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THE Board will need to receive \$311,912 between this date, March 15, and the 1st of May, to reach the amount of the actual expenditure last year. Shall not an effort be made to attain and even exceed this sum. It is a low aim surely to merely equal the past, when the work everywhere is advancing so rapidly. *Speak to the people that they go forward.* Oh let us have a General Assembly without a debt!

WILL not the Spring Presbyteries call the roll of the churches and ascertain whether all of them have contributed to Foreign Missions during the year, and, if they have not, urge them to do so before the 1st of May? What better work for a Presbytery? It is thus that the prayer *Thy kingdom come* may be set in action.

The Presbyterial Committees on Foreign Missions can render the Board substantial service by seeing that this is done. Now is the time also for Sunday Schools which have unappropriated funds in the treasury to bring them out. The very best way of observing Easter is to give a grand impulse to the spread of Christ's kingdom.

How will the receipts of the Woman's Boards stand at the close of the year? We learn of one which is slightly behind the receipts at the same date last year. We hope that all will advance.

Most touching contributions are constantly received from the mission fields to the *Christmas offering*. The generous gifts of poor children in Persia, India, China, Siam, Mexico, Brazil and elsewhere, are worthy of the co-operation of the young and the old everywhere. Many are the specimens of handiwork from those who had nothing to give. Perhaps the most remarkable contribution of all is from the wretched inmates of a leper hospital in India, amounting to nearly five dollars. The gift is accompanied by a most touching letter. All the gifts from abroad will not be in before Easter. Before that time may we not receive many more offerings from the home Sabbath schools.



ance with which scholars may be enabled to advance themselves. Foreign books are to be translated and carefully written out. The students and people are to be instructed, so that they can teach each other.

The memorialists humbly await the imperial decision on these seven propositions.—*N. C. Daily News, Daily Press, October 12, 1885.*

This memorial is followed by another, published in the *Hong Kong Daily* of October 13, 1885, which begins thus: "May it please your Majesties' gracious favors unrequited, your servant, sick unto death, utters these valedictory words, and implores that the Sacred Glance may deign to rest thereon."

After stating the sad case of his bodily condition, he takes occasion from the threatening aspect of affairs to emphasize the various points presented in his memorial, as follows:

At present, when peace has just been made in the regions of the west, Japan is seeking to thrust herself upon us, and the various nations of Europe watch round us like glaring beasts. Unless we make a great and united effort to close the stable ere the steed be gone, in the event of further trouble arising we shall become weaker and less able to make an effort, until at length we shall not even be able to attain the point at which we are to-day. Therefore, let your Majesties come to a rapid decision. Let railways and mines and the construction of ships and guns be undertaken at once as a means of insuring our national prosperity and strength.

This is followed by a word of advice to the young Emperor:

Let your Majesty attend with more and more diligence to the study of our sacred books. Be not remiss even in the smallest matter. Daily associate with men of principle and listen to their counsels. Take what is not absolutely to be spent at the moment and apply it to the wants of national defense. Be sparing in every-day life that there may be a fund for circumstances unforeseen. Let the Emperor and his ministers strive with one accord in what is right to secure what is right, and your servant will seem in the day of his death to be born again into life.

With gasping breath [and flowing tears your servant humbly speaks these words, which are copied down to be submitted to careful consideration under your Majesty's mirror-like glance.

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## CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE HIGHER CLASSES IN CHINA.

REV. JOHN WHERRY, PEKING.

HITHERTO, in China, Christianity has been accepted chiefly by persons in humble station. It has been an anxious question with missionaries how to reach the upper strata of society, especially the officials. The haughty, self-satisfied pride of the scholar, of the scion of good family, intensified, often in the successful aspirant after office, is usually an effectual barrier to the approach of either the foreign missionary or the native assistant; so effectual that many have come to believe that the only hope of the Church's securing influential adherents is in raising them up within her own bosom. Of late, however, there are not wanting signs that the Gospel is beginning to attract the attention of the higher classes, and

that some of them are not so hopelessly far from the Kingdom as to our unbelief it had seemed. It is encouraging, too, to find that there are influences at work in China's evangelization more subtle and pervasive than the voice of the preacher. The heaven that has been hid so many years is working. In many places it is fast becoming impossible for any intelligent and inquiring mind, whatever its attitude toward Christ, to remain ignorant of His claims as the Saviour of the world, and the clearer these claims become the more substantial at the same time appear the reasons for inquiring into their truth. The rapid acceptance by the Government of the appliances of Western civilization, itself an admission that Christian nations have something to offer China both useful and beyond the power of her wisest minds to discover ; the multiplication of churches and Christian centres, each with its strange spiritual worship, as conspicuous as an electric light in the darkness ; the wide diffusion of a well-prepared Christian and scientific literature, laden with facts and doctrines, not only new, but startling, as contrasted with the stereotyped, commonplace moralizing to which ages of seclusion have reduced the best thought of China ; all these are hastening the day when Christianity can neither be ignored altogether nor rejected without careful examination. It is of this day of hope that we are beginning to discern the early dawn, as circumstances like the following show :

#### **A Thoughtful General.**

At the city of Tungchow, twelve miles from Peking, there was stationed last summer a Chinese general. He had become dissatisfied with official life, in which he saw bribery and chicanery more potent to secure recognition and promotion than faithful service and solid worth. He was strongly inclined to retire from the army, and, as a religious devotee, give the remainder of his days to contemplation and benevolent deeds. He had heard of Christianity, and though ignorant of its spiritual character and demands, was strangely drawn to it rather than to Buddhism or Taoism, which he had, no doubt, his own good reasons to distrust. Under this impulse he sought out the premises of the American Board ; and, under the direction of an experienced missionary and his able native assistant, was, when the writer left China, occupying the position of a learner in the school of Christ. Now this man may accept of the truth or he may not, and if he does, experience shows that he may be less useful to the Church than others of humbler station and gifts ; but this does not impair the significance of the fact that Christianity is becoming so widely diffused that a military officer of high rank, ordinarily inaccessible to native or foreign preacher, may learn enough of it to command his respect and impel him to its study.

#### **The Truth in Herod's Household.**

A more interesting instance will serve to show how, without the inter-

vention of miracle, the Gospel can find its way even into the imperial household. What a short time since would have been looked on as extremely unlikely has, apparently, been brought about by means so simple as to lose much of its marvelousness. Not far from the First Presbyterian Church of Peking is the palace of the Sixth Prince, generally called by foreigners Prince Kung. He is the best known, and has, until lately, at least, been regarded as the ablest, best informed and most liberal member of the imperial family. He is the son of the Emperor Taokuang, brother of the Emperor Hsienfeng, uncle of the Emperors Tungchih and Kuanghsü, and brother-in-law of the two Empresses who have acted as regents during the minorities of the Emperors last named. At the head alike of the Foreign and Home Departments of the Government, he was for nearly twenty-five years practically the ruler of China's millions. A lady from his palace became, two or three years ago, a regular attendant on the Sabbath services of the Presbyterian Church. At first, accompanied by a servant, she came and went so quietly as to attract but little attention, but soon became known as Madam Hsiao, a lady in attendance on the favorite wife of Prince Kung. Making the acquaintance of the ladies of the Mission, especially Mrs. Whiting, who took a warm interest in her instruction, she began to add to her Sabbath frequent week-day visits. Like unlettered inquirers universally, she had a strong desire to learn to read that she might study for herself the New Testament and other Christian books. Having employed a servant, who had some learning, to teach her, she carried some of these books into the palace. It soon became known that she looked with favor on the new doctrine, and the matter was brought at once to the notice of the Prince. But the Prince, in his long intercourse with the representatives of Western powers, had himself learned something of Christianity, and, knowing no evil in it, did not choose to interfere with her religious rights, and dismissed the case with the only requirement that the peace of the palace be not disturbed.

#### **A Bible Class in the Palace.**

Encouraged by this generous treatment, Madam Hsiao ventured to present her books to her mistress, who accepted and read them with strong impressions of their truth. Their contents soon became a subject of earnest discussion with others, and the result was that ere long twelve of the inmates of the palace avowed their rejection of idolatry and acceptance of the Christian religion as true. And these twelve were accustomed, it is said, to meet together for Christian worship on the Sabbath day. Such was the encouraging report when the writer left Peking last July. Later advices state that the twelve have increased to thirty-one.

But how much credence is to be given to this account? Experienced

missionaries are cautious in accepting statements that cannot be verified by personal examination, even when, as in this case, no motive for deception appears. But this case has so many corroborating circumstances that were it of an ordinary family it would be accepted without hesitation. And why should it be less credible as it is? Have there not been many similar cases in the propagation of the faith since the Gospel found its way into Cæsar's household?

The corroborating circumstances we have no space to enumerate. Let it suffice to give one, which at the same time shows how these same missionaries of the Presbyterian Church had without question an opportunity to preach the Gospel to a portion of the family of this same Prince Kung. While Madam Hsiao was attending the church services, as stated, arrangements were made independently of her, through a common acquaintance of the son of Prince Kung, Duke Cheng (who, had he been a man of marked worth, might have been Emperor of China), to witness a magic lantern exhibition in the church.

#### "Pilgrim's Progress" Illuminated.

At the time appointed the Duke appeared, with a considerable retinue, among which the conspicuous part taken by Madam Hsiao showed at once that she was a familiar and esteemed acquaintance. It may be interesting to add that among the pictures exhibited was a series illustrating the "Pilgrim's Progress," and that a native preacher, taking these, from the man with the burden on his back leaving the City of Destruction, through the wicket gate and by the Cross, up to the Celestial City, as brilliantly-illuminated texts, had a rare opportunity to set clearly before the Duke and his party the cardinal doctrines of Christ and His salvation. Not long after this pleasant evening visit occurred the *coup d'état* by which Prince Kung was displaced by his brother, the Seventh Prince, the father of the Emperor, and bereft of all his offices. Had this and other trials any part in preparing one soul in his household for the reception of the consoling truths of our religion, made known through Christian books soon after? At all events, the highest families in China, and even the Emperor himself, seem not so distant and inaccessible as they did a short time ago.

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THE annual meeting of the Union Presbyterian Synod of Japan has come to be a great event.

This year Tokio was the place of the meeting (November 24), and a Japanese pastor was chosen moderator. There had been no newspaper discussions as to whether the East or the West should have the honor, and there is no evidence of electioneering on the express trains *en route*. For the communion season a large hall, the *Meiji Kaudo*, was rented, and the occasion was one of profound interest.