to learn of any one of them, that his after career was a specially useful one. I refer to these cases not as unusual and exceptional. I could add many others from Chekiang and Shantung; and I doubt not that similar instances will occur to the minds of most missionaries who read this paper.

The injury to a station in these cases does not consist simply in the loss of the man's influence for good;—positive evil is introduced. Envy, jealousy, and dissatisfaction with their lot, are very apt to be excited in the minds of those who are left. Others

think that they also should be employed, if not as preachers, as servants, or in some other capacity. It would be a less serious matter if this feeling could be confined to the station where it originated, but unfortunately it extends to other places and there produces the same injurious effects. The religious interest which passed like a wave over the neighborhood, gives place to another wave of excitement, and the topics of conversation are now, place and pay. The man employed, has lost very much the character he bore as a disinterested worker for the spiritual good of others, and is now likely to be regarded by many as a kind of employ agent, who ought to use his influence to get them places.

II.—*Making a paid agent of a new convert often proves an injury to him personally.*

He is placed in a position less favorable to the development of a strong, healthy, manly, Christian character. Some of these men, originally farmers, shop keepers, peddlers, or laborers in the fields, find themselves advanced to a position for which they are by previous habits and training unfitted. The long gown and the affected scholarly air are not becoming to them, and they naturally lose the respect of their neighbors and their influence over them. Men who were self-reliant and aggressive in their original positions, now perform their routine labors in a formal and perfunctory manner. Some, on the other hand, are puffed up with pride and self-conceit, and become arrogant and offensive. Here again I am not theorizing, but speaking from experience, and could multiply cases—as I presume most missionaries could—of deterioration of character in both directions above indicated.

No doubt the employment of some of these men has been followed by good results, but it is still a question whether they might not have accomplished more had they been left where they were found. Some of them have proved most unsatisfactory to their employers, but are retained in their places from year to year, because it seems an injustice to send them back to a mode of life for which they have become unfitted. Others have been dismissed from service, and returned to their homes disappointed and aggrieved; while not a few when they have been dropped as employees have dropped their Christianity, brought reproach upon the cause of Christ, become the enemies of the Church, and given evidence that they were only hirelings—never fit to be enrolled either as preachers or as church members.

III.—*The Old System makes it difficult to judge between the true and false, whether as preachers or as church-members.*

That the Chinese are adepts in dissembling, no one who has been long in China will deny. The fact that not a few who were earnest preachers, have fallen away when they have ceased to be employed, has already been referred to. How many others there are now in employ whose professions are suspended on their pay, no one can tell. The Chinese are close analysts of character, and know how to adapt themselves to circumstances and individuals. They are less apt to deceive their own people than foreigners, and less able to deceive others than those by whom they are employed. The desire that the native preacher may prove a true man biases the judgment. Doubtless the man employed is often self-deceived. I have had a considerable number of intelligent, and to all appearances sincere Christians, connected with my stations, who fell back and left the Church when they found they were not to be employed. These and a still larger number of enquirers, who learned during the time of their probation that there was very little hope of getting place and pay, and fell back before they were baptized, would in all probability, if their desire for employment had been gratified, be found today in the church, sustaining perhaps a fair reputation as preachers or evangelists. What lesson are we to learn from these facts and experiences? Is it not this, that so long as a free use is made of new converts as paid preachers, we deprive ourselves of one of the most effective means of separating the chaff from the wheat, and of assuring ourselves that the men we are employing are what we hope they are; and that we are not building, or vainly attempting to build, on a bad foundation.

IV.—*The Employment-system tends to excite a mercenary spirit, and to increase the number of mercenary Christians.*

Of course we fully admit that many paid agents are sincere, earnest men, and that they bring into the Church sincere and earnest believers, some perhaps who would not otherwise be reached. We are here simply pointing out an evil influence and tendency which is connected with one system, and is avoided by the other. A man will sometimes be found who will listen to a native preacher, apparently much interested, but knowing and caring very little about what is said. When he finds a suitable opportunity, he obtains from the preacher, directly or indirectly, a knowledge of what pay he gets, and how he obtained his position. This man perhaps becomes a diligent student of the Scriptures, and passes an excellent examination as a candidate for baptism; but he is interested in Christianity only as a means to an end. When this mercenary spirit enters a Church, it has a wonderful, self-propagating power, and follows the universal law of propagating its kind. The mercenary preacher

whether paid, or hoping to be paid, as naturally draws to himself others of like affinities, as a magnet attracts iron filings.

In one of the districts of this province there seemed to be a few years since an unusual religious awakening. The interest spread from town to town; the number of enquires was large; and hundreds of apparently sincere believers were gathered into the Church. Beneath the surface of plausible appearances, it was afterwards found that the movement was due largely to mercenary motives of different kinds, both in the propagating agents, and in those who were influenced by them. That district now seems to be struck with a blight. The larger part of those who were received, are now excommunicated or under discipline; a very unfavorable impression has been made upon the people generally; and persons sincerely interested in the truth are kept back from seeking a connection with the Church by the unworthy examples of its members. In this district, Shiu-kwang, there is little hope of anything being accomplished until after the pruning process has been carried still farther, and we can make a new and better beginning. It is much easier to get unworthy members into the Church than it is to get them out of it; and and very little good can be accomplished while they hang as an incubus upon it.

V.—*The Employment-system tends to stop the voluntary work of unpaid agents.*

The question naturally arises in the mind of the new convert, "If other persons are paid for preaching why should not I be?" Under the influence of jealousy and discontent it is easy to go a step farther and say, "If the missionary is so blind or so unjust as not to see or acknowledge my claims to be employed as others are, I will leave the work of spreading Christianity to those who are paid for it. This again is not an imaginary case but a common experience. It is evident that the two systems are mutually antagonistic, and whenever an attempt is made to carry them on together, the voluntary system labors under almost insurmountable difficulties. This is a serious objection to the old system that it stands in the way of the other, and makes the success of it well nigh impossible.

VI.—*The Old System tends to lower the character and lessen the influence of the missionary enterprise, both in the eyes of foreigners and natives.*

The opprobrious epithet, "Rice Christians," has gained almost universal currency in the East, as expressive of the foreigners' estimate of the actual results of missionary work. This unfavorable judgment, formed by those who are supposed, as eye witnesses, to have good grounds for it, finds its way to Christian nations in the

west, who support missions, and prejudices the missionary cause in the opinion of those who would otherwise be its sympathetic supporters. It is a serious question how far missionaries are to blame for this. While we resent as false the sweeping generalization which would include all Christians in China, or the larger part of them, in this category, it is worse than useless to ignore the readiness of large classes of Chinamen to become "Rice Christians," and the difficulty of determining who do, and who do not, belong to this class. We must also admit the fact, that not a few of those who have found their way into the Church have proved, after years of trial, to be only "Rice Christians." The idea of getting rid of such altogether, is probably a fallacious one. They have been connected with the Church, and probably will be, in all lands and in every age. Still, as this reproach has resulted largely from the fact that hitherto a considerable proportion of native Christians have eaten the missionary's rice, one effective way for removing the reproach is obvious.

The injurious effects of the Paid Agent system on the mass of the Chinese population, outside of the Church, are perhaps still greater. The *a priori* judgment of the Chinaman, as to the motive of one of his countrymen in propagating a foreign religion, is that he is hired or bribed to do it. When he learns that the native preacher is in fact paid by foreigners, he is confirmed in his judgment. What the motive is which actuates the *foreign missionary*, a motive so strong that he is willing to waste life and money in what seems a fruitless enterprise, he is left to imagine. The most common explanation generally expressed by the sentence 買服民心 is that it is a covert scheme for buying adherents with a view to political movements inimical to the state. Of course it is supposed that no loyal native will have anything to do with such a movement. If the Chinaman is told that this enterprise is prompted by disinterested motives, and intended for the good of his people, he is incredulous. Simple professions and protestations have little weight with him, in comparison with his own interpretation of facts. Observing that in some of our stations only those who are employed and paid, remain firm in their adherence to the foreigner, while not a few of the others fall back, his opinion is still further confirmed; and he looks on with quiet complacency, and rallies his unsuccessful neighbors on their having fallen behind their competitors in their scramble for money. Here again I am not imagining what may happen in the future, but am stating a historical fact. The result is that many well disposed Chinamen of the better classes, who might be brought under Christian influences, are repelled, and

those who actually find their way into the Church, are composed largely of two opposite classes, those whose honest convictions are so strong that they outweigh and overcome all obstacles, and unworthy persons, to whom that feature in mission work which we are controverting is its chief attraction.

Now we readily admit that whatever course we may take, the Chinese in general will still regard us as foreign emissaries, our religion as a feint, and our converts as mercenaries. What we deprecate is, gratuitously furnishing what will be regarded as conclusive evidence that these unfavorable opinions are well founded. Our enemies are sufficiently formidable, without our giving them an unnecessary advantage. The obstacles which oppose us are sufficiently appalling without our adding to them, and in this way postponing the time of final success.

The above are some of the principle objections which may be urged against the Paid Agent scheme. We will consider in the following papers what we regard as a better and more Scriptural way. These papers will treat of Methods of Dealing with Enquirers and New Converts; Organizing and Conducting Stations; the Present Condition and Outlook of our Shantung Stations; closing with a consideration of the Best Methods for Beginning Work in new fields where there are as yet neither Christians nor enquirers.

IN MEMORIAM—REV. JOHN BUTLER.

BY REV. W. J. MCKER.

IT was hard to believe that dread message sent us from Chinkiang on the afternoon of October 12th, 1885: "Butler dead—Johnnie too—cholera," How hard to realize that the beloved family who had a few days before left their home in Ningpo should be so suddenly cleft in twain! Our feeling were those of the Psalmist: "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it."

The Rev. John Butler was born in Ireland, August 22th, 1837. In 1841 the family removed to the United States, and settled in Lewiston, New York. On his conversion, at the age of sixteen years, he decided to devote himself to the ministry. Graduating from Union College, New York, in 1862, he immediately enlisted in the northern army as a private. He was discharged from active service on account of wounds received in battle, but afterwards