

Three Cries from Chinese Lips

By Mrs. G. Cecil-Smith



CHINA INLAND MISSION

Philadelphia :
1329 Walnut Street

Toronto :
507 Church Street

The China Inland Mission Prayer Union

Origin. The Prayer Union was organized in Toronto in 1893, to secure to the Mission, and thus to China, the blessing of definite, frequent and united prayer. It was felt that all the needs of China and the Mission may be reduced to this, the need of prayer.

Form. The membership consists of those who count it a privilege to be the Lord's remembrancers in behalf of the Mission, and of China and who for this purpose enroll themselves as members. To those persons Prayer Cards are sent annually, as also an annual letter from the Director, and the Monthly copies of "China's Millions." No pledge is asked for, but it is suggested that, if possible petition should be offered daily. There is a required fee of 10c. to cover the cost of the card and the circular letter; the charge for "China's Millions," for those who desire to pay this, is 50c. additional.

Objects. The objects of prayer are condensed into four petitions:

For all missionaries, native helpers, and native Christians in China.

For all missionaries, native helpers, and native Christians of the China Inland Mission.

For the millions of China, that many may be saved and sanctified.

For more laborers in China, native and foreign.

Applications. Applications for membership to the Prayer Union may be made by addressing the Secretary at either of the Mission offices.

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DURING the time that I have been at home several cries from China have been ringing in my ears, and urging me to much prayer for those whose need they represent. I have told these little stories at various meetings, and God has used them to arouse prayer and sympathy on behalf of China. I trust that He may yet use them as His voice to call forth some consecrated workers, who may go with the Gospel of Life to the perishing in China.

THE STORY OF DR. TSEN

While I was living at the town of Anp'ing, an out-station from Anshun, in Kweichow, in 1893, I became acquainted with a native doctor and drug-seller named Tsen. From the first time he heard the Gospel he was deeply interested in it, and he at once began to close his shop on the Lord's Day. Every morning and evening he joined the Christians in worship, for he thought it too long to wait till the next "worship day" came round. We were much pleased with his apparent zeal, but wondered how he would stand the test of social persecution. After he had been coming for a few weeks I put the test before him: "If you really believe in Jesus as your true Savior, you should take down your picture image of the goddess of Mercy from your shop and burn it." I knew that the taking of such a decided stand for Christ would at once call

forth bitter persecution from all quarters. I can never forget, nor do I wish to forget, the answer that Tsen made: "*I have been seeking a Savior for forty years, and now that I have found One, do you think that I cannot suffer for Him?*" He went home and at once took down the paper idol and burnt it. He afterwards brought me the charred stick that formed the bottom of the scroll. Heavy and subtle persecutions immediately broke out against him, and for a time he lost all peace and quietness in this world, yet the God of peace reigned in his heart through it all, and kept him steadfast. Since that time some other members of his family have been brought to Christ through his influence. I have found that his words were quite true; he had been a Buddhist devotee and a vegetarian, going about from temple to temple to heap up merit for the next life. In his blind, groping way he had been seeking a Savior for forty years.

Oh, think of that, dear friends! In all his long search he had never seen a missionary nor a Bible, nor heard the glad news of a Savior, until in the mercy of God we were sent to Anp'ing to tell the story of Jesus.

WANG TA-KO AND HIS WIFE

Among those who came regularly to worship there were a couple of poor country people named Wang. The man had been baptized, and his wife was interested in the Gospel. They lived thirty *li*—nearly ten miles—from the city, and earned a very scanty living by the hardest of toil, but they were always regular in their attendance at the services, whether it was wet or fine. In the summer time they often arrived by nine o'clock in the morning, remaining, as a rule, until five in the evening, without a mouthful of food. On one occasion I said to Mrs. Wang, "Don't you get very hungry before you reach home at night?"

“No,” she replied, “not when I have a meal of rice before I start in the morning.” “What!” I said. “are there any times when you are unable to get that?” Mrs. Wang answered, “Yes! When our rice is gone and we have no money to get more, we have only the chaff mixed with hot water into a kind of porridge.”

“How do you manage to walk so far with such poor food?” I asked. “Well,” continued Mrs. Wang, “there was one day when I was so faint and tired on the way home that I sat down by the roadside and cried. My husband said weeping would do no good, and that we had better get away from the main road, and go behind the hills, where the passers-by would not interrupt us in prayer. We did this, and my husband prayed that God would make the hunger of soul more real than the hunger of body.” “Well, Wang Ta-ma, what then?” I asked. “Why, of

course," she said, "we were not hungry after that ; I got up and walked the rest of the way home, prepared a supper of rice husks, and after eating this we went to bed feeling quite happy."

Their extreme poverty is painfully manifest in this, and one would not think it possible for *them* to give anything to the Lord's work. They had, however, a great longing to give something, and it was accepted of God, according to what they had. After a time "the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality," as the following incident will show :

As is common in Chinese houses, the guest-room was in the center of our house, with a large room on either side. It had no windows, and the only natural light that came to it was what filtered through the paper covering of the lattice-work doors. The floor was of earth, and in winter this got very damp and

sodden. Moreover, our feet had worn little hollows in front of our chairs, and when the rain was heavy these became so many little puddles of mud and water. It was impossible for us to kneel in worship, and I had tried in vain to get some straw mats or hassocks for the people to kneel on. After some time I gave it up, and had even ceased mentioning it in prayer to God as a need. One very hot Sunday in July, Wang and his wife were late for the service—a most unusual thing for them—and all the other members agreed that they must have ague, or such a thing would never have happened.

As I gave out the first hymn, Mr. and Mrs. Wang appeared in the doorway. They looked very hot and tired, and we wondered for a moment what were the bulky burdens which they carried on their backs. They came forward to the center of the little group of ten or twelve worshipers, and then each of them laid

at my feet five nicely plaited straw hassocks, saying, "This is my present to the Church." Knowing their deep poverty I thanked them warmly, and added, "You shall be paid for these." "Oh, no! oh, don't," they replied, "we can do so little for the Lord's work, do let us do the little that we can."

"Where did you get them?" was the question upon every one's lips, for straw was very scarce at that time, and I had failed to get anyone to make them for me. The reply gave further proof of their loving zeal. Mr. Wang said, "Well, in the day-time, when we were at work in the fields, we looked about for a little scattered straw, and then, after our day's work was done, we went and gathered it up." "But," said I, "working so hard as you do, how could you possibly find time to do this extra work?" "Oh," he answered, "we just stayed up a few nights and plaited them." My heart was very full that day as I saw these evidences

of real devotion to God on the part of these poor peasants, who but a little while before had been in the darkest of heathenism. I could only think of them in their poverty as being "rich toward God," and rich indeed they are in another way also—they are being used in bringing the Gospel to their neighbors and friends.

Mrs. Wang is an aboriginal woman, of the Hwamiao tribe, and so she has unbound feet. She was never so extravagant as to walk the whole thirty *li* and back in her shoes, but instead carried them in her hand till she came in sight of the house, and then put them on as a mark of respect for the worship of God and for us.

CAN WE BE SAVED?

One other cry from China rises up in my heart, and I pass it on to you, as a loud appeal for help from

the aged women in the almost countless villages and hamlets of China. I was about to leave Kweiyangfu for another station at Hingi, ten days' journey to the south-west, and before doing so I went out for a short visit in the country with two Chinese Christian women from Kweiyang.

Several women of seventy or eighty years of age gathered round me, and listened very attentively. I told the Gospel story as briefly and simply as possible, while they were getting dinner for my companions and me. We also taught them a very short prayer. I think they understood what we wanted them to grasp. I saw tears in some eyes as one and another said, "Why! I'm so old now, having little memory left, and I never heard this strange story before, but it is *very* good to listen to."

All too soon I saw, by the slanting rays of the sun, that it was time for us to be going homeward, if

we did not wish to lose our way among the lonely hills, as I once had.

With great difficulty did I unloose their hands from holding me by the loose sleeves of my coat, and as they saw that I must go, one and another of them said, "You'll come back soon, won't you? We do so want to hear more of these good words." My life and service were now to be in a distant part of the province, and it was most unlikely that I should again visit the villages around Kweiyang, so, very sadly, I had to reply, "No, I do not expect that I shall ever come back."

"But surely you'll send someone else, won't you?" was their next eager question, and to this also I was compelled, with a very heavy heart, to answer, "No, I can't do that, because there's no one else to send." We were obliged to hurry, so began running along the footpath between the rice fields. As we did so, the cry came after us, and it has been ringing in my

ears very often since that night, "*Can I be saved with hearing only once?*" Oh! tell me, can I be saved with hearing only once?" Fellow believers who read these words, God has made us stewards of the Gospel. All the riches of God's grace therein revealed are not intended for us alone, but for "every creature" in "the uttermost parts of the earth." Are we acting as faithful stewards of the Gospel if we continue to disregard these and many similar cries from converts and enquirers in heathen lands? As the man of Macedonia called upon Paul to go over and help them, so do thousands of native Christians and earnest seekers after the truth in China, call to-day upon Christians in other lands, "Oh, brothers, who have long had the light, 'Come over and help us.'" Who will answer the call?

The China Inland Mission

Founder :

The Late Rev. J. HUDSON TAYLOR, M.R.C.S.

Gen'l Director : D. E. HOSTE

1329 Walnut St., Philadelphia. 507 Church St., Toronto.

AT the time of the organization of the C.I.M. *i. e.*, the year 1865, there were only 91 Missionaries in China, and these were located in fifteen cities on the coast line of the six maritime Provinces, except one station at Hankow, on the Yangtse.

Eleven vast interior Provinces were without a single Protestant Missionary.

The C. I. M. was formed with the special object of carrying the Gospel to these interior Provinces.

To-day the Mission has stations and Missionaries in fifteen of the eighteen Provinces of China proper.

Some Statistics

	At close of first decade.	At close of second decade.	At January, 1910
Missionaries	52	225	*933
Native Helpers....	75	117	2,012
Stations and Out-Stations	52	106	1,049
Native Communicants	Twenty-eight Churches formed.	1,655	23,095
Total Baptized from Commencement....			
	—	2,026	33,705

*Including Associates.

Donations and Correspondence to be addressed to the Secretary at either of the above addresses.