

another year. Twenty-nine Colporteurs have been employed; two or three of whom are Europeans, the rest are natives. The issues of the past year are 183,909 copies, being an increase of 26,927 on the previous year.

The Committee say :

"A more extensive gratuitous distribution of the Scriptures has occasionally been urged upon your Committee as an imperative duty, nor have they shrunk from its performance wherever they have been convinced that the desire to possess them was thwarted by poverty. They, however, feel convinced that a small payment, as a test of sincerity, is a great safeguard against imposition, and they rejoice to find that the extensive experience of their Agent in China entirely coincides with the judgment they have formed. Mr. Wylie is anxious to do all the good he can; but, at the same time, to avoid all the evil possible, and it would tend to bring dishonor upon God's Word, were it given to those who only value it for the paper it contains, and the gain they might make by its sale. There need be no fear that whatever can be done with prudence and discretion will at least be attempted. A liberal offer was lately received by your Committee from a merchant at Leeds, to place at your disposal the sum of £1,000 as a first contribution towards a fund for chartering a vessel to navigate the great rivers of China, with a view of carrying the Scriptures into the interior. The whole subject was referred to Mr. Wylie for consideration, and he was much affected with the warm sympathy for the spiritual destitution of China, which had suggested the proposal. He, however, pointed out that there were already steamboats on all the navigable rivers which could be employed at a trifling cost compared with that of chartering a vessel, besides which no foreign vessel would be allowed to proceed beyond the ports open to foreign trade. Nevertheless, the expense of locomotion is very great, and if a fund were raised to defray the cost of transit from place to place, as well as of the freight of books, he was of opinion that he could employ such a sum most usefully. He felt that the success of the work depended upon its being carried on in a quiet and unobtrusive way, so as to conciliate the Government and not unnecessarily offend the prejudices of the people."

From the Depot at *Shanghai* 90,028 copies have been issued, being an increase of 10,000 more than the previous year. These Scriptures have been circulated over the Northern, Western and Central Provinces of China, and sold at a low price.

Educated Japanese can read the Scriptures in the Chinese language. Some copies have been distributed in Japan. Rev. W. Muirhead, a missionary who has recently gone to China, writes:

"I was much pleased with the information that I gleaned of the usefulness of the Scriptures in Japan some months ago. Mr. Verbeck, an American missionary there, spoke of the gratifying intercourse he has had with many persons on the subject. Numerous copies have been distributed far and near, and are known to be carefully read and studied. I had the opportunity of conversing with several intelligent Japanese, who were