

Foreign Missionary Advance

By Walfred Danielson

Report from China

We are glad to submit for the immediate attention of the readers of the Standard Rev. Sten F. Lindberg's annual report which will be presented to the forthcoming Conference in St. Paul, knowing that friends of missions will want the information at the earliest possible date.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass." Ps. 37:5.

On April 4, last year, I left the States for China to serve as a liaison officer for the Chinese Government. The one-year contract with the government got me out to China in post-haste and without any expense to our Mission. From May, 1945, until September I was stationed in Chungking training Chinese interpreters for the U. S. Army. After the Japanese surrender I was transferred to Nanking and Shanghai. Then at the beginning of this year I came up to Tsingtao in North China, having four months left on my contract. Right away I started to hunt for suitable buildings for our new mission, so that I could get an early start in opening up work. Among the hundreds of buildings which the Chinese Government was taking over from the Japanese was a small church property; and in order to save it from being allotted for some unworthy use I put in application for it at once. After more than two months of tedious negotiations it was finally leased to our Baptist General Conference. We have bought all the church furniture and equipment, including an organ for U. S. \$221.80. It is all worth many times that amount. The Government wishes us to buy the building too, but that can be a later question, and one which the Conference will have to decide. This church building is in orthodox style, built of brick and stone, with steeple and Gothic windows. It seats about 200 people. There is a parsonage of three rooms for a native preacher, and two rooms in the tower. It has also electric light and running water. Some repairs and interior decoration, however, will have to be done soon and may cost about \$300. The church is situated in a good Chinese residential section of Tsingtao.

Friends, you now have a field of your own in North China, and also a full-time missionary of your own there. Regular meetings are being held on Sundays and weekdays. But we are really starting "from scratch": one building, one missionary, one sexton, but not one member yet. Our

Sunday attendance has been very encouraging. Both heathen and a few Christians living in the neighborhood are beginning to come regularly. Besides the Sunday school class in Chinese I have started a Bible study class for English-speaking Chinese, and Marines have also been attending.

While being alone here, but waiting for reinforcements from home, I have not been altogether alone. On the first day of our taking over the property one of our own General Conference Baptists, Pfc. Bernard Holmquist, USMC, of the Emerald Ave. church in Chicago, came over to see it, and on the spot gave a gift of \$50 toward the work. Brother Holmquist is director of the Tsingtao "Youth for Christ" work and he has now added two honors: that of being the first General Conference to set foot in the church, and of having given the first gift. My parents and sister of the Swedish Baptist Mission came to Tsingtao about a month ago, and are waiting here for passage to Sweden. My parents have worked in this province for 54 years. They have helped us very much with preaching and Sunday school work, as well as playing the organ. Their assistance and advice have been a godsend.

The Lindstedt family is expected here in July and they have a very important work awaiting them. A house has already been rented for them, and I am planning for the new missionaries whom we expect out this autumn.

God willing then, our Foreign Mission will have one station in Tsingtao with work among Russians and Chinese and another one further inland as soon as it becomes possible for me to move on into the interior of the province. Up to the present moment God has led everything in a wonderful way. His finger has been very visible throughout. Blessed be His name!

As you meet in conference our thoughts and prayers will be with you. May the Lord lead you into plans for a general advance along all our mission fronts. Out here we beg for your fervent prayers that God's Spirit might move in the hearts of the heathen to work repentance, faith and salvation. With the warmest greetings to you all,

Yours in His Service,
Sten F. Lindberg.

P.S. About a fortnight ago while out traveling in Communist territory, Rev. Eric Thoong of the Swedish Baptist Mission was shot through the right lung. Just as I was finishing this report word came that he had died from his wound. My father, standing beside me, who is 80 years old and has spent 54 years on the same field, exclaimed, "O, if I were only young again!" How about you men and women who are young now? Will you step in to fill the gap? What an opportunity is yours NOW!

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