

SPECIAL
ARTICLES

Our Contributors

BOOK
REVIEWS

CHINESE STUDENTS ABROAD.

The Student of Today; the Leader of Tomorrow.

Sir Robert Hart, of China, says:—"In no other country is education so honored, so prized, so utilized, and so rewarded." In August, 1901, occurred one of the most sweeping changes ever made by any government in the Imperial Edict abolishing the ancient style of literary examinations and establishing instead modern standards of Western education, till now schools of all grades dot the Empire.

And Prince Ching writes the American Minister at Peking:—"Convinced by the happy results of past experience of the great value to China of education in American schools, the Imperial Government has the honor to state that it is its intention to send henceforth yearly to the United States a considerable number of students, there to receive their education."

While there are about 5,000 Chinese students from all the provinces found in Japan, it is estimated that there are now upwards of 1,000 in America and on the Continent pursuing advanced studies. While more are going abroad to various countries at their own expense, the great increase of recent months to the United States is due to the remission of the Boxer indemnity. "The noble action of President Roosevelt in recommending to Congress the remission of a major part—some \$15,000,000—of Boxer indemnity, and the prompt adoption by Congress of his proposal, evidences America's good wishes towards China and China's attitude is equally admirable in her devotion of this sum to the founding of an Education Mission to America as the best way to express her depth of gratitude. The direct and indirect gain to both countries already apparent should be increasingly great. The Chinese Government proposes to send students to the American colleges for 30 years from Jan. 1, 1909, as follows:—100 a year for the first four years; 50 a year for the remaining 26 years, either from ex-Japan students or from the provincial colleges.

There was organized in August, 1905, a Chinese Students' Alliance of the Eastern States, since joined by some from the middle west, enrolling 212 active members and comprising some four-fifths of the Chinese student body in the East. The purpose is three-fold, "to labor for the general welfare of China both at home and abroad, to keep Chinese students in America in close touch with one another, and to promote their common interests." Its annual conference, held at Amherst College in 1905 and 1906, and at Andover Academy in 1907, the past year at Ashburnham Academy, with an attendance of 177, including quite a number of ladies, with representatives from 38 institutions higher and lower, and a success financially as well as in the direction of instruction and enjoyment. The programme consisted of addresses, among the speakers being Ambassador Wu Ting Fang, Hon. Chintao, Imperial Commissioner, and Hon. W. W. Yen, Ph.D., LL.D., Secretary of Legation, debates, orations, entertainments, and athletics, with instrumental music, yells, flags, and bon-fires, after the American fashion. The coming summer confer-

ence has been invited to Calgate University, Hamilton, N.Y.

Beginning in a modest way in 1905 the Alliance has now an up-to-date self-supporting monthly magazine, entitled the "Chinese Students' Monthly." There is also a "Pacific Coast" Chinese Alliance, with which there are negotiations looking to a so-called "joint council" uniting all the Chinese students in America with a world's Chinese Student Federation in embryo. In character these students are notable for proficiency, integrity, courtesy, and veneration, while some of them take the prize as best class dressers, though back in the eighties some were recalled largely for doffing the queue and copying Western fashions.

However, in more important ways by far the majority make creditable records at their various colleges, notwithstanding their language handicap. Of 26 at Harvard, for instance, all passed the requirements, and several won honors the past year. They can only get the official allowance by being regular candidates for a degree at a college of well-known standing, where their work must be satisfactory and good reasons be given why they need Government support. Those who are diligent and faithful may also, it is now decreed, obtain a share of the returned indemnity fund. Oftentimes they take high rank, however, as Fen Chin, who accomplished the astonishing feat for a native Chinese of attaining a place in the first group of scholars, made up of those undergraduates whose work in the preceding college year entitles them to the very highest distinction; or Fay Chi-hao, a Yale M.A., now president of the province of Peking, and V. K. Wellington Koo, editor-in-chief of Columbia University "Spectator," who recently addressed the Foreign Mission Boards of the United States and Canada on "The Task Before China's Students Today." So of many others too numerous to mention, and in various directions, not excepting athletics, music, etc.

Their range of studies is also wide in preparatory and high schools, colleges and universities, in agriculture, commerce, engineering, electrical, mining, railway, etc., law, music, but especially is this the era of western science and technical study for the utilitarian Chinese. And in all this, before the beginning their technical studies, they are advised to be efficient in the English language, which is ever in vogue even in their conferences at home or abroad, and of which they have become very fond as well as most proficient therein, many of them. One remarks his interest in hearing Japanese boys sing in English and being understood by the Chinese students when neither could understand the other in his own language.

Their Distribution.—Since 1890 a continuous stream of Chinese students has, it is said, gone to the United States, and, according to a recent directory of them, there are now some 398 there and about fifty in the Sandwich Islands. These are found in 20 of the Eastern and Middle States. Massachusetts has 85 in 14 institutions, Harvard showing 33, New York 63 at nine points, Columbia University having 20 and Cornell 31, Yale 23, University of Pennsylvania 31, University of Illinois 12, and Chicago Uni-

versity 7. A probable incomplete report gives of the Western States, California 119, Oregon 16 and a few elsewhere. A goodly number of girls, about three dozen, mingle with their brothers in the "popular land of learning." Formerly largely Cantonese, the Northerners are now very much in the majority. Outside the Government students are a number studying at their own charges, estimated at about 200. In Great Britain the estimate is upwards of 200 with about twice as many on the continent probably, making in all fully 1,000 Chinese students in Western lands. The Chinese students' Union, 56 Devonshire street, London, reports some 90 members, with Mr. Kwai Kwang-Tien as director of Chinese students in Europe. But culture is no substitute for character; however highly educated and civilized they may be found wanting some day. While the students' environment is often non-Christian, at least they are religiously inclined manifestly, and few elements are more responsive. In their attraction to the Y. M. C. A., that unifying force in Christian fellowship, specially to those unwilling to perpetuate our historic distinctions, we find a worthy aim. The appeal of Christianity, not without its ethical attraction to those fond of the old moral maxims of Chinese education, is coming to mean more, as in the case of the Chinese Director-General at Nanking, who, though not a Christian, declared "The only religion that teaches both the spiritual wants of mankind and the principles of morality also is the Christian religion. That is why we wish you to teach us in our schools." So, too, the very intelligence of the Chinese, as compared with some other peoples, makes them effective and earnest Christians when they are brought into right relations with God, and gives them the wider influence on return to their untutored villages in China. In illustration we have President C. H. Fay, Oberlin College, Ohio, who, being offered the presidency of the Paojing Provincial college by the Chinese Government while in mission service, only consented after the insistence of the authorities, and that on his own terms in the matter of teaching and continuing mission effort, he being the first Christian president of the college. While it is said of 60 students of the Peking University, members of a student volunteer band, that they spent their summer vacation in going forth by twos, visiting the churches and working under the direction of their pastors with revival interest resulting.

"If not reached for Christ while students, the probability is great they never will be," and yet results then are most encouraging, as in the remarkable success attending the campaign on behalf of the thousands of Chinese students in Tokyo, more being converted in Japan, away from native environment, than in China. At a Y. M. C. A. gathering there over 1,300 from every province in China were together, possible nowhere else. Of 300 in the United States it was said one-third were found to be members of the Y. M. C. A., and one-fourth of Christian churches. Therefore the importance that wise and adequate effort be put forth on behalf of these many Chinese students abroad in view of their paramount influence for good or evil and earnest prayer often, as well as unflinchingly on the Universal Day of Prayer for Students in the 2,000 universities and colleges of the World's Student Christian Federation.