

ing condition in a gentleman's horse-stable in Madura three years ago. He is now in the Tirunangalam Boarding School, with four others whom we sent there."

The editorial and printing work done at Madras is upon a very large scale. Last year there were printed six editions in Tamil, comprising 50,000 copies, seven in Telugu, comprising 31,000, and one of 8,000 copies in Malayalam. The most important work in hand is a reprint of the Telugu Bible, which has been out of print for six years. As the revision of the Scriptures in this language, though actively carried on, is by no means yet complete, it has been found essential to provide an *ad interim* supply, and towards this the Parent Society has made a special grant of £300, in addition to £1,500 for colportage, with a supply of printing paper, binding materials and Scriptures to the value of £798 16s 1d.

## CHINA.

To scarcely any part of the world have your Committee given greater attention during the past year than to China. They are thankful that the work so long and ably superintended by Mr. Wylie should have passed into the hands of one who, by devoutness of spirit, by accuracy of detail and breadth of aim, together with the cultivation of cordial relations with all bodies of Christian workers, bids fair to render invaluable service. But no Agent, however well qualified, could succeed in China without the co-operation of the missionaries. When it is recollected that the distance between Peking and Hongkong is about 1,250 miles, or as far as from London to Odessa, and that from Shanghai to the Snowy Mountains on the border of Tibet, the distance is equally great, it must be evident that local committees and itinerant workers are essential to any adequate provision.

Both these agencies are in course of satisfactory development. Mr. Dyer enumerates ten centres at which committees are organized for the superintendence of colportage, and seven other centres at which the same friendly office is filled by single missionaries.

At the New Year a letter of inquiry was received from a generous friend who has previously helped the Society's work in China; and when the reports being taken had been described to him, a further note came in which he said he was so convinced that these efforts most nearly resembled our Lord's walks in Galilee, and were best fitted to promote the evangelization of the Chinese Empire, that he begged the Society's acceptance of a donation of £1,500. Encouraged by this and other signs of growing interest, the Committee have appointed a sub-committee to consider what steps may wisely be taken with a view to extending Bible work in China.

Though the prices of Chinese Scriptures are very low, often scarcely a third of what the books cost to produce, there is abundant evidence that to sell is wiser and kinder than to give. On this subject important testimony is borne by one of the missionaries.

"I fully approve the plan of selling the Scriptures to a people like the Chinese. I believe this practice ensures the reading of the Book. The Chinese attach little value to gifts which are really disinterested, because they do not understand them. Their own giving is usually with the expectation of an adequate return. Frequently the people remark:—'Writings intended to exhort and convert the world ought to be given away as works of merit, and not sold.' The answer given seldom fails to gain their assent:—'We do not sell these books for gain, but that they may reach those who will value and read them. The books are too precious to be used for shoe-leather or any other purpose than that of instructing men.'"

Of course in the famine districts, and in cases of extreme poverty, this rule is relaxed, but for the most part adherence to it is felt to be the only way of undoing the harm which in earlier years has been caused by the system of gratuitous distribution.

The Peking Committee make the following handsome acknowledgment:—