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POLICY ADOPTED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE

SOUTH CHINA CONFERENCE,

HELD AT KAK CHIOH FEB. 24, '08

The policy of the South China Mission has from its earliest history sought to place increasing responsibilities upon the Chinese Christians themselves. The results of the work vindicate the policy. While we thank God for the prospect of increased devotion in the home land to the extension of the kingdom of God throughout the world, we on the mission field still hold that economy, so far as may be consistent with efficiency, is also a necessary virtue in mission work. We believe it to be in harmony with this principle of economy when we reaffirm it as our fundamental and guiding principle in plans and mission activities to help the Chinese Christians to become as soon as possible entirely self sustaining and self propagating.

In view of this we, missionaries of the South China Mission, present the following as our policies in the evangelistic, educational, and medical departments of the work:-

I. The Evangelistic. We are convinced that the evangelistic work is and must ever continue to be the most important branch of our mission work. We assume that every missionary, whatever his or her department of work will gladly share in this form of service. We are convinced that all Chinese Christians should exercise their spiritual gifts in the proclamation of the gospel. We ~~believe that a large number of~~ recommend that the missionaries urge upon the parents the importance of inclining and influencing their sons to become ministers of the word of God. We believe that a large number of evangelists, pastors, and bible women, supported by the Chinese churches themselves, yet cooperating with the missionary, is far more effective than the multiplication of foreign missionaries.

Courtesy of American Baptist Historical Society

II. The Educational work. It has been the conviction of our missionaries in the past that to have educated Christians is to have a church of greater influence in China. We believe so more than ever today. And we declare it to be our policy to get Christian parents to do their utmost to put their children in school, and thus supply the imperative need of China for Christian leaders. In this connection we reaffirm the policy of our mission that our schools are primarily for the children of Christians, and yet we would not forget the vast amount of good sometimes accomplished by receiving scholars from heather homes, they of course paying their own expenses. We deprecate however the receiving of such scholars should their presence in any particular case prove detrimental to the best interests of a school. To make our school system efficient we believe there should be uniform curricula for schools through outthe field, and that there should be as soon as practicable primary schools for boys and girls in connection with every outstation, boarding schools at every central station, and an academy for boys and a high school for girls centrally located. We further believe that so far as possible these schools should be supported by the Chinese, and as quickly as competent teachers can be provided they should also be taught by the Chinese.

The need of a college of arts and sciences located in our field we leave for future consideration.

The schools for the training of Christian workers must be brought to the highest possible degree of efficiency. The Theological school, certainly for many years to come, and probably always will require two courses of study, a complete and high grade course for those who are qualified to pursue it, and beside this an easier partial course for men whose attainments or whose years stand in the way of their attempting the full course but who can pursue the partial course with profit to themselves, and with the promise of great usefulness to the church.

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We deem it also important that the field missionaries establish preachers'institutes, and that all evangelists and preachers be expected thus to continue their studies after leaving the theological school.

In regard to the training schools for women we restate the resolution of the Conference of 1905, that we should aim to have classes for the training if the women of the churches at each of the mission centers together with a school of higher grade centrally located for such women from all the field as shall be found fittel for advanced training.

III. The Medical Work. We hold that the medical work, while it has been greatly blessed as a means of removing prejudice against the foreigner and of opening the door to the preaching of the gospel, is not merely an aid to evangelistic work,but when rightly conceived and rightly carried on, is itself distinctly evangelistic work. We are of the opinion that there are at the present time centers where hospitals may be advantageously placed. As to the question of a medical school for the training of Christian physicians, we recognize the fact that a body of men and women trained for this form of service, would extend in a most helpful way, the beneficent influences of the Christian church. Yet in view of the large questions involved in providing a complete course of instruction with the small staff of teachers available, we deem it advisable to defer this matter for future consideration as the providence of God shall lead the way. At the same time we rejoice in and heartily approve every effort at medical instruction in connection with our hospitals, confident that, among those thus instructed there will always be found some who will well repay the effort expended on them, by useful service rendered to the cause of the gospel.

Courtesy of American Baptist Historical Society