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*How Far is Federation Practicable among the Native Churches of Shantung ?*

BY REV. HENRY D. PORTER, DD., M.D.

*(Concluded from page 432, September number.)*

II. How far is a Federal Union practicable among the Native Christian Churches of Shantung ?

In considering the practical side of this theme let us notice :

1. That we present, to the native Christians of this province, the highest moral thought and purpose we possess. It is the great gift of God to men that we bring to them—exceeding great and precious promises. The struggle which the Gospel encounters is with the difficulty in unfolding the divine and gracious message of God's love in ways most persuasive and helpful. It is ours to present a simple gospel. The impress upon human hearts is the work of the Divine Spirit. Men have learned, through the course of history, that the by-ways of thought and experience are very various. The forms of church life merely express the efforts of certain leaders, acceptable now to great multitudes, to give the thoughts of Christ more clearly, more fully, and exactly. If doctrine, or Christian experience, or methods, or enthusiasm, can be given in one form better than another, safeguarding the truth and shielding the new hearer from a false estimate of expedients, it becomes a duty to give that thought in the simplest and most effective way. Because of this, each of us, as God gives to each a measure of faith, or knowledge, or efficacy in service, pours out upon the new disciple his estimate of the promises of salvation.

2. The previous discussion has pointed out that the ideal relation of Christian workers has not been hitherto attained. The strong tide of Christian ideal, in sentiment and conviction, is moving on

7. Christian literature, which must henceforth greatly increase, will be guided to secure the most fruitful results. Books best fitted to influence the Christian mind will be secured, and the church guarded from that which may be harmful.

8. A public Christian sentiment will be formed and directed toward whatever may develop, in fruitful ways, the good of the new Christian society.

9. I am disposed to urge finally, as one of the desired aims of the proposed union, that a sense of responsibility for widely extended interests will be deeply impressed upon the native Christians. This may develop, in God's good time, into a genuine patriotism, or even statesmanship. For, in the not far distant future, Christian thought and purpose must assume the direction of this great, desperate, ignorant, and unhappy people.

These, dear friends, are some of the principles which must determine the ideas of Christians. These are some of the suggestions which, being in the minds of many, should be in the minds of all. If they are in the minds of us, who are fellow-Christian workers, they should be early implanted and become fruitful in the minds of the native Christians of Shantung.

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### *First Stones in the Foundation of the Synod of China.*

BY REV. WILLIAM SPEER, D.D.

THE fountains whence great rivers issue from the hills, the laying of the first corner-stones of grand edifices, the earliest movements towards important advances in political history, are objects of particular interest from generation to generation of mankind. Far more so are the beginnings of the ecclesiastical structures of Christianity in the fields where heathenism and other false systems of religion have been overthrown in ages past, or in those where these structures are now being reared in strength and beauty and are distributing the blessings of spiritual knowledge and of medical relief and of intellectual enlightenment to nations and races. The narratives of early missionary efforts and successes and foundation work, connected with any one department of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, are ever inspiring and useful to all the organizations and men and women who share together in the spirit and hopes of his followers.

Fifty-two years ago the writer was sent by the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions to be one of three ministers who were appointed to establish a mission at Canton. This Mission organized

the first Presbytery in China as the first step towards the Synod of China; and probably also the first regular and permanent organization of any Protestant ecclesiastical body in that empire. As one of the few survivors of an occasion which has since then been only indefinitely noticed, and in view of the jubilee anniversary of it, which occurred on February 23, 1899, it seems desirable that he should furnish some account of it.

While the first opium war was in progress, the Rev. Walter M. Lowrie was sent to China as a pioneer to observe and report upon the openings which that political and commercial movement would effect for the spread of the gospel of Christ. He arrived at Macao, May 28, 1842. The treaty signed at Nanking three months afterwards, on August 29th, granted the possession of the island of Hongkong and opened five ports northward to foreign intercourse. The wise and able statesman, the Hon. Walter Lowrie, who had left an honored position in the senate of the United States to serve the kingdom of Christ as the corresponding secretary of this missionary Board, and who was the father of the missionary mentioned, hastened to organize means for broad and efficient and progressive evangelization of this great, long-secluded nation. He encouraged the commencement of hospitals and schools which would prepare the way for preaching the gospel to the people. He had for a number of years personally studied the written language for the purpose of devising metallic divisible characters, by the combinations of which a few thousand could be made to do the work of a far larger number as they are ordinarily cut in cumbersome wooden blocks. The Board had suitable matrices made in Paris. This was the beginning of the great printing establishment at Shanghai, which has been the leading agency of the kind in that part of the world, enriching China, Japan, Korea and the neighboring countries with many millions of copies of the Scriptures and portions of them, a vast amount of Christian and modern literature, and the unspeakable benefits of periodicals, magazines and newspapers.

Mr. Lowrie saw also that to implant the religion of Christ and the apostles, so that it would become universal and fruitful and enduring, missionary operations should be made as self-dependent and free and direct as possible. Thus the Presbyterian principles and forms of church government, learned from inspired and Asiatic sources, and with which the ideas and methods of the ancient nations of the East in their popular organizations are so thoroughly harmonious, should be introduced as speedily as practicable. In the year 1848, at the suggestion of the Board of Foreign Missions, the General Assembly, meeting in May at Baltimore, made provision to detach the missionaries in China from their different Presbyteries

in this country and form them into three bodies of the same kind, of which the centers would be Canton, Amoy and Ningpo; and that these Presbyteries should be combined, when prepared to do so, under what was to be named the Synod of China. In the largest mission, that named Ningpo, at the north, there were at that time the Rev. Messrs. M. Simpson Culbertson, A. W. Loomis, R. Q. Way and John W. Quarterman. The wives of the first three mentioned were with and assisting them. D. Bethune McCartee, M.D., was doing there a very useful medical work. At Canton were the Rev. A. P. Happer, M.D., whose principal duty was the charge of the school, Rev. John B. French, and Rev. William Speer, who had studied medicine three years and, besides other work, now assisted Rev. Peter Parker, M.D., in the hospital which has long been (in later years) under the care of Dr. John G. Kerr. At Amoy the Presbytery was not afterwards formed, on account of the death of the Rev. John Lloyd and Rev. Hugh A. Brown's return to this country. (The proposed Synod was not constituted until the two branches of the Presbyterian Church in America were reunited in 1870, and its territory was then extended, for the time, to the missions in Japan and Siam. It met, by appointment of the General Assembly, at Shanghai, October 20 of that year, and was opened by a sermon from the Rev. A. P. Happer, M.D., as its oldest member.)

The arrangements to be made for the meetings of the Presbyteries having been left by the Assembly to themselves, the members of that of Canton determined to formally organize it, when brethren expected from America on the ship *Valparaiso*, on their way to the north, could take part with them in the ceremonies. Rev. Messrs. Henry V. Rankin and Joseph K. Wight and their wives having arrived at Hongkong, and after a short stay there come up to Canton on the 21st, the time fixed for the first meeting of the Presbytery was the evening of Friday, February 23rd, 1849. The place was the large reception room of the American Legation in the house of Dr. Peter Parker, in which Sabbath and other religious services were commonly held for the benefit of the foreign community, and which for that purpose had been furnished with a pulpit and rattan chairs, so that it had quite a chapel-like air. There was present an unusually full and interesting audience. The Rev. A. P. Happer, M.D., the senior member of the Presbytery, was chosen to be the moderator, Rev. John B. French to be stated clerk, Rev. William Speer to preach the opening sermon.

The text of the sermon was from Isaiah xlix. 12: "Behold, these from the land of Sinim." Its purpose was, in substance, to show that the prospects now opening before the cause of Christ in China are the wonderful and joyful fulfilment of promises definitely

made to it twenty-five centuries ago. The text taken is one line out of thirteen verses, in this forty-ninth chapter, which form a preface to the great concluding division of the book of Isaiah; and the sermon was an exposition and application of the passage. The prophet in the preceding parts of the book has admonished Israel and the nations of Western Asia and Northern Africa regarding the sovereign rights of Jehovah, the one living and true God, and the judgments with which he would visit their idolatry and other sins; and he has held up in strong and tender terms the mercy and the grace of God in preparing the way for the advent of a glorious divine redeemer, who would spring from the stock of David, but would give peace and joy, a "rest that shall be glorious," to the gentiles also. In this forty-ninth chapter he rises, by inspiration from the Holy Spirit, to a new and lofty point of vision. He looks forward to the latter age of the world. He sees the incarnate Messiah waiting in vain, for a long period of time, to see the fruits of his labors and sufferings for the redemption of man. At last there comes a joyful time of acceptance and reward. The powers of the world see and worship; its prisoners and sufferers find liberty and relief; the afflicted people of God, comfort and blessing. There is such a change in all the condition and spirit of the human race that the inspired prophet shouts: "Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains." He describes the regions of the world in which will occur the most glorious and happy events of this final triumph of the kingdom of Christ. Millions of converts flock to it from mighty nations which had been reared in the extremes of the earth far from the weak and troubled beginnings of its history. "Behold, these shall come from far; and lo, these from the north and from the west, and these from the land of Sinim." Great and interesting as are the transactions related to the conversion of the other nations of the world, one of them is thus singled out above all others and mentioned by name as that of most final importance, "the land of Sinim."

What is this land? and what are our relations to it at the present time?

The explanations of the geographical designation "Sinim" have been strangely contradictory and unsatisfying until the present day. The name has been imputed to several great countries or regions of the old or the new world. But of late, with extraordinary unanimity, biblical interpreters have been led to agree that it means China. The people themselves have never thus designated their country. But valid reasons have been given for this conclusion. There are the suggestions from different ancient languages; the extent and richness of the commerce of the Sinæ,

or the Seres, that is, "the silk nations" from the earliest historical ages; the unparalleled number and the homogeneous character of its population; its peculiar history and civilization and influence in the Oriental world; its inappeasable opposition in all past time to the intellectual advances and religious teachings of the West; and, finally, the events which have of late broken down its isolation and opened its gates to the preaching of the gospel. We can see in these things taken together the reasons why the omniscient Spirit of God indicated by name the empire of China as one in which the final victories of the kingdom of Christ would be peculiarly great, powerful and glorious.

The relations of those who are now missionaries of the different branches of the church of God to all the hopes and duties involved in this prophecy are sustained by the highest of all grounds of encouragement. We are heralds of all that earthly and eternal good which the explicit covenant of God the Father and Son and Spirit has pledged in this book of eternal truth and in its express mention of this land and people. It is our infinitely great and joyful honor and privilege to be among those who begin here to wave the banner of the cross and sound the trumpet announcing the approach of the King of righteousness and peace. Our feet, like those of Israel under the lead of Joshua, are on the borders of a "land of promise" The victories of the army of Immanuel, feeble as we are in numbers and strength, have been assured from the hour when, having passed under the cloud and through the sea, we set feet upon its mountains and plains. The power and swiftness of them, in God's time, will cause the heavens to sing, the earth to be joyful, and the mountains, which are now the great strongholds of Satan's power, fortified with the temples and monasteries and symbols and memorials of heathen and false superstition and iniquity, shall become Carmels and Moriahs, Tabors and Olivets, where the Lord shall most gloriously manifest His holiness and His grace, and whence there shall break forth the loudest and most joyful singing of redeemed multitudes.

The presence and co-operation of brethren Rankin and Wight, on this occasion, afforded us much gratification. They remained for a few days; and on Sabbath, 25th, Mr. Rankin preached in the same place a sermon from Solomon's Song, vi 3: "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine; he feedeth among the lilies."

The meeting was gotten up as to the community rather informally, and was not made mention of in correspondence and otherwise as fully as it ought to have been at the time. But there were in the company present, or in the community, a number to whom this laying of the cornerstone of the Presbyterian ecclesiastic-

al system in China was a matter of peculiar interest. Such it was to some of the gentlemen connected with the noble mercantile tea house, at the head of which was Mr. D. W. C. Olyphant, an elder of the Bleeker St. church in New York city, through whose sympathy with Dr. Robert Morrison and earnest efforts Christians in America had been enlisted in the cause of missions in China, and Bridgman and Abeel been sent out in 1829. Forty-nine other free passages were given subsequently by this house to missionaries of different denominations; and its establishment at Canton was ever an open hotel for all that came and went. Mr. Olyphant's intelligent piety led to the establishment of the *Chinese Repository*, a monthly magazine in English, the unequalled storehouse of missionary narratives and essays and translations and of official documents as to political events related to China and that quarter of the world during the momentous years from 1830 till 1850, when the publication of it ceased. The first press and its equipments were furnished by the Bleeker St. church, with which he was connected; and for thirteen years he provided for the American Board a house at Canton. The printer, Mr. Samuel Wells Williams, who was with us now as a fellow-missionary, had come from the First Church at Utica, New York; he became in time the editor of the *Repository*, the largest and most eminent compiler of dictionaries and vocabularies, and writer of works of permanent value relating to Chinese history and affairs. Two other missionaries of the American Board were laboring at Canton, both of them born in New England, but the oldest, Dyer Ball, M.D., had come out as a member of the Union Presbytery of South Carolina, and the other, the Rev. Samuel W. Bonney, had studied theology at Lane Seminary, Cincinnati. And, similarly, the father of medical missions in China, Rev. Peter Parker, M.D., though from Massachusetts, had been sent forth to the field as a member of the Second Presbytery of Philadelphia. Mrs. Harriet Parker, whom he married during a visit to America in 1841, at Washington City, a relative of the Hon. Daniel Webster, was a member of a church there.

One of the most interesting circumstances connected with the formation of the Presbytery was that Mary Rebecca, the only daughter of the pioneer, Dr. Morrison, by his first wife, was now a resident of Canton as the wife of Benjamin Hobson, M.D., who had charge of a hospital associated with the London Missionary Society. Mrs. Hobson was born in China in 1812, and was living very recently at Croyden, Surrey, near London. Her father had come to China in 1807; he was of Scotch descent; his father, James Morrison, went from Dunfermline, near Edinburgh, settled and married in England and became an elder in a Scotch church at New Castle-



upon-Tyne, of which his son Robert in 1798, at the age of sixteen, became an earnest member. It may perhaps be noticed in connection with Dr. Morrison's distinguished labors as a translator of the Scriptures and tracts that they were largely and well shared by another Scotchman from Aberdeenshire, the Rev. Dr. William Milne, resident at the time in Malacca. Dr. Milne translated, in the version called Morrison's, the large portion in the Old Testament, extending from Deuteronomy to Job, excepting Ruth, and prepared many idiomatic and spiritual Chinese tracts.

Several missionaries of other Christian denominations were living in Canton at the time when the Presbytery was organized, with whom we were on terms of affectionate and fraternal intercourse, and who were in the audience and invited to sit as corresponding members. Rev. George Loomis, of the Methodist Church, was seamen's chaplain at the port of Whampoa; Rev. Frank C. Johnson and Rev. Issachar J. Roberts were of the Baptist Church; and Rev. J. F. Cieland, of the London Missionary Society. A number of highly esteemed American merchants attended usually the religious exercises at Dr. Parker's; among them Mr. William Moore, of the house of Wetmore and Co.; Mr. G. W. Lamson and Mr. H. H. Warden, of New York; Mr. John D. Sword, of Philadelphia; Mr. William Buckler, of Baltimore, and others.

The provision for establishing a Presbyterian Synod of China, made by the General Assembly in 1848, and the formal laying of the first stone of its foundation at Canton in 1849, and the previous conversion of a number of individuals in connection with the labors of the different devoted British and American and Continental missionaries, male and female, at the seaports opened to them, appeared at the time to men of the political and mercantile world, if they condescended to notice them, to be small affairs. Their eyes and ears were occupied with the wind and the earthquake, and the fire of the continuous diplomatic and naval and military warfare which was carried on in the south during the fifteen years between the two great outbursts called the first and second opium wars. It was a time when the prophets of Jehovah were sorely tried on every hand by the crimes committed by nominally Christian nations and people on the one side and by the hatred and revenges of the heathen on the other side. And yet they were commanded to "be not afraid," but to speak words which the Spirit of God put in their mouths that would overthrow kingdoms, and to go forward "to root out and to pull down and to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant." This is what the missions have been doing which have set up their hospitals and chapels and schools from province to province until now there is scarcely a large section of the empire

between the China sea and the steppes of the north, between its Pacific coasts and the mountains of Thibet, in which these engines and implements, "mighty through God," are not pushing forward a war that will not end until the strongholds of idolatry in the land of Sinim shall submit to the Lord Jesus Christ. The but half a century of Christian missions in China shows now scores of thousands of converts, enough to assure all his faithful followers that the day is dawning when all its mountains and plains shall be built over with the sanctuaries and institutions and homes of Christianity, and shall be planted everywhere with the richest and sweetest benefits which repentant Christian faith and love and mercy can bestow, in compensation for the ages of bloodshed and robbery and wrong with which the nations of the West have darkened and devastated that immense and wonderfully rich country and smitten its peaceful, industrious and thinking people.

The years which introduced the last half of this century were an era of momentous revolutions in the political, commercial and religious world. The discovery of gold in California in January, 1848, speedily produced a great effect upon the commerce of the Pacific Ocean. British, American and other merchants at Hong-kong began to send ships to San Francisco. They sent agents into the cities and towns of Canton province to publish the intoxicating news and invite Chinese passengers. In 1849 there went to California over 300; in 1850, 450; in 1851, 2,700; in 1852, 18,000. Christians were deeply moved by the prospect thus opened of a new advance in the kingdom of God. The Presbytery of San Francisco requested the Board of Foreign Missions in New York to send a missionary there acquainted with the Chinese language and the needs of this Asiatic people. The writer of the present paper received a commission in July, and with his wife, leaving New York by steamer in October, reached San Francisco, November 6th, 1852. This was the beginning of Christian missions on the Pacific Coast in behalf of the immigration of the Chinese thither, a movement which has since then extended over the United States to Australia and to most parts of North and South America. It has excited the race to explore the possibilities of labor and trade in many countries of the world and to test for itself the value of their novel civilization and professed religious creeds. The future results of it to America, to Asia, and to other continents will be vast and enduring.

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#### THE PRESBYTERY OF CANTON CHINA.

The General Assembly of 1848 at Baltimore made provision for the establishment of three Presbyteries in China—one at Canton, one at Amoy, and one at Ningpo. The ministers who

formed the Presbytery of Canton were Rev. A. P. Happer, M.D.; Rev. Wm. Speer, M.D.; and Rev. John B. French. They met in Canton for the organization of the Presbytery at 7 p.m., February, 23rd, 1849.

By appointment of the General Assembly, Dr. Happer was moderator and Dr. Speer preached the sermon, from the text Is. xlix. 12. Mr. French was chosen stated clerk. The meeting was held at the house of Dr. Peter Parker. Besides the members of Presbytery there were present as visitors: Dr. Parker; Mr. and Mrs. S. Wells Williams, of Canton; Dr. James Legge and two or three other missionaries of the London Mission, Hongkong; Rev. Henry V. Rankin and Rev. J. K. Wight and their wives, on their way from New York to Ningpo; besides a good audience of Canton merchants, etc.

Dr. Speer left for the U. S. A. in December, 1849, so that there was not a quorum, and the meetings were suspended for a long time. Rev. J. B. French died, on the Indian Ocean, November 30th, 1853. By authority of the General Assembly, the Presbytery was reconstituted January 11th, 1860, by Rev. Andrew P. Happer, M.D.; Rev. Dyer Ball, M.D.; and Rev. Charles F. Preston. Dr. Ball was elected moderator and Dr. Happer stated clerk. The minutes of the former meetings had been lost when the Mission dwellings in Canton were burned during the war which commenced in 1856.

Two meetings were held in 1861 and no more till November 19th, 1863. The reason given in the minutes is "lack of a quorum." Regular and special meetings were held from 1863 till 1878, with the exception of 1868 and 1869, when the members living in Canton did not make a quorum, nor is there any record of a meeting in 1876. Lack of a quorum caused the meetings to be again suspended in 1878, and they were not resumed till 1883. Since that time regular meetings have been held, and occasionally special meetings.

It was fourteen years after the organization of the Presbytery before it had a church under its care, and thirty-five years before it ordained a native minister. God, however, cared for the seed that with much toil and long patience was sown by the earlier workers, and some of them lived to share in the joy of the harvest.

From the beginning there have been thirty ministers connected with the Presbytery (27 foreign and 3 native).

At present there are fourteen ministers (eleven foreign and three native); four licentiates, and nineteen churches with a membership of about 2,500.

HENRY V. NOYES.