

# Northern Messenger

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## Bibles and Colporteurs.

The 'Monthly Reporter' of the British and Foreign Bible Society tells of the work of the colporteurs who carry packs of Bibles and sell them from door to door in many different lands. Here, for instance, is a little story of France, by M. Monod, who tells us not to despise the small beginnings, as a great fire may be kindled by a tiny spark. He says:—

Here is a colporteur who has been working all day long in some village, and has not succeeded in selling a single copy. When evening comes, worn out with fatigue and sad at heart, he sits down on the roadside. A farmer, coming home from the fields, enters into conversation with him, and to show his kindly feeling buys a five centimes Gospel, saying, 'It will amuse the children. Some time after he falls ill. He remembers the little book he bought; it is looked for and found. He reads it, and reads it over again. A strange sensation comes over him. . . . If Jesus is the Saviour of all men,

Thus an evangelical church comes into being. How many churches, now become numerous and living churches, have commenced in this way; and on looking back to their origin, one will find a small halfpenny Gospel, sold by a colporteur to some worthy man, who bought it merely 'to amuse his children.'

Mr. B. C. Randall, who is working as Sub-Agent in the province of Kwangtung, China, reports the following interesting experience: 'My recent trip I enjoyed very much. In several places I was invited to spend the evening with some well-to-do merchants. Only at one place was I in any way threatened; there I was followed to the boat by a large mob shouting, "Kill the foreign devil"; I did not hasten my steps, however, and the mob kept a safe distance behind me. Whether they feared to attack me, or only desired to frighten me I do not know. To remove my doubts I immediately took a number of books and Chinese Scripture calendars from the boat and returned to their midst. The

and took it home to read. It was the Gospel by St. Mark in Chinese. He said he would like to ask me some questions about it, and, after treating my patients, I took him to my study. He referred to several passages, giving chapter and verse, and after re-



peating the passage asked its meaning. I am sorry I have forgotten his references. Any one could see he had read the Gospel and had been interested. He told me he had a family and had read to them and had tried to pray. He was anxious to know how to pray. And also asked about the breaking of bread. This will not be strange to you when you remember the "Tanghake" mode of worship, which is to place bread and water on a stool and bow several times to it—this being the prayer. He said he had followed this method, not knowing better. He had taught his family and friends this Holy Book, and had been ridiculed. I prayed with him and gave him a copy of the Chinese New Testament, an Irish potato, and some corn for seed, and some tracts. I asked him to our meeting on Sunday to learn more about praying, etc. He said he could not stay all day, but would come in the morning. He turned up at five a.m., just in time to get a fox I had taken the night before, sold it, and got enough money to pay expenses home, which he called God's blessing, as he had not enough before. He promised to see me when I went to his part of the country.'

The Rev. Donald Grant, speaking of Bible translation, says: 'Now let us take up the Society's little book, 'The Gospel in Many Tongues,' and as we finger its pages we shall learn that the very essence of the Gospel, as it is contained in St. John iii., 16, has been translated into "more than three hundred and twenty languages and dialects." For further information let us spread out before



us the Society's "Map of the World." There we have a bird's-eye view of what the Society has done. Dotted all over the map are red numbers. These indicate the lands for which the Society's translators have been at work and where the languages and dia-



TRANSLATORS AT WORK.

he must be his Saviour; if He can forgive sins, He can forgive his sins. By degrees light dawns upon him. He utters timidly a prayer, and he hears the answer: 'Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee.' He now feels another man; a new life has begun for him and for his family. The glad tidings he has received in his heart he cannot keep for himself alone. He must make them known to his friends and his neighbors. The little book is lent to one, and then to another. The curé hears of what has happened, and goes about the village warning his parishioners against this book, which is being sold by the English. He is told that the little book is nothing else but the Gospel, of which many fragments are textually reproduced in the Catholic prayer book. And then the inhabitants of the village begin to think that they ought to try and find out whether what the Protestants teach is really in accordance with what is to be found in this little book. Some friends consult together and make up their minds to write to the nearest Protestant pastor and ask him to come and give them a conference about the Gospel. Meetings are held, and soon a small congregation is formed, which gradually increases, till at last a pastor is called to reside among them.

shouting ceased at once, and the books and calendars sold well. It was also at Chantsun that I was called upon by one of the customs officials. He was a pleasant old gentleman, and I enjoyed the half-hour I spent with him very much. He agreed with me that if the doctrine be good and true, it is well worth his while to learn it; on the other hand, if the doctrine be worthless, the time spent in ascertaining the fact would not be very considerable, and he promised to study the books I left with him. At the same place I was visited by a merchant, who said that he had heard I was selling Christian books and had come to buy one of each kind. When I informed him that the New Testament contained not only the four Gospels, but also much more valuable reading and sound doctrine, he seemed pleased and bought a New Testament.'

Dr. McGill, of Korea, says:—'Quite an interesting case came under my observation lately. An old man came in one Saturday and softly followed me into my dispensing room, where the patients in waiting could not hear him. He said he was a "Holy Doctrine" man. I asked him when and how he first saw the Bible. He said a man got it from a dispensary and did not want it as he could not read well; thereupon he asked for it