

The Chinese in Winnipeg.

BY JAMES THOMSON.

A paper read at the annual meeting of the Winnipeg Presbyterial W. F. M. S.

The subject I am to bring before your notice is the Chinese and what is being done for them in Winnipeg. Since God in His Providence has sent representatives of this great nation into our very midst, remembering Christ's last command "Preach the Gospel to every creature," it is surely the part of a true Christian to make known to them the blessed truth that Jesus is a Saviour for them as well as for us. This we cannot do unless they first learn our language; a school or class for that purpose is therefore necessary. All honor to the band of Christian ladies with Mrs. Watt as Superintendent at their head, who some ten years ago resolved to take the matter in hand and form a class to teach them for one hour on Sunday afternoons. Having secured a room from the Y. M. C. A., and after visiting the different laundries for some weeks, a class was started with a membership of five. For some years the number did not increase beyond six or eight.

Nearly five years ago Mrs. Watt through delicate health was constrained to give up any active part in carrying on the work. As honorary president she is however still connected with the school and shows in many ways her deep interest in all pertaining to it. Mrs. Thomson then acted as superintendent for a short time. When she was set aside the Lord called me to fill the vacant place. Since that time I have held it a sacred duty, with the help of the faithful teachers of whom I cannot speak too highly, to visit each laundry in the city—there are twenty-eight in all with seventy Chinamen—every week and speak to every Chinaman, whether they go to school or not, trying to induce those who do not come to come and be taught English, (that being the first step). Though their desire to learn our language is very great, there are some in Winnipeg who have been visited almost every week for the last five years who have never yet come to school. Still we go all the same. They always seem glad to see us and we endeavor to be helpful to them in other ways; but we feel in our hearts that the best way to do them spiritual good is through the school, and we keep on asking them to come.

At the close of 1895 we had thirty on our roll, with an average attendance of twenty-three for the whole year, and teachers twenty-four. We still adhere to the plan of having one teacher to each Chinaman, with one exception—a lady who takes two. Some six gentlemen have been enrolled as teachers a slight departure from the old rule of having ladies only. Ladies no doubt make the best teachers, but gentlemen sometimes feel freer to visit the laundries. Both have proved earnest and capable instructors.

It was a cheering sight last Monday night to see over thirty Chinamen gathered together to enjoy a little social arranged for them by their teachers—to see their bright happy faces, and how thoroughly they entered into the amusement of the evening, yet each conducting himself with strict propriety and as gentlemen should.

In February of 1895, a missionary box was placed on the table, into which the boys put a little every Sunday. At the close of the year its contents amounted to \$23.65, to which was added \$5 from a friend, making a total of \$28.65. By the wish of the scholars \$20 were given to the Y. M. C. A., and the remainder, \$8.65, to help missions in China.

One of our Christian Chinamen—Lee Chair—being home on a visit to China, died last July. He was one of our brightest converts, and said before he went away both to his teacher and myself, that he would tell his people all about Jesus, and we find from Chinamen who have since come back that he proved faithful to his promise. Who can estimate therefore, how far-reaching the little heaven he put forth may have been blessed of God.

This is the chief aim we as teachers have in view—to bring all who come to the school under a knowledge of the truth, that when they go home they may tell others of the true God and His love for all mankind. Another Christian Chinaman—Lee Ying—our oldest

and most faithful scholar, is away now on a visit to China, where he will remain for two years, and we trust much good may be done by him. Still another went back to China last week. As these leave us, how essential it is that they should carry with them, some knowledge of the one and only Saviour, and how earnest and diligent we should be in doing our very utmost to lead them to Him who alone can save.

At present we have five baptized Chinamen who are members of churches—four in Knox and one in St. Stephen's. Five in all have confessed Christ, as a direct result of the instruction obtained at the school, while three have come to us with certificates from other churches. And so we labor on in faith and prayer, *nothing doubting, but that the Lord will use our humble efforts and bless them to the good of immortal souls.*

The Young Peoples' Societies of Our Church.

W. G. JORDAN, STRATHROY.

Written for the Review.

By this time it is probably pretty well known throughout the church that the last General Assembly appointed a Committee on Young Peoples' Societies, with Rev. R. Douglas Fraser, M.A., of Bowmanville as Convener. The aim of this Committee is not to run all the Societies into any one mould but to gather information as to the work these are now doing, and find out in what way help can be given to them. The problem is to discover how the Societies can be organized as an official branch of the Presbyterian Church while encouraging the freedom and individuality of each local Society. It is not necessary now to discuss this matter in its general bearings; the Convener during his first year of office has shown a commendable activity, and already much useful information has been received which will be presented for discussion to the higher courts of the Church. It may be well however to point out in passing that we as Presbyterians are not the first to take action in this matter; our Methodist and Baptist friends have already organized their young people into "Leagues" and "Unions" with district meetings and provincial conventions. If it had been possible to have the young people through their Societies organized simply on undenominational or inter-denominational lines, the objections to the existence and action of our Committee would have been strong; but evidently the time for that, has either not come, or has passed by, and while there is danger in having too many unions and conventions, it may be found that the "unsectarian" unions will be all the stronger when each Church possesses its own fully equipped organisations. Leaving all these questions to the full and free discussion which awaits them we turn to a sub-division of the subject which will need very careful consideration before any definite action is taken. *Is it possible to use these Societies as a means of conveying to our young people a course of instruction in the doctrines of our Church and the principles of our church-life? If so what is the best way of dealing with this somewhat delicate and difficult matter.* Many of our young people are working for Home or Foreign Mission schemes and the pamphlets and leaflets now being issued on those schemes will be both instructive and stimulating if the members of the various Societies can be got to take an interest in them. *This is the kind of education that is needed in the practical work of the Church.* As to the issue of a paper especially designed for the use of the young people there seems to be no opening in that direction at present, and many will think there is no need for it as the journals already appealing to our people devote a fair share of their space to this subject. It may be thought that any movement in this direction would clash with the work of the Sabbath school Committee and its schemes for higher instruction, or it may be suggested that the solution of the problem is to link the work of that Committee in some way to the Young Peoples' Societies. That point will not be lost sight of, and no action will be taken without conference with Mr. Fotheringham and his co-adjutors. In a matter of such importance it may be well to "hasten slowly" but in the meantime the Committee will be glad to receive information or suggestions from Conveners of Presbyterian Associations or others specially interested. Those who have had most experience in the working of Young Peoples' Societies will surely be able to form an opinion on the question whether