

“HOSPITAL OF UNIVERSAL LOVE.”

METHODIST GENERAL HOSPITAL, HANKOW,
CENTRAL CHINA.

DEAR EDITOR,—I enclose an account of the laying of our foundation stone for our new Nurses' Home on December 1st.

This week I have watched the workman shaping-in a small alcove into the assembly hall of our Nurses' School building. The alcove is destined to hold the Nightingale Brick later on.

Though we are full of wounded soldiers and refugees, so far the bombs have missed us and we have been able to go on peacefully with our routine.

The influx of refugees, many of them panic-stricken, has disturbed the calm demeanour of Hankow somewhat, and the authorities have taken alarm at the fearful increase of population and have ordered the women and children to get out into the country around, away from the city.

All hospitals in the enemy-occupied territory have had to close. So nurses and doctors have poured in in numbers more than we could use, for the moment. To-day, one group of Nanking Central Hospital doctors and nurses have moved on to Changsha, the capital of Hunan, the next province to us. It is heartbreaking to even think of beautiful Nanking, so recently built up, and the fate that this very day is being dealt out to it.

What has happened to the world that superiority in armaments can allow a country to be so ruthlessly invaded and destroyed while the great powers look on and no one seems to come in to the rescue!

The failure of the Brussels conference deeply hurt many of the Chinese though they say in their speeches that they understand the difficulties of the other nations.

What will happen to Hankow in the next few months no one knows. We go on from day to day, remembering that our lives are in God's hands—that His will and purpose for the world is one of love, even though evil men try to frustrate it. The Nurses' Association of China has moved to Hankow for the present and are here with us. Last night our Nurses held a “welcome” reception to greet them. They looked very tired and worn, and when one remembers that they have lived through 165 air raids in three and a half months, it is not surprising. Up to date the Association headquarters has escaped damage, though the Central Hospital and National Health building were both bombed.

I enclose a photograph of one section of our emergency hospital for wounded. The seriously wounded cases are in our hospital wards, the lighter cases are nursed in this emergency hospital, which is housed in part of a warehouse; all the equipment is similar to that used in the emergency hospitals of the great flood of 1932. Trained nurses are giving their services for board and lodging, or in some cases for a nominal sum to help their country in its unspeakable need.

Yours very sincerely,

G. E. STEPHENSON.

BUILDING UP THE CITY OF GOD IN WAR-TORN CHINA.

Wednesday, December 1st, 1937, saw a day of bright, cold sunshine dawn in Hankow. In the compound of the Hospital of Universal Love there was much bustle and hastening to and fro, as soon as it was light. It was the day of the dedication of the new hospital chapel and of the laying of the corner stone for the new Nurses' School and Hostel Building.

For weeks we had feared that war distresses, air raids, etc., might make such a ceremony impossible, but the day found the city still at peace and ourselves looking forward with glad anticipation to the event.

As air raids had a habit of coming in the late afternoon,

the ceremony was planned for 11 a.m. All the wounded troops in hospital had to be attended to and some operations performed before that hour, so everyone went swiftly about the morning's duties.

A spell of very wintry weather had delayed the work of reconstruction of the Chapel, and it was not until the last day that the pews, pulpit, organ, etc., could be moved in and the preparations all completed.

November and December are months when glorious chrysanthemums bloom in Central China. When the Church was ready for the service, it looked beautiful beyond our anticipations and the wealth of golden, pink and white chrysanthemums gave the finishing touch to its beauty.

A small, graceful chancel has added to the length of the Church, and one blank wall that was previously attached to a dormitory next door now rejoices in six new windows opening on to a new piece of land outside.

The pale cream walls, the dark brown stain of the furniture and comfortable design of the pews all were much admired.

The Nurses in their blue and white uniform wearing their new school badge, were all very happy. The motto chosen for the school is “That they may have life,” in token that Christian Nurses can be the hands of Christ bringing physical and spiritual life to the patients. The design of the badge is that of the eight-pointed cross of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. This white cross was worn on a robe given to them at the solemn consecration service which admitted them into the Order, in the twelfth century. The points represented the eight beatitudes which they were ever to seek to preserve: Repentance, Humility, Compassion, Patience, Sincerity, Justice, Love and Joy.

Rev. Shen Wen Ching, the Chairman of the District, occupied the pulpit and led the service. Rev. A. J. Gedye, Rev. T. C. Kwan, Dr. Wu, the Mayor of Hankow, and Mr. Li Jui, a devoted Christian layman, were all present and took part.

The Nurses' Choir sang “All to Jesus I do dedicate,” and then Mr. Shen briefly gave the history of the Chapel and afterwards preached from “My House shall be called a House of Prayer.” The Chapel was first built by the kindness of a Methodist friend in the days of David Hill, who founded the School for the Blind, and all down the years it had served generations of blind boys as they grew to Christian manhood.

Now that the school has removed to a more spacious compound in Wuchang, the site which adjoins the hospital had been given for a Nurses' School and Hostel building, while the Chapel had been repaired and enlarged to become the hospital Chapel. This was made financially possible through a gift of the brother of the friend who had originally built it.

How great was our joy and gratitude that day, that even in the midst of the sufferings of war we could meet together in faith to dedicate the Chapel anew to the worship of God and the building up of our souls in Him.

The service concluded by singing “Christ is our Corner Stone” while we adjourned outside to the site of the stone laying of the new Nurses' School building.

The Matron gave a report of the planning of the building, the amount of funds raised for it and our hopes for the future.

Reference was made to the undying memory of Dr. Hodge, whose anxiety for a Nurses' Home, during his last illness, had led his Chinese and English friends to build the present home for twenty-five nurses, just thirty years ago. This was still the only building we had for nurses although the staff had increased to seventy, hence the need for more accommodation. The new building will contain school

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