

Associated Boards for Christian Colleges in China

One Hundred-fifty Fifth Avenue New York, N. Y.

BULLETIN NO. I

October 1, 1937

To those who are deeply concerned with the welfare of the Christian colleges and universities of China, this is the first of a series of bulletins summarizing news being received daily in the offices of the Associated Boards. We are conscious of the keen and sympathetic interest in this work felt by thousands of Americans, and are glad to be able to report from the Colleges a steady purpose to continue their programs despite current grave difficulties.

The General Situation

Despite our fears lest the disturbed conditions in China might prevent many of the Colleges from opening for the fall term, a majority have already cabled that they have begun their work, and other reports are coming in as rapidly as letters and cables can get through. In thus carrying on, these Colleges are pursuing the course they have always followed in the many crises with which they have been confronted in the past. They are also heeding the expressed desire of General Chiang Kai-shek to keep the educational work of the country going forward.

These Christian Colleges have produced a strikingly large proportion of the leaders in China today. At this time they are more urgently needed than ever, because many other institutions are being compelled to suspend operations and because an even larger number of trained and devoted leaders will be needed during and after the present crisis.

The latest news received from each of the twelve Colleges within the Associated Boards, beginning in the north, is as follows:-

Yenching University, Peiping, cabled on September 22, "HAVE OPENED WITHOUT INTERFERENCE. ENROLLMENT TO DATE 268 MEN 111 WOMEN." (This is approximately half of normal enrollment.)

Cheeloo University, Tsinan, cabled some weeks ago, "TSINAN QUIET. PLAN OPEN SCHOOL." We do not as yet have the date of opening or the enrollment.

Ginling College, Nanking, planned to open September 20th. The air attacks on Nanking made this date impractical, but every cable indicates President Yi-fang Wu's determination to continue and to hold her staff in readiness.

The University of Nanking has been planning to open October 4th. A China Clipper letter from President Chen dated September 14th announces this plan, and adds:- "We have prepared dugouts and trenches on the campus and will assign each student to a definite place in time of raids. The students are pressing us to open, and it is the opinion of the administrative group that we should try to do so."

The campus of the University of Shanghai was damaged in the fighting around Shanghai, and has been occupied by soldiers. But it has announced its plan to open on October 1st in the French Concession. President Liu has cabled, "NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS WE ARE DETERMINED TO CARRY ON. I BELIEVE THAT THE EDUCATIONAL FRONT IS EVEN MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE MILITARY FRONT."

Hangchow Christian College and Soochow University, both in the vicinity of Shanghai, have sent no definite word. The military disturbances in this area have probably delayed the opening of one or both.

Fukien Christian University and Hwa Nan College, both in Foochow, have opened. On September 25th, President Lin of Fukien cabled, "FOOCHOW QUIET. WORK GOING WELL. STUDENTS 160." A few days earlier we received from President Lucy Wang of Hwa Nan the following, "COLLEGE OPENED REGULARLY, SEVENTY PERCENT USUAL ENROLLMENT. EXPECTING LATER ADDITIONS FROM WAR-RIDDEN REGIONS. ALL SAFETY PRECAUTIONS TAKEN. CALM COURAGE PREVAILS."

Lingnan University, Canton, opened on September 20th. In spite of repeated bombing of the city, close at hand, the Provost, Dr. Henry cables, "ENROLLMENT SMALL BUT SPIRITED." The twenty American exchange students were eager to remain, but most of them have been recalled by their parents.

Hua Chung College, Wuchang, has been requested by the Chinese government to accept a large number of students from government institutions affected by the hostilities, and will operate virtually on a "double shift". Its enrollment is about three hundred, a fifty percent increase over last year.

West China Union University, Chengtu, far removed from the present disturbances, has cabled, "NORMAL OPENING. LARGEST ENROLLMENT, MANY TRANSFERS. CENTRAL UNIVERSITY MEDICAL DENTAL COLLEGES COMING." (Central University is a government institution, located in Nanking.)

Personnel

While exact figures are not available, we estimate that from eighty to ninety percent of the total staff of the whole group of Colleges (omitting those regularly on furlough) are now on the campuses of their respective institutions. These proportions naturally vary widely in different localities.

Many difficulties have, however, been encountered by members of staff away from their colleges for the summer, or returning to China at the close of their furloughs. The disruption of transportation facilities has caused much delay and inconvenience, but the latest reports indicate that most of these staff members are now back on their campuses. A typical case is that of Robert Gaylord Barnes, going out from Princeton to Yenching. After being delayed in Hongkong and being caught in the typhoon there, he had quite an Odyssey along the coasts of China and Korea before finally arriving safely in Peiping.

President Stuart of Yenching writes as follows concerning the urgency of the need for Western members of staff at this time:- "Foreigners will be more than ever needed these next few years - and pathetically wanted. The only pleasing feature of these recent weeks has been the touching proof of this."

In a later bulletin we will give more explicit information as to the location of the personnel of the various Colleges.

R. E. DIFFENDORFER,

President

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