

Prior to the interchange of the Treaty of Peace between England and China, in 1843, but little result had followed the efforts of the few noble, heroic men, who, with undaunted courage, had attempted to open the barred gates of China, in order that the exclusive millions within might hear the glad message of love and freedom. By this treaty the island of Hong-Kong became an English colony, and in addition five ports, viz: Canton, Amoy, Foo-chow, Ningpo and Shanghai, were opened. In a very short time missionaries entered these ports and commenced work. For several years very little progress was made, and the number of converts was small, but much good work was done in the way of translating and revising the Scriptures.

About the year 1860 no less than seventy missionaries had assembled at Shanghai from different parts of the West, waiting for the further opening of Central and Northern China, and in the meantime they were busy preparing themselves to take advantage of such opportunity.

When we speak of Central China, we refer to the district comprising the seven provinces drained into the Yang-tzee River, which is in reality the geographical centre of China proper. This district has a population of about 180,000,000. The opening of the three ports of ChinKiang, KiuKiang and Han-Kow was followed in the early sixties by a decided advance in Mission Work along the river. At present no less than 17 different societies are at work in this region with about 450 workers, male and female, occupying 110 cities as centres of work. Besides this there are some 22 ordained native pastors and over 250 unordained native helpers with upwards of 6,000 communicants. There are also 23 boarding schools and colleges, with a total of over 1,000 boarders. There are no less than 15 regularly organized hospitals and a very large number of dispensaries, where tens of thousands of sick people are treated annually. About the same time missionaries proceeded to occupy the newly-opened ports in the North, and large additions were made to their numbers for this purpose from England, America and Germany. The ports were in the first place secured as a basis, and the outlying country was faithfully attended to until it was possible to take possession of distant fields in the interior. If we take the three provinces of Chihli, Shansi and Shantung, which may be called North China, we find that foreign immigration has gradually spread so that missionaries are now to be found in each of the provincial capitals, and probably in nearly all of the remaining prefectures. Some of the missions working in the North have had marvellous success, especially the American Presbyterians and the English Baptists, both of which are located in Shantung. There are well on to 10,000 communicants in connection with these two missions alone, and

nearly as many more in connection with all the other missions working in this district. The various statistics for the whole of China may be stated as follows: There are upwards of 1,300 missionaries, male and female, working in different parts of the field, and several hundred native associates are connected with them as pastors of churches, preachers, teachers of schools, Bible women and otherwise. The total number of converts in fellowship with the church is about 42,000, and there are at least 12,000 scholars, boys and girls, in the boarding and day schools. Much of the work in the districts referred to is as yet in its infancy, and we must not expect too much, nor should we be too easily discouraged even if the results are not as good as we might expect after all these years. The difficulties to be encountered are stupendous, and when we take into consideration the character of the people with whom we have to do, their pride and prejudice, their ignorance and indifference, their idolatries and superstitions, and their utter lack of honesty and truthfulness from the highest to the lowest—not to mention the evils introduced by the foreigner—we may well thank God for what has already been accomplished, and, with renewed energy and zeal, press on in the great work. What is needed most at present is strong reinforcements of efficient men to fully occupy the territory which is now open. In these districts—although much better supplied with missionaries than many other parts of China—there are at least about 400,000 souls to each person, and at the present rate of increase many must by necessity perish before the word of Life is able to reach them. Yours sincerely,

J. FRASER SMITH.

Hein Chen, Honan, Jan. 31, 1894.

COMMUNICATIONS.

To the Editor of the Journal:

IN the JOURNAL of March 31st a nameless correspondent expresses most emphatically his opinion of the reports brought from the Detroit Convention, or rather of one misquoted sentence from those reports. As I was the only one who spoke about the watchword of the Student Volunteer Movement, viz., "The Evangelization of the World in this generation," I desire to make a few explanations. I do not expect to 'enlighten the darkness' of your correspondent, as the spirit manifested in his letter offers little encouragement to such an undertaking. But I feel that it would be unfair to the students who sent delegates to the Convention that such a wrong interpretation of their reports should be allowed to pass unnoticed.

Your correspondent refers to the fact that "2,600 years ago it was clearly understood that God was