

# Our Mission In South China

By

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## OUR MISSION IN SOUTH CHINA ARE WE TO HAND OVER OUR WORK TO LESS ORTHODOX COMMUNIONS?

Our South China Presbytery after fifty years has seen fit to accept most of our American Standards of doctrine worship and Church Government; but on certain very important details they have seen fit to differ" (This is a sentence from Missionsry Boyle's communication to the Board, December 12th, 1946)

In the Communication Mr. Boyle suggests that he also may hold views which should be known before he be returned to China. **He raised the question himself.** In his communication he says: "I am inclosing a rather detailed statement of my personal views on certain controversial matters which may affect my influence as a missionary." I do so with the utmost sincerity in order to prevent, if possible, future misunderstandings and thus promote our common cause in a spirit of mutual goodwill, even if total agreement may not always be possible."

His Statement follows and is about twenty-five hundred words. Asked by the undersigned to please clarify some points, he kindly replied in an amplifying statement of about fifteen hundred words. The space required is apology for not including both statements here.

Conditions in China would seem to be the immediate concern of Synod. Mr. Boyle intimates that his own beliefs have undergone some change; so much so that in justice to himself, he laid them before the Board. He raised the question—Should he be returned. The Board voted—'Yes.' The undersigned voted—'No'; and asked that his reason

be recorded on the Minutes. It is as follows:

Minute for record re-meeting of Board  
March 12th, 1947

"The undersigned records his vote against returning Mr. Boyle to the China field because of beliefs and practices in our congregations there contrary to the Distinctive Principles of the Covenanter Church. These are apparently sanctioned by the China Presbytery of which our Foreign Ordained Missionaries are constituent members and supposed to be guiding influences. The danger of handing over God's fifty year's work in China to less orthodox Communion is imminent. Mr. Boyle's stand on what should be done in this critical situation is not sufficiently clear to return him to China to reestablish the truth."

(Signed) F. M. Foster

That those who so recently have come to the gracious Saviour should already question doctrines and practices which have proved their Scriptural soundness and worth for centuries, is cause for regret; and calls us all to prayer. "Thus saith the Lord, Stand in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But, they said, We will not walk therein." (Jer. 6:16).

How can the situation in China be explained? Covenanter Distinctive Principles, and practices based on them, are according to the Scriptures, and according to the Covenant of 1871. If not, the Covenanter Church should close her doors as unjustified schismatics. But God's Word is true and our Standards, based on the Word, are true. Covenanters are holding forth doctrines of

the Word of God not accepted by many; or, if accepted, not wrought into life practice. These principles are truth for China as well as for America. And God commands His church to go into all the world and herald them forth to all nations, peoples and tongues. When God speaks it is for all peoples to bow, reverently listen, and answer—"All that the Lord saith will we do and be obedient."

A man wanted to hire a driver. At a dangerous curve he asked—How close can you drive and be safe? Pointing he answered—**This close**, and be perfectly safe. Another—I can drive **so close**, and be perfectly safe. Another said—I can drive **just as far away as I can get from the dangerous place and be safe**. These days there is continual strain at the leash to get as close to heresies as we can, and claim we are safe. The "Explanatory Declaration illustrates. Whereas we should strive earnestly and cry mightily to God to keep us up to the standard of truth and righteous living. The great Apostle Paul, after a life of warfare and unparalleled suffering, stood at the close and answered—"I have kept the faith." At the end of life Worldly applause is stripped off as a cocoon. What have you gained? NOTHING! What have you lost? MUCH!

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Why is the China Mission apparently veering off? Is there an answer? There may be a number. The undersigned will suggest one. **OUR MISSIONS ARE LARGELY IN THE HANDS OF WOMEN.**

**OUTRAGEOUS!** No. Just plain fact. (Wives are counted for they work). Kentucky—One Minister; three women. China; One Minister (Foreign Or-

dained) and six women and another preparing to go. Syria; No Foreign Ordained Minister; one layman and two women. Cyprus; At Nicosia—Three women. Larnica; One Foreign Ordained Minister; One Licentiate; two women. Is the tabulation correct—**SIXTEEN WOMEN AND THREE FOREIGN ORDAINED MINISTERS** sent to preach the Gospel as Christ commanded? At one time in China Dr. A. I. Robb; Dr. J. K. Robb; Dr. Blair; Dr. Taggart; Dr. Kempf. In Syria—Dr. Stewart; Dr. McFarland; Dr. Edgar; Dr. J. Boggs Dodds. Cyprus—Dr. Eason; (another minister whose name not recalled; Dr. McCarroll. Now, in Cyprus, One Foreign Ordained Missionary; a Licentiate, and a disorganized congregation. But a very large School—390—and no congregation. Although such large school—390 students, the fewest numbers leave the heretical idolatrous Greek Church, after 40 years. Does God use schools to cause souls to be “born again?” The Larnica congregation, with a church built for it by Mr. Torrance of Second New York, and which flourished when it was the center, gradually died down when the school became the great objective and several years ago, became disorganized. Read Dr. A. J. Gordon’s “Holy Spirit in Missions,” and hear him say—Education does not prepare one to be “born again,” It may, and often does, make one harder to influence; and may have equipped him to fight the Gospel. (In Cyprus there is a small Arminian congregation with a minister, all using their own language—refugees from Turkey).

In the Home Land congregations in collections for missions are in some danger of being overshadowed. Synodi-

cal; Presbyterials; Congregational organizations are thorough from President to Corporals. They glean sheaves; sometimes suggesting where the money should go.

Please do not jump at conclusions. You might be wrong. Let it be gladly and gratefully acknowledged that Congregational, Presbyterian and Synodical organizations do good. They are and have been an enthusiastic force which has kept the cause of Missions stirred up in our congregations. All thank God for this gracious work. **But are they not also almost taking possession of our Foreign work?**

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Would you follow in a short examination of Scripture? When God numbered Israel women were not numbered. They did not bring the shekkel to the sanctuary. They did not bring sacrifices. They were not priests, keepers of the temple. They were not **commanded** to go up to the three feasts. (Many went.) They were not drafted for battle. (These things were in the Old Dispensation. In the New—Women were not in the first “seventy” Christ sent out. Nor were they in the second “seventy” sent out. The “seventies” were to confine their work to the little land of Israel where they would at all times be close to home and among their own people. No women were “sent.” Nor were women called to be Apostles. Nor do the Acts of the Apostles show that a woman was ordained to be a minister, elder, or deacon or officer in any congregation. **ARE WE REVERSING GOD’S PLAN?** (RE-read “A PLEA TO RETURN TO GOD’S PLAN SET FORTH IN THE GOSPELS ACTS OF THE APOSTLES AND EPISTLES. If you have not copy send to the undersigned

for one). "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." "God hath manifested his word through preaching." "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Note—"by the WORD OF GOD." One can teach arithmetic, type-writing, commercial law, a foreign language which students wish to learn etc., until "dooms day" and no saving results. God has not given the least intimation to go and teach them to the heathen, or to heretical religions. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned"—a fearful statement which should not allow the missionary to stop in his running to teach secular education; and to put up great buildings to show the natives—**We have no intention of moving on to fields that sit in darkness.** Great buildings; Great Institutions, in nearly all cases, are presently dominated by heresy. Tuition and out-spoken testimony against heresy and wicked ordinances and conduct are irreconcilable enemies. A truly converted soul, if not too old, will labor earnestly to learn to read the Bible in his own language, and his children. The Lord and the Apostles dealt almost exclusively with grown people. Possibly there is a reason "Teacher said—**CHRIST IS THE SAVIOUR.**" Well, let her say it! It isn't so. Mohammed is the Saviour. And the child believes the mother naturally so. "Suffer little children and forbid them not to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." They were brought by believing mothers.

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THE NUMBER OF WOMEN MISSIONARIES ON THE FIELD, AS IN CHINA, MAY EXPLAIN WHY DIS-

## TINCTIVE TRUTH AND PRACTICES ARE BEING QUESTIONED.

OUTRAGEOUS AGAIN! Maybe so. But read on. It is not because women missionaries are not good Covenanters. In some cases they are better than men. Sometimes women keep their husbands up to their Confession. The reason the writer assigns is—**WOMEN ARE NOT EQUIPPED TO CONTEND ON THE HIGH FIELD.** In civil affairs they are not 'drafted,' or put on the firing lines. (There are a few Amazons from whom people want to be delivered). They are not preachers. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

"God maketh the reading but especial preaching of the word and effectual means—of convincing and converting sinners." — (Shorter Catechism). "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." Hence, Go ye into all the world and **PREACH** the Gospel to every creature."

Furthermore: God's charge is—"Earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints" (Judge 3). "I kept back nothing: Paul Acts. 20:203. When one thinks it expedient to "keep back the sin of swearing allegiance to men as the nation's ruler, he is already in retreat. Paul 'kept back' nothing. The Gospel cannot go into a debased, idol and devil ridden country and do other than stir wickedness into action. "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I came not to send peace; but a sword." Matt. 10:34). God did not come to appease; but to establish His law in a devil ridden earth, and His church in all the world. A Soothing Syrup half heretical message will cause the devil to yawn only. Deborah is mentioned. Judges were

not inspired in giving their opinion when men differed. Deborah was inspired to awaken Barak to go to battle, and in foretelling how Sisera would die by the hands of a woman. So far as the record shows she was not further inspired. A Commentator says—Men were such cowards, God could not use them. Barak illustrates. A more startling example is Miriam. She seemed to have induced Aaron to join her in declaring to Moses that God spake through them also; and demanded to sit with him. God didn't wait, He didn't argue. He immediately smote her with leprosy. Moses pleaded with God to heal her. He did. But commanded that she should be put out of the camp seven days that all Israel might see and understand that pushing into an office to which God has not called is a mighty dangerous thing. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." The sons of Aaron offering strange fire were slain.

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Furthermore; God commands "Lay hands suddenly on no man" and "man" means "men" which means—Thorough preparation and examination — the Seminary and thorough examination by Presbytery before being "sent" to preach. Error and heresy are because of lack of Scriptural training in theology. How many missionaries are thus trained? "The thing which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses." The one on whom hands are laid must know, stand for, and preach the truth as set forth in the Word of God and apply it. The courts of Christ's House are charged to see that this is done.

The great Apostle Paul, after a life of unparalleled suffering, stood at the end and answered—I HAVE

KEPT THE FAITH. A mower can drive here and there to what he calls the good parts, leaving great bunches, so that the field has to be gone over again. Much work at home and on the foreign field must be gone over again—in the matter of the Psalms, Instrumental Music, Secret Societies, Swearing Allegiance to "We The People" instead of the Divine Ruler, etc, "Who shall be able to teach others also" the whole truth as it is in the Word of God. A Methodist minister said—You can shout—Come to Jesus! **Come to Jesus!!** until the people starve to death spiritually. "Feed the flock of God." (Pet. 5:2). The Old Scotch Standard Bearer pushed on up to the top of the storm-swept hill. The Commander shouted—Bring back the Standard to the regiment! The battle-scarred warrior shouted back—"BRING THE REGIMENT UP TO THE STANDARD!!" Sometimes a "Boy Preacher" gets into the pulpit; and the grandmothers of both sexes answer—I never heard anything like it! Probably not. (3) "Able to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." Dr. Duff, long years a missionary in Burma, was at last invalided home. The people wanted to hear him; and he tried to go from place to place. At last he fainted in the pulpit. They carried him to a side room. Revived a little, he insisted on going back and finishing his pleading for missionaries. **You will die if you do! I WILL DIE IF I DON'T!!** Read Dr. Paton's Biography, and see what "enduring hardness" means.

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Are these things mentioned to discredit women and women missionaries? Far from it. Many women have died as martyrs. Many have died heroical-

ly on the mission field. Many have worn out their strength and dragged themselves home or been buried on the field of conflict. They are needed on the field as wives of missionaries; as Bible Women; as teachers for converts and their children. Admitting all these, God has assigned them a still more important work—to train children for Christ: girls to be Christian mothers; boys to be Christian fathers, Church officers; ministers, elders, deacons. Ministers are prayed into the ministry by praying mothers. Mothers stand at the very head. They are the arsenal preparing the munitions of war. If they should fail in this highest of all work, the battle at home and foreign fields is lost. Back of every preacher is his mother; and be assured their reward will be great. A General had a regiment which seemed always to lead to victory. The Officer answered In that regiment you see my Drill Sergeant. Women are justly exempt from warring on the high field, for they have a more important, God-assigned work. Hear God's command—"Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke; exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine: for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." (2nd Tim. 4; 1-4) Does God call women to this service? If so, would He have

given them such beautiful, soft, and musical voices to charm baby to sleep? "Lift up thy voice like a trumpet!" On a Pullman a man was trying to comfort a crying baby. A woman poked her head through the curtains and said, "We can't sleep with so much crying!" A man shouted, "Take that baby to its mother!" The pathetic answer went down the aisle, "How I wish I could! She is in the baggage car." There was a deep hush. Very soon a mother in her woolly robes had the weeping baby on her motherly breast, as it listened to the sweet lullaby; and a man in undressed uniform came striding up. All was still. The little babe was at rest in sleep! God gave women beautifully soft voices.

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As to Missionary Boyle's communication to the Board Dec. 12th. 1946. all agree on his many commendable declarations. Here is one—"Intelligent and thorough study of problems which arise by native leaders and missionaries on the field, by the Board of Foreign Missions. AND BY THE SYNOD" (Cans mine)" He thus says Synod should consider the whole matter; approve; or, disapprove. But Synod cannot approve or disapprove unless the communications are laid before the court. And as Missionary Boyle brought the whole matter into the open, he and Missionaries Kempf and Mitchell should see that both papers are in Synod's hands. The Board is not a court to settle doctrine or its application. In the meantime Mr. Boyle will, or should, favor any quotations from his Communication to the Board, Dec. 12th., 1946 and the following explanatory letter in February, 1947. Four or five copies of the letter were made for the Board,

and it was read by the Corresponding Secretary to the Board. The Church wants the most open, frank setting forth of the whole matter for it is of serious concern to the Church's work in China.

The following paragraph is from Mr. Boyle's clarifying letter which may seem to justify the undersigned in venturing to vote "No" on Mr. Boyle's return to China.

The letter was read to the Board by the Corresponding Secretary. Mr. Boyle says: "I would require Chinese converts to accept the Distinctive Principles of the Church **if** (boldface his) they do so honestly and from real conviction. If they do not believe, and do not accept these principles sincerely, yet profess them; or, if the Presbytery takes an official position against one or another principle, the situation would seem to require some adjustment by which the Chinese Presbytery will have to make its official choice. Either the Presbytery would have to accept the whole system of doctrine, Church Government and worship, taught by the Covenanter Church in America (as far as applicable in China); or, if they refuse, to expect us to withdraw from organic union with them." Again, "We must rather keep in mind their national sense of sovereignty, under God, as a Chinese Church, and deal with them on the basis of equality of position and judgment." These are unusual positions for a mission to which the Gospel has been so recently taken. The reader will bear in mind Mr. Boyle is stating the views of the Presbytery and, as in Radio Station, "not necessarily his own."

The matter of the Chinese Church standing off for itself is before Synod.

Mr. Boyle brought his own views before the Board. It rests on Missionary Boyle and Dr. Kempf and Rev. Jessie Mitchell, constituent members of the China Presbytery, to lay the whole matter before Synod.

(Synod)

F. M. Foster.