

Along the southern coast and up the Yangtse, particularly, one senses the unconquerable spirit of the Chinese. You feel the throb of New China the moment you step ashore in Canton. Here is the spiritual home of the Revolution and the starting point for the northward drive that carried the present government into power. Here the Communists were supreme for a while, to be driven out at last with much slaughter. The city was within an ace of capture by the Kwangsi rebels a few months ago. Yet I should never have recognized in the Canton of today the city I visited in 1914. The narrow, picturesque, malodorous streets, with their little open-front shops, which we knew then, have been displaced to a remarkable degree by wide concrete highways. Many streets are still being cut through, gaping shop-fronts and piles of rubble attesting the policy of ruthless expropriation which has left many property-owners with strips of land only five or six feet deep - upon which they have successfully erected miniature four and five storey "skyscrapers"! This work has been carried through unceasingly during the past few years, regardless of political change. The new administration simply starts in where the previous one leaves off.

It is the same in Amoy. The whole of this rich port city of 150,000 looks as though it has been through a bombardment - sides of buildings ripped out, streets torn up, piles of debris everywhere - and rising out of it all, modern Amoy, after thousands of unchanging years. And this in Fukien province, where banditry holds sway not only in the country districts but in the cities too. At more than one Board meeting the absence of certain directors was explained by the fact that they did not dare risk going into the streets after dark for fear of kidnapping. In Hankow I met a young Chinese engineer with London and Paris training who is successfully carrying through a remarkable civic development there, regardless of the fact that the local government has turned over three times in eighteen months!

I have referred to the strong grip which pessimism and materialism have gained in China, and to the lack of faith on the part of many leading Chinese in their own ability to drag themselves out of their present Slough of Despond. Christianity itself, under strong Communistic, anti-Christian and anti-foreign attack, has had to give ground. The number of foreign missionaries has dropped from 8,000 to less than 6,000, and great difficulty is being encountered in recruiting new, native pastors, especially of college and university grade. The result is that thoughtful, educated, often foreign-trained Chinese feel themselves left outside the Church. Numbers have been brought into church membership through the Y.M.C.A., only to drop out within a year or two.

The Association itself, as you know, has lost men heavily in recent years. One reason is lack of sufficient funds to pay for top-grade Chinese secretaries. Another is the heavy drain of many of its best secretaries into government service of