

*The
Art of the
Missionary*

*Fellow Workers with
the Church in China*

By Ronald O. Hall

Bishop of Hong Kong and South China

*The Art of
The Missionary*

THE KNOWLE
DEDDINGTON
BANBURY OX15 0TB

*THE ART OF
THE MISSIONARY*

*Fellow-workers with the
Church in China*

by

R. O. HALL

*Sometime Missionary Secretary of the Student
Christian Movement; now Bishop of Hong Kong
and South China*

*STUDENT CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT PRESS
56 BLOOMSBURY STREET, LONDON, W.C.1*



THIS BOOK IS PRODUCED IN COMPLETE CONFORMITY
WITH THE AUTHORIZED ECONOMY STANDARDS

First published July 1942

*Distributed in Canada by our exclusive agents,
The Macmillan Company of Canada Ltd.,
70 Bond Street, Toronto*

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
NORTHUMBERLAND PRESS LIMITED
GATESHEAD ON TYNE

Contents

	<i>Page</i>
PREFACE	7
<i>Chapter</i>	
I. THE HAPPINESS OF IT	9
II. THE RELEVANCE OF THE MISSIONARY'S JOB	18
III. ADVENTURERS IN FRIENDSHIP	30
IV. REDISCOVER CHARITY	42
V. THE IMPORTANCE AND UNIMPORTANCE OF BEING A MISSIONARY	51
VI. THE MISSIONARY MOOD	66
VII. AT ONCE CARE MUCH AND CARE LITTLE	75

Preface

To the Rev. Hugh Martin.

MY DEAR HUGH,

The day I left Hong Kong your second letter came. So for a week, in lovely weather, with endless sheets of paper, and a typewriter whose spelling is worse than my own, I've tried to write a book about China.

And it's not going to come.

I can see the Generalissimo and Madame Chiang in her little sitting-room in Chungking—his quietness and her eagerness. The dear land of China is their country and it is mine. It is too dear to me to write about.

Instead, a book is coming out of the typewriter about the job of a missionary. I hope that it will determine many who plan to be missionaries to give up the idea, and a few perhaps who had planned otherwise to ask God what *He* wants them to do and what *He* made them for.

RONALD.

September 1941.

CHAPTER I

The Happiness of It

THE MISSIONARY'S JOB, at its best, is the happiest in the world; at its worst it is like a blister on a thirty-mile walk. Missionary work can be very, very good, and it can be very, very bad. Like art and music and all creative work, the average and middling, the hack-work and mechanical, had better never have been done. But like art and music and all creative work, the honest and imaginative, the generous and unself-conscious—however poor its form or halting its technique—is part of the glory of the creative love of God.

"Don't send us," said James Chalmers, "men who talk of self-sacrifice." He was right: the missionary's job is the happiest in the world. But you have to pay for happiness. Happiness just does not grow of itself. The hall-mark of happiness may be spontaneity, but spontaneity has to be bought with a price. The spontaneous happiness of married love is bought at the price of complete surrender of individual freedom to the interests and claims of another person's life. There is no talk of self-sacrifice when a man and a woman get married. Being a missionary is like being married. Your happiness and your joy are in other persons' lives. The interest and excitement of sharing other people's lives is infinitely more than the cost of exile from your own country and from your own folks. Just as in marriage the real giving up is not of bachelor quarters and bachelor ways but of independence and self-will in carving out your own life; so as a missionary the real self-sacrifice lies in being willing to give

up the desire to carve out a distinct pattern for your own life-work.

More than a hundred years ago Henry Venn, the first secretary of the Church Missionary Society, described the missionary's life as "scaffolding". To-day, success or failure in the missionary job depends on whether or not you are artist enough to see the place and meaning of scaffolding in the work of the Master Builder. Even the doorkeeper in the House of the Lord is more important than the odd lengths of rough wood on which the builders stand to raise the walls. But the rough poles and planks have this in their favour: there is no end to the number of buildings they see rise beside them; there is no end to the number of uses to which they may be put.

There is, then, endless happiness in the missionary life. But it is the untidy, impromptu, unsettled happiness of vagrant scaffolding timber, rather than the settled, orderly "this-is-mine-own" happiness of the Headstone of the corner. And believe me, you who are young and restless, the nomad is much less part of you than you now imagine. Ten years from now you will yearn for a job which is your own. Unless you are careful, that yearning will grow into a blister on your foot. You will walk the Highway of our God not as a pilgrim, happy and content to wander as the Lord commands, but with dragging steps and twisted mind, wondering why others get on so blithely while your heroic and industrious life goes unregarded by your fellow-Christians, and unrewarded by your Bishop.

Lest you think, however, that the missionary's job is not for you, I will remind you of the comparison I made with married life, the most common and the most complicated of all human adventures. Marriage

needs the same spirit and the same approach, for its fulfilment in true happiness, as this missionary job of being scaffolding to a building which is never yours but always someone else's. You do not think yourself unfit for marriage: neither, then, are you unfit for missionary work. Those who come to marriage or to missionary work with the unpossessive mind of "scaffolding" find an abiding dwelling-place in living human hearts that is part of the Joy of the Eternity of God.

I find this happiness of the missionary's life most difficult to write about. My life has been one long succession of happiness in work and in friendship. I do not know what it is to tramp the Highway of God with a wretched blister on the sole of my foot (though I know and so do my fellow-travellers what it means to climb the Kwangsi hills so hindered and to be treated in consequence, to my shame, as an old man). There have been sorrows, of course, and disappointments, and there is a cost that must be paid by the missionary and his family. It is now more than three years since I saw my eldest son. This is the third time that my wife and I have been separated for more than six months; and, as I write, that separation is due to last "for the duration". The happiness, then, I speak of is something that has to be known to be believed. For all these other things that cost and hurt, and God knows they do cost and hurt, all these other things are taken up and become part of happiness: not part of a Crown of Thorns, but rather part of that serene happiness of the Upper Room when the Lord showed His wounded hands and side to His friends. Without those wounds of His there could have been no Resurrection; without the Resurrection

there could have been none of that bewildering and forgiving friendship which lies behind the words "The Lord is risen *indeed* and hath appeared unto Simon", and the triumphant answer, "Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee." The wounds are there—but as part of the happiness of the Risen life. So it is with being married, or being a missionary. It is a happiness that is none the less gay for being deeply rooted.

The experience of the artist is, for this reason, the best parallel to the experience of the missionary. Those who dream of missionary work should go to school with artists. Artists work in words, or paint, or stone, or music. The missionary works in human lives. But artists have the same reverence for *things* that you should have for *life*. I was amazed when first I heard a sculptor say that what he carves depends on the shape and nature of the block of stone. You can pour concrete into moulds of your own making. But marble, granite and other lovely natural things must not be carved against their nature. The lordly curio shops of Hong Kong will show you many a lovely ivory carving. But the best of all will be the graceful drooping figure of Kwan Yin, revealing in its slender curving grace not only the typical beauty of China's womanhood but also the natural curve of the ivory tusk from which it has been carved. So with all art. What you make must reveal a beauty hidden in the material in which you work. The result should not reveal your genius so much as the true meaning of the subject or the material you have handled.

The starting-point of the artist's life is reverence for that which is not oneself and co-operation with

something which is so much more than one's own mind. But the achievement of true art depends on such attention to detail that in the finished work no detail claims attention, and also on great discipline and industry to make something which reveals only the freedom and leisure which discipline and energy exist to serve.

No man can make himself an artist. But artists are not born, but made. There must be grapes before you can make wine. But the juice of the grape does not make wine of itself. As the artist's talent is to the artist's life and work, so is the call of God to the missionary's life and work. It is not enough for the great artist to "stir up the gift that is in him". It needs discipline and training and long hours of hard endeavour. The beloved Paul, an artist surely if ever any man was artist, would wring his hands to think that those chance words of his to Timothy had become the only advice offered to the Timothys of our day and generation.

Artists are not dull. Nor was St. Paul. You never know what he will say next. Almost without stopping to take breath he passes from lyric poetry about the celestial body of the risen life to say, "Now concerning the collection." It is true that he says, "Now concerning the collection for the saints", but it is also true that by "saints" he meant a people like you and me. He included "backbiters", "fornicators", "unforgiving", "such are some of you". To know better what St. Paul was like, or St. Francis Xavier or any other great missionary, it is best to go to school with art. Go to Chelsea or the Latin Quarter, and you will find there men like those "born of the spirit"—whimsical, changeable, unaccountable, but

dynamic—"The wind bloweth where it listeth. No man knoweth whence it cometh, or whither it goeth. So is he, that is born of the Spirit." This quality of surprising un-dullness you will find among artists and among true saints—saints in our modern sense. I advise you to make friends with artists so that you may discover the secret of saints, because artists are more numerous than saints and you are more likely to meet them. Artists are more numerous than saints not because art is more important than holiness, but because the material in which they deal is more easily handled, more easily understood, and the discipline needed for understanding and co-operating with their more tractable material is more within the reach of man and human effort than the supernatural discipline and obedience that must be won by saints, by those who would be disciples of the Great Master in the Great Art School of the Way of Life.

In another sense the artist's way is important for missionaries. The artist's material is limited, but he deals with it whole, and as a whole. So must a missionary. Modern missionary training has gone to school more with science than with art, and suffered accordingly. For science rules by dividing. But art is not interested in dividing or in ruling. The artist, like God, prefers enjoying people to improving them. And the good artist, also like God, has a passion for redemption. Improving and correcting are shockingly inartistic, but redeeming and giving, spending, loving, and giving away, are the very soul of art itself, because they are the soul of God. If I was in charge of a training college for missionaries, I would sell the psychology books and buy violins. I would sack the Professor of Ethics and bring in a Teacher of Art.

No one would be allowed in class if their clothes were dull, no woman would graduate who would not make her own clothes, and make them beautiful, and no man who was not also a master in the garden or the garage, in the kitchen or the carpenter's shop. We would wrestle in that college to win from God the secrets of beauty. For God has made Beauty and Sympathy twin sisters, so devoted that they cannot live apart.

"But then, you see," as Phœbe says in *The Yeomen of the Guard*, you are not the Principal of a missionary training college or you would not talk such nonsense.

But there is one professor who would not be sacked. He is the Professor of Dogmatics. For the study of Dogma is the study of the Great Art of God, the great Drama of Revelation, and the Five Act Mystery Play entitled *Bethlehem to Pentecost*. But this professor, also to keep his place, would have to go to school with the art teacher to discover the secrets of his own profession. Bless him! What a time he would have going round the Louvre: to find every picture more full of Dogma than the International Library of Theology itself.

Behind this raillery there is deep conviction. If you would be a missionary spend your time in the art galleries where the old Masters are to be found. Learn to appreciate their greatness and to understand what they have done. Learn also from the disciples of those old heroes of paint and canvas why in this day and generation they are their disciples still.

And so back to happiness. What is it when you stand in front of a great Master's canvas that gives you such breath-taking joy? Part of it is, of course, sheer amazement that it should be so infinitely more

beautiful than the best reproduction that you have ever seen. Part of it is the painful knowledge that your memory of it will so soon fade, that this vision of beauty must so quickly be left behind, and that the open door of memory is like a blurring screen of tantalizing incompleteness. Part also of the amazement is at the mystery of such transcendent skill of hand and eye and brush. But more than amazement is sheer joy. It is, as it were, an overdose of the same happiness as the happiness of the missionary, of the artist, of the married man or woman. This happiness you will find in all great art. You will find it in the beauty of nature; and you will find it in the life which knows valleys as well as mountain tops, the long dark hours of night as well as the radiance of the dawn. Of my own life I can only say it has been one of continual happiness. As a missionary I have been a profiteer in happiness, perhaps because I have been a profiteer in friendship. I have received so much that I have become insensitive to others' needs, and to the necessity of giving. And all this beauty and happiness which I know in life is echoed supremely for me in music and in art and in all beauty. This same happiness God offers those who become missionaries. They will live long years without visiting an art gallery. But they will never enter a Chinese village without being reminded of some meaning and beauty they last saw in a great picture, or heard in the Queen's Hall. They will have no money to hang water-colours on their walls. A harmonium or a concertina will be their only piano, and yet if their hearts have been tuned to the artists' wave-length, to enjoyment not to moral endeavour, to redemption not to edification, they will find the same consciousness

of beauty about them: in a servant's smile of welcome, in the greeting from a sick bedside, in the clothes and ways and habits of the common folk, their festivals, their songs, their baskets, and that tireless limber walk of coolies whose art it is to wring beauty from the endless carrying of terrific loads.

CHAPTER II

The Relevance of the Missionary's Job

THERE HAVE BEEN in Hong Kong while the long war in China has dragged on, a succession of exhibitions of work by Chinese painters, refugees from Shanghai. Half the proceeds have been given to relief funds. The exhibitions have been opened by Governors, Vice-Chancellors; even by bishops. But there has been about them all something tragic and pathetic. These men and women should, surely, be employed by cities and governments to make beauty in public places. They should not spend their time hawking their water-colours and oils to those who wish to adorn their walls with fragments of another man's soul. Art should mean more than this in life. The artist should not be so dependent on the whims of those who can be tempted to put money into buying pictures, or the missionary so dependent on those who invest in sending missionaries overseas. Beauty and religion mean much more than this suggests, intend much more, are much more significant, much more relevant than one can discover at artistic exhibitions or at missionary meetings.

Do not let anyone convince you that art and missionary work share a common irrelevance to life itself. Even Communists with faith rooted in materialism will not admit this irrelevance for art. Communists call religion the people's opiate, but art is their very life. Capitalists unconsciously agree with Communists. Those who are most successful in the stern business of money-making use the money they have

Relevance of the Missionary's Job 19

made to buy beauty in some form, houses perhaps, or gardens, pictures or sculpture, or it may be women, for their enjoyment.

Art then is relevant. Art, like beauty, is unpossessible and elusive. And yet all who have the leisure or the cash for her pursuit set out to buy beauty if they can.

"Whatsoever," says Paul, "are the promises of God, in Him (Jesus Christ) is the yea." This hunger of the soul of man for beauty, this more than happiness which is the very soul of art, is one of the promises of God which is fulfilled in Jesus. For if there is God at all, this all-pervading mystery of art and beauty must be of Him, from Him and for Him.

The relevance of religion lies close to the relevance of art. The place of the missionary in society is near neighbour to the artist's place. And yet the place of art and its relevance in life are almost impossible to define. No wonder then that religion also cannot be defined, or valued, or given its own measurable place in life. A great opera, a cinematograph performance and a service of worship—all are alike indefinable. Their value is in the experience itself. They cannot be described or valued. Those who share in them live their value. To appraise what is experienced is like weighing love, or measuring the beauty of a sunset.

When they say to me then, "Do you think religion is necessary for the Chinese?", I cannot answer, "Do you think art is necessary for you?", because neither art nor religion are "necessary". Both are more than necessary. Life without either is not life. Without art and religion we would be colonies of human ants.

In China art and religion are very close together. The Chinese are an artistic rather than a religious

people. Only those who love beauty can understand the Chinese people. By understanding the relevance of art to their life, you will understand the relevance of religion. Sell every book you have on the religion of China and buy instead some fragment of her art. Begin there to see why or why not you should be a missionary. What your answer will be I do not know. That is not my business, but God's. He made you and He made China. He knows why He made you the odd, muddly thing you are. He knows why He made China what she is. He knows whether or not He made you for each other.

I cannot tell you whether or not God means you to be a missionary, but I must, if I can, tell you why in China art takes the place that religion takes in India. You can ask me that, and we can discuss it, and so know China better, and perhaps human nature better. But finally this mystery is God's and He must tell you the full answer. He has not yet told me. That is no reason why He should not tell you. If you come to China as a missionary you will probably know the answer. You may even—though this is most unlikely—be able to pass it on to others.

One of the limitations of our knowledge of China is that historically and geographically India is nearer to us. India has two great religious divisions which separate her people as land and water separate our ways of travelling. Our own European history has been dominated by similar religious separations—by the struggle of Christianity first with paganism, then with Islam. We are, therefore, like India, religion-minded. We assume that everybody must have "a religion" or else have none. We call even Communism a religion. To call Communism a "religion"

is more correct both historically and analytically than to talk about "the religions of the Chinese people". China's life does not fit our categories. In our sense of the word they are not religious—but they are artistic. You cannot talk of the religions of the Chinese people, but only of their art; not because their art is their religion, but because their art is their life. For the Hindu, the Moslem, and the Communist, religion is life, but for the Chinese this is not so. You may ask then: do you mean that the Chinese are an irreligious people? I cannot answer "yes" to that question. I do not think being "religious" is a final category of value or of judgment. The only final category in my understanding is "being yourself". You can then ask me: do you think Christianity will make the Chinese people more themselves? I am already answering that question in the affirmative with my life. That is why I am in China. That is why my life is happier than I can express in words. "Whatsoever are the promises of God, in Him is the yea."

The artistic and the religious mood are alike promises of God. China carries on the long business of living and of dying which is the cycle of human life; and, within this cycle, shows her artistic mood in *compromise* rather than in controversy, in *cynicism* rather than in fanaticism, in *common goodness* rather than in religious fervour. And the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ gives to this artistic mood of the Chinese soul just what Paul the poet meant when he spoke of our Lord as the "yea" to all the promises of God. I cannot express what missionary work means in China better than St. Paul did in those words. Perhaps some day you will be able to.

I have listed "compromise", "cynicism", "common goodness" as part of China's artistic way of life. These things are not to be despised. They are promises of God. Even before they are touched by the wounded and risen hands of the world's Redeemer they are not to be despised or esteemed lightly. The human activities and human outlook those words describe go far beyond the words themselves. They come of a mood that is not our own. We cannot therefore expect words of our language to describe them. Nor do I suggest that in those three words I have touched the soul of China. Nor would I dare to confine her spirit in those words. "Cynicism" I have used deliberately, and not "detachment" or "fatalism", for there is in China's mood an enjoyment of detachment, and a devotion to the fatalistic mood which, in us, would be deliberate. But in China it is not deliberate. No artistic action, and no artistic mood is deliberate. It is something more spontaneous, more related to enjoyment than to purpose. The cynicism of China is at its best cynicism without a snarl, and without a bite. It has about it the subtle savour of man's enjoyment of his fellow men for their own sakes—an enjoyment of the wickedness and craftiness and stupidity of men as well as the heroic and the noble and the good. Shakespeare knew this artistic mood and this true cynicism. There is more of King Lear even in a *Midsummer Night's Dream* than the sentimentalism of our youthful civilization will readily accept.

There is poverty in China, and illiteracy, and terrible disease. Tuberculosis carries off millions every year. Infant mortality is astronomical. Malaria keeps a larger population than the British Isles fatally

anæmic, and incapable of maximum use of hand or brain or heart. Opium and gambling and the terrible drive for money-power are as bad as our English habits of cocktails, bridge, horse-racing and football pools, and our judgment of success by what a man has to retire on whether the size of his pension, the rank of his title, or the extent of his investments. But these evil things which are common to us both are perhaps more destructive in China because she has not got the social organization with which Western democracy has managed to protect in a measure the financially or morally weak against too obvious exploitation by the financially strong.

But China's poverty is no reason why you should be a missionary, nor is her illiteracy, nor are her terrible endemic diseases reasons for your coming to her shores as a missionary. The supreme relevance of the Christian movement is not to these things. I do not say that the Christian movement must ignore these things. Christians cannot remain Christians if they pass by on the other side. But the missionary movement is not humanitarian. It is either of God, or it is impertinent.

A Chinese once asked me, "What will be the place of the Christian Church in a communist state?" Implied in this question is plainly the idea that Christianity is immediately and supremely relevant to the things which a communist state does by state action. Schools, hospitals, public health services, agricultural and industrial co-operatives—all these things to which in the last ten years a large part of my time has been given as a Bishop of the Church—all these things are taken in under state action in the communist state. What then is the function of the Christian Church in the communist state? The answer

to that question will also include the relevance of the Christian movement to any state, and the relevance of the Christian movement to China in particular.

I am afraid I must make an artistic approach to this answer or, if you prefer it, a dogmatic one. For the poetry of man's thought about God is called dogma. . . .

This is my problem. I find that people who really in their bones know that God exists, do, in spite of this, continually discuss China or economics or philosophy as if God did not exist. To do that, surely, is like trying to swim with the assumption that there is no water in the swimming-bath. To think of China as she really is you must think of China as "China-plus-God". You and I believe in God or you would not be reading this book and I would not be writing it, and yet you may get impatient if I insist that you can only understand China, estimate, appreciate the Chinese people if you remember all the time that "in God they live and move and have their being", and have always done so since history began. I have suggested that they are by our standards an irreligious people; that they prefer compromise to controversy, cynicism to fanaticism, and common goodness to ethical enthusiasm. But it is possible to be irreligious and yet remain actively obedient to the creative will of God. You can only get the feel of the relevance of the Christian movement for China if you see China to be now, as it always has been, within the moulding hands and heart of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

God made the world, including China and the Chinese people. In Christ, God intervened to restore, redeem, fulfil, complete, intensify what He had begun.

That intervention is relevant first of all and finally because it is God's intervention. I can best define what I believe this intervention to mean for China by emphasizing the word *intensify*. The relevance of the Christian movement in China is easiest understood as *intensification* of what God began when He made the Chinese people, and what He has gone on doing down the ages. God would not be God if China had ever been a god-forsaken country. And God would not be God, but a machine, if His dealings with every people were the same as His dealings with the Jews or with the European peoples. It is not easy for our Western minds steeped in the influence—direct and indirect—of the story of God's dealings with the Jews, to imagine the same Eternal Love dealing very differently with another people. You can only properly appraise the balance sheet of the established firm "God, China and Co. Unlimited" by the type of business that firm has been carrying on, by understanding God in China's way, the way of the artist rather than the way of the religionist. You can understand this when you can see Christian dogma as poetry, because poetry is art, and art is a deeper and truer representation of reality than any other activity the human mind can fashion.

China loves mountains as she loves every natural thing. China's pictures, China's poems, China's gardens cannot escape the influence of mountains. But no one supposes that those pictures, poems and miniature gardens are real mountains. Our Christian dogma, that is our Christian poems about God, are best understood in the same way—as the poet's effort to describe in words something you can never confine in words. The Nicene Creed and a Chinese scroll are both artistic creations. The painted scroll will

never be mistaken for the infinite variety, and endless changing beauty of every glade and runnel, every group of rocks and every clump of fern, on the vast mountainside which the few simple strokes of the master's pen have captured for us. But there is a danger for our Western minds that we will mistake creed for the great reality those simple words of master minds have captured for us. We tend to believe in the creeds rather than in the infinite God whom the creeds with such consummate art represent to us. This happens still more commonly with the Bible. Even in these post-Madras days many European Christians give to our Chinese minds the impression that they believe in the Bible rather than the God whose beauty and truth inspired the Bible. In the West we talk of "the Bible as poetry", or "the poetry in the Bible"; but we hesitate to call the Bible as a whole a poem, or a work of art. In China we know that it is one of the greatest works of art that God and man have ever achieved, only surpassed in time by the living drama of that intervention of God in human life, which is the life of Christ, not as it is written out in the New Testament but as it is lived and is still being lived both in time and in eternity. The Chinese mood being artistic rather than religious sees the Bible and Church and dogma alike as poetry—and in so doing honours them more and not less than we do.

But the Chinese people do not only delight in the artistic reproductions of mountains; they love to visit them. They carve on the mountains poems of gratitude for their beauty. To visit a mountain is an intensification of the joy that one has from scrolls and poems and rock gardens. Returning from an actual visit to the mountain itself, the artistic representa-

tions, though they are in a sense dwarfed by the actual experience, are also intensified by it. The mountain itself and its artistic representation, whether the poem or the picture or the miniature garden, take on richer meaning from our experience of both.

The relevance of the Christian movement in the long history of God's dealing with His Chinese people is like the mountain lover's visit to the mountain, the visit enriched by the previous artistic enjoyment of mountains, and the artistic life enriched by the visit to the real thing. As Christ comes in the life of the Church more and more to this country, which in the past has only known God through the representations of art, and life and literature, there will be an intense enrichment of that artistic life. China's new religious life with God in Christ will be richer and deeper because of its artistic heritage.

It has been supposed sometimes that the old books of China's wisdom will take the place of the Old Testament in the Chinese churches that are to be. This is not so. China's Old Testament is not written in books. The Jewish Old Testament is a deposit of the life which God and the Jews lived together. The Old Testament of any country is the whole of its experience of God and man, in all its folkways, its habits, its traditions, its art, its clothing, its common ways of life. All China's past is her Old Testament. A common mistake of our Western tradition is to assume that a people's literature will most clearly reveal the secrets of her life. This is only partly true in any country. In China it is less true than in most countries, for the reason that her approach to literature has been part of her whole artistic approach to life. At many periods the form of Chinese writing

has mattered equally with the matter. When I called a few months ago on Bishop Song, the busy and able Chinese Christian leader of the Province of Szechwan, he was engaged in copying the characters of a famous Chinese scholar of the past. A busy bishop improving his handwriting by industrious use of a copy-book! My friends might wish I could so profitably employ my own leisure. But that is not a true description of what Bishop Song was doing. The Bishop is essentially Chinese and less foreignized than most of China's Christian leaders, though he is an ardent propagandist for true use of the English language by the Chinese students as an open door to lead them into the heart and mind of Christendom. The Bishop's absorption in this old art of his country goes much deeper than we Westerners, who are in the main unartistic people, can understand. For the Bishop this attempt to wrest more of the secret of the old calligraphists by methodical copying of their writing, has a significance which is not religious but artistic. It is parallel to our religious use, say, of the book of Isaiah. He was training hand and eye and mind to fashion for himself these old characters whose poise and restraint, strength and proportion, grace and symmetry, have in them China's life embodied in the flowing stroke of the artist's brush. These achievements of Chinese life cannot be studied except by copying them. That surely is part of the artistic understanding of life—an understanding which is not typical of our Western mind, except in those to whom it means so much that they become artists.

A few months later Bishop Song gave me a scroll he had written himself. It was the thirteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians. For him I

know it has two values: firstly that he wrote it out for me himself, and secondly that he has tried to represent the soul of China in the style and flowing beauty of the script. For me it has mainly the first value because I cannot fully understand the other. I recognize it as another way of thought and living from my own. But I cannot enter completely into the artistic mood of China. I reverence it. I know it is of God. I believe it contains treasures that down the ages the great Christian Church of China will mediate to all the nations. But nearly all of us who are missionaries are at present outside this inner sanctuary of Chinese life. We are scaffolding. But, thanks be to God, scaffolding has a real place in house building.

It is on the foundation of the artistic way of life that God is building the Chinese Christian Church. His intervention in China in the great Poem, which is Jesus Christ, will intensify and draw closer to His heart in the bright radiance of personal communion, the centuries-old trafficking that He has had with China in the ways of beauty and of art. All that China is, and has become, will be lifted up a reasonable, holy and living sacrifice unto Him, and all who are partakers of this Holy Communion will be filled with His grace and heavenly benediction.

And the last part of this lovely prayer applies especially to us who are missionaries:

"And although we be unworthy through our manifold sins to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offences, through Jesus Christ our Lord—by whom and through whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. Amen."

CHAPTER III

Adventurers in Friendship

I DID NOT finish the quotation from James Chalmers which I used in the first chapter. Here it is in full: "Don't send us fellows who talk of self-sacrifice. Send us those who take dangers and difficulties as the pepper and salt of life." With all respect to a great missionary I dislike his second sentence as much as I like his first. Jesus, our Lord, was not the type of man to whom he refers in the first sentence. Our Lord's talk of self-sacrifice was very different. But it is equally true that our Lord Jesus Christ was not the sort of person who regarded dangers and difficulties as "the pepper and salt of life". There was none of that sort of rough stuff about Him. The agony of the Garden has nothing of Dick Turpin or Douglas Fairbanks about it. The agony of the Garden is of a different order also from the stories of Shackleton and Amundsen or of Nansen and Mallory and Scott. I do these great heroic men no injustice when I say that. Nor do I do injustice to the great James Chalmers and other pioneers.

But of this I am convinced: that to be a missionary is rather an adventure in friendship than an adventure in physical dangers. The student of psychology would guess from Chalmers' statement that he was himself as proud of his devil-may-care attitude to dangers and hardships as the men he did not want were self-conscious about self-sacrifice. The adventurer in friendship takes life as it comes. The rough or the smooth will be all one to him if it is

Adventurers in Friendship

for people and *with* people. But if he has the finer sensitiveness which is the essential for true friendship, he will almost certainly not be the type who can be described in Dr. Chalmers' pepper and salt phraseology. Those earlier missionaries may have lacked the kind of sensitiveness which makes deep friendships with another people, because so much of their strength and of their imagination was absorbed in dealing with the practical problems that confront the pioneer. Land had to be secured, houses built, and relationships with the people and their leaders had to be so surely laid that there would be as little misunderstanding, and as much mutual confidence as possible. This was achieved by fairness rather than by friendship; by a kind of detached patronage rather than by intimacy.

But in China that day is over. There is a Chinese Christian Church. The Chinese Church is still small, immature, financially weak, self-conscious, and in many ways pre-adolescent in its psychology. But it is there. It is alive. The pastors and members are Chinese. Contacts with governments and magistrates are now made by them. It is their country. We come as their guests and fellow-helpers. The dangers and difficulties that await us are real. But they are the difficulties of a true sympathy; the dangers of the thick-skinned soul and the pig-headed mind. The attitude of self-conscious self-sacrifice is even more fatal than it was in the old days. In those days it failed in dangers and in difficulties. In these days it will fail in everyday living. It does not take much imagination to realize how quickly a Chinese Christian will detect that type of mind in a missionary. Even the most Christian Chinese with a long experience of the weakness of missionary human nature is puzzled and hurt by the

missionary who regards life in China as a self-sacrificing experience. By their standards our life is a pampered one. They are themselves insistent that we should take holidays that they cannot get. At every turn they shelter us from what is unpleasant and difficult. They are often embarrassed that we should share their home food. If they have time they send out for more than they generally eat themselves.

I have two Episcopal colleagues. They are not my subordinates though they are called assistants. We are rather co-operating bishops. One is a Doctor of Columbia University and has been Professor of Sociology in one of the most famous universities in China. The other is a countryman whose only university has been experience. In that university he has indeed taken his doctorate with honours. These two colleagues of mine have one most noticeable characteristic in common: they desire all the time to shield me and make life for me and my family easier than it is for them and for theirs. Pray God this is not because I give them the impression that my life in China with them is one of great self-sacrifice. For that is not true. It is a life of the greatest happiness, interest and enjoyment in which the joy and interest of working with them is not the least part. It is due, I hope—this continual care for my family and myself—rather to love and courtesy, and recognition that we come as guests among them.

The man who is best described as one "to whom dangers and difficulties are as the pepper and salt of life" will fit into this kind of atmosphere about as easily as an Alsatian puppy in a porcelain shop.

We must not be those who revel in physical hardship, but we must be prepared for physical hardship

when it comes. And it will come. Three Y.M.C.A. student secretaries left Hong Kong recently for Chungking. All three were "green". The two Chinese were Northerners, and the third an Englishman who had never travelled overland in China. On the journey, where they found mission stations he could take the lead; where there were none his Chinese colleagues looked after him. The Englishman was the only one who got through the journey without sickness. His colleagues, had they been missionary candidates, would never have passed the doctor and been allowed out of England. The Englishman was not a man for whom dangers were the salt of life. He hated discomfort. He dreaded this journey in the hottest part of the summer. I was a little anxious as to how he would stand up to it. I rather pooh-poohed his concern to equip himself with vitamins, Haliverol and brandy. His two Chinese fellow-travellers, who seemed to need them more, could not afford to buy them. But the journey was a great success, largely because of two things as far as the young missionary was concerned. He was used to the normal holiday hiking of our English countryside, and he was sensitive enough to physical weakness and discomfort not to despise as poor city-bred weaklings his two colleagues. The journey was rather an adventure in friendship than an adventure in physical endurance. Such is the life of the missionary to-day.

The life of the missionary is an "adventure in friendship" rather than an "experience of friendship" for in a sense the friendship is always in peril. All friendships in which there are very considerable inequalities share this peril. Inequality of age is an example. Between two men of the same year in the

same college, friendship in which the pre-college environment is totally different is always an adventure. It is lived out in daily peril of disaster. The friendship of missionary life is an adventure, and that friendship is always in peril, not because of racial differences *per se*, but because of differences in environment preceding the friendship.

The peril of our adventure as missionaries is increased by the psychological oddness of our position. We come as teachers and yet we must always be learners. We cannot be teachers unless we are always learning. We have to learn so much more than we have to teach, and yet the little we have to teach is more important than the much we have to learn. If we only or mainly come to learn, the money spent on us would not be justified. If that money were given to the Chinese Church for their disposing, two, perhaps three, men who have drifted into education or government might now be giving full time to the ministry of the Church supported by the cost of one missionary. Those who know China know what this means. They know that any one such pastor is of more value for the conversion of China than any three missionaries. And yet without the help of missionaries these men cannot do such good work. The life of their country is in their bones and in their blood. They can speak of Christ to their fellows in a way few missionaries can get near. But in the blood and in the bones of the missionary is the life of the Church. However green he may be he brings with him the great wealth of a Christian heritage. He knows the ways of the Church and her traditional reaction to human problems in the same way that the youngest and least experienced Chinese pastor knows the folkways of his own people.

The missionary life then is a perilous adventure in friendship because of the inequality in the relationship. The missionary does not meet his colleagues as equals. They are steeped in the folkways of their own people, he in his. But he is steeped also in the folkways of a Christian people and of the Church of his country. From such unequal marriages the Chinese Church itself is being born. And the question is always: how much of the past of each parent is to be preserved in the bringing up of the child? It is over the question of children that unequal marriages most often come to grief. Similarly in the adventure in friendship which is the missionary life, it is over the "children", over the treatment perhaps of brother Christians for which there is a shared responsibility, that disagreement often arises, accompanied by real problems of compromise, of trust, and of forbearance. Missionaries may see things passed over or condoned, which their different approach and the folkways of their own upbringing, national or Christian, make them regard with horror. And Chinese have to see missionaries blundering almost every day because they have not the same instinctive capacity for judging a man's worth as a national of his own country. "I never accept for baptism a man recommended by a missionary," said a Chinese pastor to me on the same day that a missionary advised me to examine more carefully the length and quality of training for baptism customary in the Chinese Church. The missionary instinctively trusts the man who responds to his advances. The Chinese pastor is more ready to be lenient, as we are in our own country, to men and women held in repute by their own people. We missionaries often forget that it is easier for us to mix with the poor than for the Chinese

pastor. We can ignore the traditional customs of hospitality and friendship. Because we are foreigners we are forgiven for doing things which make it impossible for a Chinese pastor to continue to work in the district. As a foreigner I can say to an unsatisfactory worker, "You have had your chance and you have not made good. Synod has decided that you cannot be employed after next summer." The Chinese secretary of Synod will write the same words in an official letter. This decision has been taken by a unanimous vote in a committee in which are two foreigners and twenty Chinese. I may make two or three attempts to find him other work and fail. But if he is a son of the Church, if his parents have been Christians or he is perhaps a pastor's son, my colleagues will never be clear of responsibility for him until he has found other work. They will contribute from their own salaries for his support or more doubtfully by our standards create inside the Church a job for which he is fitted.

Nor must you think that by living on Chinese food, wearing Chinese dress, living perhaps with the pastor, eating the same food and so on that we can escape the difficulty. Again and again missionaries who let go in this way the foreign externals compensate for this surrender by an equivalent obstinate devotion to their own estimates and judgments on what should be done for this person or not be done for that. You may find indeed very great reluctance on the part of a pastor to such intimate relations with you. It will be because he knows that he will far too often have to give way, without your being conscious of it, to your worse judgment against his own better judgment.

Living in China will help you to see how subtle and

delicate a matter friendship is. You will realize it has always been so in your own life, though you have not known it. You will discover that you have never given to friendship the thought and care and prayer that it needs and deserves.

Part of the difficulty in the adventure in friendship, which is the missionary life, is the spiritual pedestal on which a missionary is put. In some ways it is more difficult and more dangerous than being a clergyman in one's own country. For the life is more public and in a sense more lonely. You feel that the whole reputation both of your country and of the Church you represent is in your hands. And yet in spite of this responsibility very few missionaries achieve saintliness. Real saintliness is more common among Chinese Christians than among missionaries. The scales are weighted too heavily against us. I suspect that the devil, who is more adept even than the guided "Grouper" in selecting key men for his attacks, is mostly content to leave our Chinese friends alone and to concentrate on us! I do not say that saintliness is common among Chinese Christians—only that it is more common among them than among missionaries. The chief failure of the average missionary, that in which he least shows true saintliness, is in his great capacity for criticism of others—this tends to increase as more responsibility for others is taken off the missionary's shoulders on to the Chinese Church. Is it not true that one is most critical of that for which one is least responsible? I know in saying this I am making a most serious confession of failure in my own life, as well as in that of my fellow missionaries. I know also that my ability as a fellow national to judge my fellow missionaries with more knowledge than I can our Chinese Christian col-

leagues, probably makes it easier for me to blind myself to the sins of the one and to see more clearly the sins of the other. There is indeed a very high standard of faith and generosity among missionaries; and I do not know one who is not held, and rightly held, in deep and most grateful affection and regard by many, many Chinese friends.

But we all who are now missionaries yearn that you who follow after us should learn from our failures and most succeed where we have most failed. I am convinced that every China missionary to whom you show this paragraph, and ask whether it is not true that deep and genuine saintliness is not more common among Chinese Christians than it is among missionaries will answer, "Yes; it is true." Plainly for me as I write to you about the missionary's job this is a matter of great importance and of great sorrow.

When I was a student, a missionary in India wrote a most delightful book about the missionary life. It was called *Not Leaders But Saints and Servants*. Those were the days before the writer had discovered that he was vain about his beard and, if I may say so, vain with some justification. It was a fine beard. Later at a Group House Party he discovered beard-vanity in his soul and shaved his chin to the greater glory of God. I have wondered sometimes whether he would not feel the same about the title of his tract on the missionary's job. There is a self-consciousness about both the words he uses—"saint" and "servant". To be a missionary is to be too much part of the life of the Chinese people and the Chinese Church for words so separative to be used of it. A missionary must indeed be a servant, but his service must be part of the service of the Church, sharing in her serving

rather than being her servant. He must also strive earnestly after saintliness and yet must not separate himself from her own saintliness, but be one with it. He must be less noticeable than the words "saint" and "servant" suggest, and yet he will be failing in his task if the Church with which he lives is not more serviceable towards men and more saintly towards God because he is part of her life. He must be so much part of the Church that the difference which he is becomes absorbed in the whole body of the Christian folk with whom he lives and works and prays. It must be true not that he is noticeable because different, but that the whole body is different because of what he brings in his single person from the whole Church of God to this part of it in which he works.

The peril both for true saintliness and true friendship is in this pedestal, in the fact that we are always the one or two perhaps who are different in race and language and wealth of church experience among so many. This peril of the pedestal is best defeated by the taking together *as two aspects of the same thing* "friendship" and "saintliness".

I find it hard to believe that our Lord after He had washed the disciples' feet said, "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet" (St. John xiii. 14). It is difficult to reconcile these words with the words He had just used to St. Peter, "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." I cannot regard the feet-washing as an object lesson in Christian service. It is a spontaneous act of love and affection carried over into a dramatic and ritual act. As a spontaneous act of friendship it embodies the true relation between friendship and saintliness. There

is about it both solemnity and naturalness, both holiness and the human joy of touching and tending the bodies of those we love. Take away from the story the suggestion that it was in any sense an object lesson; that Jesus either said in word or planned in mind that it should be an object lesson to His disciples; see it rather as something complete, natural and fitting in itself, whose full value began and ended with its performance. It then takes on for us, for whose sake it is reported, a new value of its own. It comes to us not as a lesson as to how we should act, but as a picture of our Lord's way of living with others in a way in which saintliness and friendship are blended without self-consciousness or strain.

I mention this story with some hesitation because it is dangerous to think of our lives as missionaries among our Chinese fellow Christians as like our Lord's life with His disciples. For we and our China friends are fellow disciples. I mention it because it is the way in which I have been treated by my Chinese friends. It is they rather than I who have been in the position of the Master. I have been the one who received. And having received this kind of friendship I can understand better our Lord's words, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part in me, Peter." One is taken up by this kind of service given and received into a happy atmosphere of friendship in which the word "servant" simply will not fit, and the word "saint" is too dangerous to use.

For the saintliness we long for is not the saintliness of the hermit, or of the man who lives a life of such notorious mortification that men speak of him in bated breath. It is not anything that can come from a strict discipline of life and prayer. It is something nearer

in tone and habit to charity as charity has been known and honoured in the early Church. It is near to charity in the sense of the prayer which draws us to share in the Lord's Supper with the words, "Ye that are in love and charity with all men", to which our hearts answer, "Because we yearn to be drawn unto Thy Inmost Being, who art in Thyself Love and Charity we dare to draw near; that we who are empty may by Thee be filled."

This saintliness of charity needs indeed the discipline our Lord Himself had need of, the discipline of mortification, of prayer, and of obedience, but its tone should not be, as it were, a reminder of the remoteness of heaven from earth but of its glad near-coming and eager reaching down for sinning and weary men and women.

In charity, then, we can seek saintliness. In the charity of Christ, our pedestal, our "missionariness" will be forgotten. Our being different, being so forgotten, will then most fulfil its purpose.

Rediscover Charity

CHARITY NEEDS REDISCOVERING not by coining a new word but by reminting the old. For charity is pure gold. The impress of the head of Christ the King has, by careless handling, been worn till it is almost unrecognizable. But charity is still the true mark of royalty. There is no other sterling value in the Kingdom of God. In charity the values of "social service" and "personal evangelism" find their true proportion, and their true meaning. Charity is at once supernatural and natural. It touches equally the soul and body of all who meet with it.

Bishop Paul Yu Pin, Bishop of Nanking and national leader of the Chinese Roman Catholics, came to Hong Kong after the fall of his see city—came burning with eagerness to collect great sums of money for the relief of the millions who were homeless and starving. But He spoke to us of charity, the royal charity of God. To give food was to Bishop Yu Pin one part of the Bread-breaking in the Mass. In his mind there was no final division between blessing the bread and breaking it and giving it to the faithful as the Body of the Lord, and setting up food kitchens where rice and soup are handed out to endless streams of refugees. One was reminded of how much there is in common in the atmosphere and actions of the "Feeding of the Five Thousand" and of "The Last Supper". And the difference between them only emphasizes the similarity. After the feeding the people wanted to make Jesus King. After the Supper

the people said, "We have no King but Caesar." It was left to Pilate to write "Jesus of Nazareth, King". In giving bread, and in giving His own body on the tree, the royalty of the charity of God is manifested.

For the missionary and for one training to be a missionary, or pondering whether or not this is God's calling for him, this question of charity is paramount. Rediscover in your own experience what the charity of the Eternal God has been and meant in your own life. If you have not yet known what it means to be before Him as a half lifeless beggar, receiving life and strength and meaning for your own existence from Him, then the worst and final danger of the starving is upon you. You are so far gone in hunger you have no more desire for food. You are content to starve when He would feed you daily from His own table. And if the Communion Service means only to you a solemn act of human fellowship, in God's name don't come to China. China has known for centuries the heights and depths of human fellowship. She has drained the meaning of hospitality to the dregs, and has found there only dregs. Her philosophy is based on fellowship, and the result is cynicism at its best and at its worst—in Lin Yu Tang's phrasing, "old roguery". You cannot teach China anything about fellowship. She can teach you more than the West has ever learned. But China knows that all this is not worth learning and not worth teaching.

Is it possible that just as we have allowed a kind of buffer state to grow up between ourselves as missionaries and the real life of the Chinese people, so our own religious life and religious world is a kind of buffer state between the living God and the world of men? And in that buffer state we use the currency

of both countries without the true value it has in either. Living thus in a world in which we use the name of God and the currency of His intensely personal activity among the souls of men in ways impersonal—like fellowship, and brotherhood, and truth—has led to the decay and beggary of royal charity, until that which is the very fire of the heart of the Eternal is called among us "cold". The word "charity" is among us commonly discarded because of its condescension and its tepid, even temperature. Perhaps charity was finally murdered when the fatal title for a good society was coined—"The Charity Organization Society". Who can "organize" "charity"? Only those whose hearts do not know its eager fire.

To be a missionary in China to-day one needs above all to understand charity as a holy and a royal thing, at once costly and gay, natural and supernatural, serviceable and intimate, pressing, urgent and serenely leisurely, speaking as if it were in all its deeds of Galilee, and Calvary, and the blessed leisureliness of the Forgiving and Risen Lord in the days that followed Easter.

You must not come to China bearing a doctrine which argues, "Here in Christ Jesus is the divine personality who has always been behind your thought of Heaven". You must come as an artist with a dogma—the dogma which describes in poetic form the activity of the charity of God. You must come to China knowing that charity embodied in the living Church is the final art of life which God will Himself use to possess and win in Christ the people and the land of China. Don't come to China to argue but to paint pictures. Not sentimental pictures but pictures

alive—alike with indignation and with understanding love—pictures which will show the standards of China's artistic achievements to be at once rotten and sublime. They know how rotten they are; they know how much their compromise covers up suffering and sin. And yet even compromise is as a human achievement sublime, for it is at least free from that hypocrisy which blighted Judaism and eats the heart out of the practice of our own religion.

It is the great art of charity, the supreme art of God, which will prove the touchstone by which China's artistic achievements will be shown to be at once rotten and sublime. The charity of God will consume what is rotten and kindle into divine radiance what is sublime. For China's great achievements—compromise, cynicism and common goodness—are at once rotten and sublime. They are sublime because they ask and secure from men reasonable standards of human conduct. They are rotten because they are afraid to ask too much of men for fear of getting nothing at all.

This mixture of the rotten and the sublime is the explanation of the widely differing opinions expressed by missionaries and travellers about China and about the Chinese people. Two missionaries may be speaking on the same evening in the same city and both speaking the truth as they have seen it. One will speak so enthusiastically of the character, the heroism, the stubborn good sense of the people that the listener will feel he would rather give his money to bring missionaries from China to England. The other will speak with an equal enthusiasm of the blight of Satan cast upon the country by "face" and "familyism", by gambling, by opium and disease, by the avarice of

landlords, and the speculation of officials, that the listener will say to himself, "How can China ever be a nation? We had better let the Japanese have a shot at establishing their New Order in the Far East."

Both speakers will be right. Both listeners will be wrong, but wrong because they have been misled. There is in China at once more for Christ to build on, and less, than either speaker had disclosed. Apply to each the touchstone of charity, and what is lacking in the one becomes as clear as what is misjudged in the other. Both speakers have been describing exactly what happens to human nature everywhere when it tries to face life with only human goodness—with human goodness at its best but still *human* goodness.

Look for a moment at the sins so clearly listed by the second speaker and well known, bitterly well known to-day, to the beloved Generalissimo and his wife who are trying so eagerly to counter them. They are well known also to Almighty God in every country in the world. In our own country bridge and the cinema take the place of gambling and opium. Dividends and the daily scanning of the stock market lists are our counterparts of avarice and speculation; familyism is replaced by the old school tie, and for "face" we have a doctrine of "the rights of men" and a readiness to be "insulted". All these things may not seem so damning as China's counterparts. They are not. They have been exposed for one thousand years to the charity of God in Christ; they have been challenged down the generations with a view of God and life which is never content with the possible and always asks in God's name for man to aim beyond what he can reach. And this view of

God has not only been preached but practised. It has been incarnated in the Church which has fired men to action beyond their own powers in every walk of life.

Confucius' teaching is not ethical; that does not describe it. It is rather sublimely human. It says to man, "You are never alone when you act. Every action affects someone else. Here in the five relations is a frame within which you may achieve as much as is possible of individuality without doing damage to another individual or creating a bitter conflict with him." This pattern of life includes wife and husband, father and son, brother and sister, ruler and subject, friend and friend. But two areas of life are entirely omitted from it: the enemy and the beggar. They are both outcast. One by his enmity, the other by his beggary have burst the bonds of this admirable pattern for living. And yet the pattern has been so skilfully made and so successfully carried out that few are made enemies, and none with any relationship of blood or friendship can ever become a beggar. One powerful family or village can drive another whole family or village into beggary. (I have seen this happen.) But while there is wealth or power in any family or any village none of its own members will go hungry. This is the pattern recorded by Confucius, and it is surprising how successful it has been. But even its skilful compromise with life has not been universally successful. Brothers have quarrelled, sons and fathers have been estranged, and the wealthy have often failed to recognize the claims of fellow members of their family upon them.

If Bethlehem had never happened: if God had never spoken to Abraham and Elijah, to Isaiah and to

Jeremiah, and finally entered human life where it had been prepared to receive Him, if God had not acted in time to unfold His timeless nature, I can see no better human attempt ever made anywhere than China's attempt to answer the problem of living.

But it has gone rotten. No honest Chinese will deny that to-day, like New York and London, like Liverpool and Hong Kong, the public life and the private life of the vast majority of men and women is something that in their best moments they long for their children to escape. The New Life Movements, Officers' Moral Endeavour Societies and the enforcement of "Party discipline" are like putting a poultice on a hidden cancer. The one outstanding lesson of the war in China has been this: nothing but the living charity of the love of God burning in a man's soul makes him live a life without thought of himself, devoted to his friends, and strong for righteousness. But this charity of God does not depend upon conscious recognition or acceptance. It burns in some—both communists and nationalists—who would not call themselves Christians or believe that this precious gift comes from God. Christian teaching, Christian profession, or a reversal to and revival of the old religions—all these things are like straw, when the most natural remark in the world made to my knowledge by one elderly Christian to a young relative was: "The salary, of course, you cannot live on. But it is a very lucrative job. For the sake of your wife and children I advise you to take it."

Is this really very much different from a Christian father in the West who will guide his son's choice of a profession by its financial standing and security rather than by its human or religious value? For East and

West alike the infinite forgiveness and patience of the charity of God is continually needed to strengthen, purify and sweeten our common life.

In China, cynicism, compromise and common goodness have arisen as good things, and, at their best, very good things indeed in a country which had never known the dogma of the forgiving heart of God. They do not therefore reflect that forgiveness. They are like pictures painted by an artist with a limited range of colours; forgiveness is not in their paint-box.

Charity is forgiveness in action, rather than in attitude. It is not a teaching but a drama. Those who live as her apprentices must live like actors, demonstrating by every art of word and act alike what is the secret of life they have come to unfold.

Actors they must be and not just mimickers. They must show by word and deed that this life they live is not a human fantasy but springs from something more than men thought possible; that it is not another sample of Western self-estimated superiority, but something opened up to East and West alike by the Unseen Source of all life and all goodness.

Don't imagine therefore that because you have been a good Sunday School teacher that you will make a good missionary. You cannot be a good missionary until you have learned to waste your time and not feel it wasted. Have you sat evening by evening in the bar of a public house? There is no better school of charity than that. Are you welcome in the home of your poorest neighbour not because you can help her with dispensary letters or with getting a job for Gertie in a sweetshop, but because you can sit there and listen with no sense of time, as you sit perhaps in your own sister's house helping her with the mending

while she knits vests for the baby that is coming next year?

Is there anything deeper or more peaceful than that leisurely busy-ness of secure family life? Can you take that with you to the poorest home, and indeed find it there, as surely as in your married sister's home? It is that capacity, that understanding life of true and simple charity that is needed in the missionary. This living knowledge of the way of love must be yours. Beside this the tense religious experience (for which I, with you, thank God) is nothing—is indeed dangerous. Those who are mindful only of the top rungs of Jacob's ladder most often fall to earth. A ladder must stand on earth if it is to reach to heaven. The higher its reach the wider must be its base. Nor is it enough to have book knowledge and to know the art of teaching. You must know the art of leisure, the meaning of a "spare time" life. A missionary's job is not a professional job. It is a spare time job. None should set out on it who do not know that all work has only one aim—to make more spare time; and that spare time is only for one purpose—the joy of God and the joy of man, for both God and man are above all things enjoyable.

CHAPTER V

The Importance and Unimportance of Being a Missionary

THIS IS GOD'S world. He made it such that sin and tragedy can defile and destroy what is best in it. He has made it such that His own inmost being is hidden from His children, except where the narrow stream of His revelation of Himself in Christ, and in the Church, has reached the lives of men. Even in those areas and those times, even among those who acknowledge Him in Christ, the power of sin is still such that doubt and confusion, and even despair can prevail over His love. Even Christian men more easily worship self and power, money and pleasure than the Living God.

But it is God's world. He has made it what it is. We go as missionaries not at our own initiative but at His. Because God sends us, our work is plainly important. "As my Father has sent me, even so send I you" is as true for us as for the first apostles. Our work is as important as theirs was. Human souls await the touch of God's love through us.

Our work is important, and yet so unimportant that we have no reason for self-importance. We are told sometimes that we shall only escape self-importance by remembering that it is God who sends us; that it is God who giveth the increase. I am not sure that this is enough. I am not sure that it is true that we can by remembering God escape self-importance. If I look honestly at China I get a different feeling about God and His purposes. Looking back down the vista

of perhaps a million years God has been the God and Father of the Chinese people. But He has not been in a hurry to show His full nature to them. To our view God's leisurely handling of the Chinese people seems to be almost a casual way of handling human life, human sin and human suffering, human goodness and human happiness. We cannot think, however, that God has loved less for being so leisurely.

A wide view of China as she is to-day only deepens this impression. Numbers are vast. Traditional customs and traditional thoughts about life are very deeply rooted. In comparison with this vastness, the widespread work of the Church in China appears fragmentary. The intensification of China's life, its redemption and fulfilment in Christ appears by comparison a very little thing. It is like a summerhouse put up in a garden, perhaps. It is not yet part of the house in which China dwells. Nestorian Christianity has left no trace of its mighty work which twelve hundred years ago probably counted more adherents in China than all the non-Roman churches do to-day. And there is *on the surface* relatively little to show even for the centuries of steady and faithful work of Roman Catholic missionaries. China always puts up a robust resistance to anything that is not her own.

We can only see our job as missionaries in a true perspective when we try to see God and China, China and God also in a true perspective. In India this sense of perspective is dominated by the two great religious divisions. The work of God is seen in relation to the strength and the weaknesses of Hinduism and Islam. In China one must take a broader sweep, less religious and more Christian. We must see China as part of our Father's house; this people are His

people, this vast land is the home God and His Chinese children have won out together down the years. Economic changes in China are on the surface more influential than any religious force; so are cultural and educational changes. As a steadily growing force stronger already than religion is the modern political movement and interest in the two great parties (the Kuomintang and the Communist Party) which have for years kept China in a state of civil war. Beside these vast forces which affect in countless ways the lives of millions, the work of the Christian Church, for all its widespreadness, seems to touch only the fringe of Chinese life.

It is very necessary for the missionary not to be church-centred in his view of what is happening in this land which God has made among this people whom He has moulded so differently from ourselves. The activity of God and men in the development of communications which are always narrowing the boundaries of the world; in the growth of the knowledge of disease and how to cure it; in the development of new theories of government which Chinese students have learned in Germany and Russia, in Japan and in America; all these things as well as China's past are part of the common life of China to-day in which the Christian Church must grow.

The missionary will escape the snare of self-importance by pondering this amazing indifference, so it seems, of God Himself towards a man's religious practices and beliefs, and the capacity He has given to men for successful secular achievements; and the importance of these achievements for the well-being of a nation.

On the other hand we know God to be Christ-

hearted. That is how He loves. To know Him as He is, is of supreme importance. It is salvation. It is just because God is Christ-hearted that He gives more than He demands. He makes railways and wireless and aeroplanes and hospitals, universities and motor-cars, and gives them to men with both hands. He makes His sun to shine and His rain to fall impartially upon all alike.

What then does it matter in the long centuries whether or not you or I go to China as a missionary? Our nurse used to say to us when a precious toy was broken, "It will be all the same a hundred years hence." This was such small comfort we did not really believe it. It sounded all right, but we were sure there was a catch somewhere. And there is the same catch in considering the unimportance of your life or mine. It will be all the same a hundred years hence whether we go or whether we do not. But there may be one person or two, in China to-day, or twenty, or it may be one hundred for whom it will not be "all the same".

Our going may change their lives. I think now of the four thousand students and the three hundred staff members of the Sun Yat Sen National University in northern Kwangtung, and of the one young Chinese priest and his Student Movement House amongst them, and of what he means to that university. If it had not been for the work of one missionary that young priest would now be keeping the accounts and checking the stock of a chemist's shop in Hong Kong. Something has been started that under God will never stop. During his lifetime, as a priest of the Church, how many people—sensitive living souls—may not be touched by the quickening, healing touch of the

Charity of God upon them? And others will follow his example and forsake counters and classrooms for the work of the ministry. All this because one missionary went to China.

Our Hong Kong home is on a hillside which stretches for miles behind it. In the middle of that varied hillside is a slender stream. Though it is a slender stream it never fails. Because it never fails we can live on that hillside. The life and work of the Church in China is like that. In proportion to all that is going on in China it is a slender stream, often hidden from view behind the rocks and boulders of sin, and failure, and mistake. But it never fails. It never can fail because its source is in God.

On our hillside also the trees and shrubs and grass of the hills do not draw the water that is their life from the stream, but from our annual eighty inches of rainfall. They have their own systems, leaf and root, for storing what they need. So it is with China. She is receiving all the time from God His own creative and life-giving power. The tiny stream of the Incarnation and the Church, even though it flows sometimes in spate, is still only a very small thing, hardly discernible against the vast mountainside. But as the narrow stream makes life possible on that hillside for men and women as well as trees, so the narrow stream of the life of the Church in China makes possible for many men and women that life with God for which the New Testament uses the words "friends" and "sons". "If sons then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ."

The importance and unimportance of being a missionary lies somewhere in that picture. The stream is a narrow one, but it is a stream of living

water for the healing of the nations. "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

Self-consciousness is as dangerous for the missionary as self-importance. It is most often a missionary-consciousness or mission-consciousness not only over against one's own fellow countrymen abroad but also in relation to Chinese Christians and non-Christians with whom one is in daily contact. Similes from nature are always misleading in relation to the lives and ways of people. The simile of the narrow stream and the wide hillside which I have used to illustrate something of the relation of the Christian Church to the whole life of the Chinese people is no exception to this rule. A missionary must share also the general life of the people. He must be, as it were, part of the hillside and not only part of the stream. There is in this a remembrance of the Incarnation. Jesus was not only a teacher, He was also a carpenter. You must have roots in the country so that it is in a sense your home, if you are to escape this separative self-consciousness. Reading Livingstone's life one sometimes wonders whether he was not more a pioneer of empire than a missionary. This is because he had a deep feeling for the whole life of the people. He saw trade not as something outside the Providence of God but as part of God's answer to our prayers for daily bread. Have you noticed also that the early missionaries all had hobbies? In Morrison's case this was languages. In Carey's it was gardening. In Temple Gairdner's it was music and drama.

Every missionary ought to have a hobby. Perhaps I should say more bluntly what I believe to be true, that candidate secretaries should not accept as

missionaries those who are not hobby-minded. To have a hobby shows both energy and leisureliness of mind. It shows the energy that has always room for new interests. It shows also that essential leisureliness which will always find time for people because it does not see its life work as a moving staircase on which one dare not stop even to read the advertisements. I have been surprised to discover how many Army officers who find their way to the top positions in the Far East are "bird-lovers". They will gladly give a whole day to wander in a wooded valley or a scrambling hillside, and without a gun but with binoculars. They will tell you afterwards with a boy's delight that they have seen perhaps thirty, or even on a good day sixty, different kinds of birds. They get more tongue-tied when they are led on to describe the beauty of the crested kingfisher, or the grace of the grey minivet, but you know that their real joy has not been in their record score but in sheer enjoyment of the birds themselves. I have learned not to be surprised at this hobby-mindedness in those who are of outstanding ability but to recognize it as a sign both of mental energy and of capacity for mental growth. For a missionary a hobby, or more than one, has another significance: it is something outside religion which will be a bond between him and the people of the country. It will take him away from the narrow bed of the stream, and make him at home on the hillside. One of my hobbies, I confess, is keeping pigs. The young and irreverent have taken moving pictures of Blanche and Blanchette, my two vast black sows, who are now peopling the villages of the valley with larger and better pigs. I pretend sometimes that I keep the pigs to help my neighbours

to improve their livelihood. But I realize those pretences are like the shyness of my Army friends when they try to describe the beauty they have enjoyed on a bird walk. The fact is that I like keeping pigs, in the same way that I like reading novels or seeing a good picture. I believe if I had anything to do with a missionary training college there would be pigsties and chicken-runs and goats and cows, as well as music and art and workrooms and a carpenter's shop.

A man who has hobbies is at home wherever he goes. He quickly settles down and becomes part of the life of the place. But you must be as honest in your hobby interest as in your prayers or in your friendship. I do not regard a hobby as essential because it is an "evangelistic contact point". Of course my pigs make many friends for me and have brought me closer than all the talking in the world to the life of my neighbours, but if I had kept them *for that purpose* I should never have been able to look an honest pig in the face. It would have served me right if they had all died on me.

I mean what I have tried to say: if you are the kind of person who has hobbies you will settle; you will belong; you will feel when you come back from furlough that you are coming home, and you *will* be coming home. You have no right to become a missionary unless you are the kind of person who will not call China your "field", but will make her fields your home.

Does this mean that every missionary ought to become a naturalized Chinese citizen? The answer to that question is most emphatically not "No", but it is equally emphatically not "Yes". I know several missionaries who are now naturalized Chinese citi-

zens. I can think of one case in particular in which I am sure she was right. I can think of another in which I am equally sure he was wrong. In the second case the man is an incurable *poseur*; change of citizenship was part of a deep spiritual dishonesty. In the other case the step was taken by an essentially honest mind. It has succeeded because it was the honest thing to do. You will find that many Chinese rather resent the fact that so many missionaries do not become naturalized Chinese citizens. They resent our claim to share their life, while we are unwilling to let go our British or American citizenship. Part of this feeling is due to unconscious wounded pride. For example, American citizenship is coveted by some Chinese who have studied in America because of the higher standards of comfort and security that life in America offers. We who love China are all too conscious of what she might be if she could have the efficiency of her neighbour, Japan, but we are glad that China is not prepared to pay the price for efficiency that Japan appears to have paid. The natural unwillingness of missionaries, therefore, to accept Chinese citizenship, or to transfer themselves to China as we do, for example, to New Zealand or South Africa, is a continual reminder to our Chinese friends of what is the greatest obstacle very often to the happiness and settledness of their own lives, the failure so far to establish a settled order in China. In these war days this feeling is all the more bitter. We know, all of us who love China, that the worst effect of the war, worse than bombing and death and many other hatefulnesses, is that the peace and order built up at such cost in the last fifteen years have been largely undone. The worst part of the cost was the

summary execution of countrymen turned bandit. To-day, wherever the Japanese armies have been there are once more landless countrymen who have learned the excitement that there is in the life of banditry. The cost of settled-ness has been in vain.

The feeling, then, that we missionaries ought to become naturalized Chinese citizens, if we are to give our lives to missionary work in China, is based on emotion rather than on reason. It is, however, evidence that our Chinese friends are not happy at the aloofness that most of us missionaries have from the real life of the Chinese people. And the gulf is obviously not bridged by keeping a few pigs as I do, or by collecting porcelain or by growing orchids.

There have been roughly three stages in the history of the contact between missionaries and China. Pioneer missionaries had to identify themselves completely with the life of the people to get anywhere at all. They wore Chinese dress and even cultivated or hired queues (pigtales) and knew, as I for one do not know, all the details of Chinese official courtesy. The next stage was perhaps the stage of education when so many Chinese men and women learned English and Western ways. The queues went in an incredibly short space of time. Missionaries were welcomed for their foreignism. Moreover the development of a Chinese Christian ministry made the missionary's opportunities for speaking Chinese much fewer. Life became so full that many missionaries tended to get on with their work very largely in the English language, and failed to get much more knowledge of the language than they had acquired in Language School. They had enough for ordinary needs and there it stayed.

In the first stage the missionaries had to get clear across the gulf and live in Chinese society to make any contacts at all. In the next stage this process was in a measure reversed. The Chinese who were interested came across the gulf to our side. They met us in school and compound, in hospital, Church and Gospel Hall.

What is the situation now? With the qualification that every generalization needs, not least the two I have just made, the present situation is this: we live in a kind of "buffer state" or "No Man's Land". The Chinese with whom we have any intimate contact come into this "No Man's Land" either permanently or for the purposes of their Christianity only. And we are seldom able to get beyond this "No Man's Land" into the really Chinese part of their lives.

I know that I am saying a very grave thing. I would remind you of what I have said above about the stubborn resistance to anything foreign China has always put up. In India, the earliest Christian movement was made safe for Indian civilization by being made a separate case in the Indian system. In China something similar and yet very different is happening. The life of the Chinese Christian Church is being lived very largely in a neutral territory of mind, outlook and habit; a life in which Chinese and missionaries can share. From this rather artificial club-life each of us retreat back after the business of the day. The missionary returns to his radio and the latest mail from Europe or America, and the Chinese Christian slips back into the real life of his people. This is not as serious as it would be if the majority of Chinese Christians stayed in this "No Man's Land", which is our common ground. Fortunately the Chinese Chris-

tian goes back and is re-absorbed into the life of his own people just as the missionary slips back in imagination to the life of Britain or America. What is serious is that we missionaries are not, as we think we are, in living touch with the life of China, and do not realize that we are not. Let me remind you of the skill in passive resistance of the old Chinese statesman who invented the idea of "concessions" in which the vigorous foreign traders might live their own lives without too intimate contact with Chinese life. This invention made it possible for them to refuse permission to foreigners to buy land anywhere else except in these oases of neutral territory. There has been no similar, deliberate keeping of missionaries out. They are, by special treaty, allowed to buy land. But perhaps the same fundamental Chinese stubbornness in adherence to her own past and her own ways, which led her past statesmen to the brilliant solution of "concessions", has, working unconsciously in the lives and minds and habits of thousands of individuals in contact with foreign missionaries, created "concessions of the spirit"! This is the "No Man's Land" in which missionaries spend their days. In this separated atmosphere fundamental Chinese ways are for our sakes soft-pedalled not because they are really incompatible with Christianity, but because we cannot understand them.

The existence of this "concession area" of the Christian Religion has two serious disadvantages. It means we live largely in an area of life which is unreal and has no roots in the real life of China. To live in an unreal world is fatal to true Christian living anywhere. Secondly, spending so much time with us in the "concession areas" makes the contacts of the best

Chinese Christians with their own people fragmentary and unstable. They have to live in two worlds. Their minds are moulded in two different modes. This is a very different thing from knowing two different languages. It makes for uneasiness and touchiness. Chinese Christians often feel that something is wrong and ill-adjusted in the Christian Church, but they have not as yet publicly recognized the existence of this "spiritual concession" into which we both come to live our Christian life together.

An example of this concession mind is the Chinese daily newspaper. Every Chinese Christian in a city or a market town reads the daily newspaper, or hears discussed what is there written. Perhaps one missionary in a thousand reads the Chinese newspaper one day a week! Strange that the daily newspaper, which is such a test in married life, should come into this story of the adventure in friendship which is the missionary's job. My wife and I have not yet had enough meals together in twenty years to have time for the newspaper when we sit together at table. But in this missionary adventure you have a picture like that of a man and woman living together in which one cannot read the paper which is faithfully read and pondered every day by the other. The mind and imagination move therefore in circles which barely touch each other.

I believe it is more important for the missionary to learn to read the Chinese daily newspaper than to read the Chinese version of the New Testament. It is more important that he should give each day an hour to reading it than to give two hours daily to the study of the Chinese Bible. (Though it is *not* more important than the study of the Bible in his own

tongue or any other tongue which speaks directly to his own heart.)

I speak with great heaviness of heart, as one who has himself failed to master the Chinese language, who cannot read either Bible or newspaper. But it is to me quite incredible how many missionaries by failing in this obvious matter of friendship live still in another world from those with whom their lives are cast. Newspaper language, we are told by language experts, is not easy, and yet many Chinese coolies read the newspaper. If we know our own Bibles well it is surely more important that we should be able to speak to the folk about us of the things which are in their minds and hearts from their daily reading, in the language in which they are reading every day, than that every time we open our mouths in Chinese we should speak in a kind of missionary Chinese used by us and by the Bible. This failure to share in the absorbing interest of China's daily life must show how little we really care for the teeming life about us and for the hopes and fears and interests of those we long to win for Christ.

When someone from the village comes up the hill to my house to ask for some quinine or for some sick woman to be taken into hospital, or perhaps to buy a pig, or for a letter of recommendation for employment, my gardener has often to interpret my Chinese to him. Only those who hear me speak every day can really understand what I am saying. I am afraid that danger besets every missionary. We are cushioned round by our colleagues and fellow workers. We build up a narrow little life of limited interest and limited knowledge and they are too kind, too generous, too long-suffering with us to bid us "be-

gone" and so make it possible for the precious money poured out by the faith and love of the Mother Church to be left in their hands to keep men and women of their own race active and full time in the sacred ministry.

To break through into the real life of the people is the task of the modern missionary. Chinese Christians long for this to happen; but they have seen failure so often and have become so accustomed to our blindness in thinking this "No Man's Land" the real life of their country that they hesitate now to lead us further.

The Missionary Mood

A MISSIONARY OUGHT not to be tense nor ought he to be moody. But there is something very real in "The Missionary Mood". I am using the word in the same sense that it is used in our grammar books. If you press me further, I shall say that it should be rather of a *subjunctive* nature.

The missionary mood consists in recognizing and embodying in life and fundamental outlook a sense of the sameness of the missionary life to that of the Christian in his own country, and at the same time blending with it so that it is not noticeable, just that difference which comes from difference in background and history. There is a sense in which our American-ness or our British-ness is a part of the difference. But there is another sense in which the difference is just in being a Christian with no national colouring or atmosphere at all.

Perhaps absolute freedom is the first mark of this missionary mood. By becoming missionaries we have been detached from our life in our own country, and still more from our place as a living part of the Church of our own land. It is easier I find when I am abroad to keep in touch, at least on the surface, with the general life of England than with the life of the Church. It is in my life as a churchman that I feel most uprooted.

Now these roots are emotional. They are deep-seated in our unconscious. We must expect therefore that they will seek eagerly for new soil and root themselves

all the more tenaciously in what they find because of the shock of their first uprooting. The danger is that the soil they will find readiest to hand, and to their unconscious seeking most recognizable, as like what they have left, will be our own work, our own ideas, our own view of this and that. This is the reason why so many missionaries are incurably pot-bound.

We must therefore make every endeavour to provide the wounded and torn roots of our life with an appropriate soil. There is only one soil that is appropriate and free enough to provide our roots with endless opportunities of growth, and that is God Himself.

To become a missionary is a form of death. All that has been our life before, all the familiar things which day by day affirm to us that we are and that we belong, are taken from us. We go to a place of very different familiarities. It is impossible for us to substitute them for what we have lost. This should help us to realize how this was true also for Jesus Himself. His life of obedience to His Father was a life in which the roots had been as violently torn up. He disowns His mother and His brethren, and bids us also hate all those dear familiar roots for His Name's sake. I suggest that when our Lord said, "Take up your cross daily and follow me" He meant "Live every day as I shall live Good Friday, knowing that before dark I shall be dead". It is this kind of living that alone is free. All its roots are gone. One can plan nothing for to-morrow and therefore one can give oneself completely, at once wholeheartedly and lightheartedly, to everything and person that to-day brings with it to our living. I would suggest this spiritual exercise: that you imagine for five minutes every morning that it is

indeed your last day in this life. I am not suggesting concentration on the horrors of dying with its mystery and pain, but a much more objective imagining that there will be no "you" in your bed to-night, no "you" in your accustomed place at meals, and that all your plans and dreams of what you are going to be and to do are scattered as inevitably as paper thrown over the side of a ship.

Jesus said, "Take up your cross daily and follow me." The picture is of a man setting out each day as a condemned criminal. Every tie is severed. He is powerless to do any more for his family, himself, his country, or for God. Powerless to do anything save to accept whatever in that day's journey comes his way and to meet it as a man completely free because his roots are all torn up. What he does and says will make no difference to him to-morrow. Try this exercise in imagination; try it thoroughly and honestly, especially at the beginning of a day when you must do something you hate doing. I think you will find in it a root of freedom; that people will appear to you as more themselves, more detached from you and therefore, strangely, more interesting, and that the world will somehow not be overcast with a sense of what *may* happen.

This bears out the introductory sentence to the cross-bearing picture. We are told we are to "nought" ourselves. I know no other way of doing this in my mind than by imagining that to-morrow I will not be here. This mental exercise must not be confused with the attitude of mind to which Dr. Chalmers objected. I have not mentioned the word self-sacrifice. I have suggested rather looking right away from oneself into a world which is going on

apparently undisturbed without that precious personality which is ME. I find in this attitude to life a real source of freedom. I believe every missionary especially should cultivate it. It should, if it is honestly practised, cut at the root of possessiveness. It is the only way I have found to that freedom which our Lord offers to those who will follow Him.

This simple exercise of the imagination has enabled me to understand those old monks who used to sleep every night in their coffins and elderly Chinese gentlemen who delight to be presented on their sixtieth birthday with the coffin in which they will make their long last journey.

A similar exercise will give you that freedom which I have suggested is the first mark of the missionary mood. It clears the way for something that goes farther. It enables us to realize in our daily life the meaning of the words "our citizenship is in Heaven". My elderly Chinese friends find the exercise psychologically healthy in old age. It enables them to face life without sentimentality, and without that cruel tyranny of the years which makes old age so wretched for many. But what I have suggested is a spiritual exercise and not only a psychological one. This exercise of the imagination corresponds to a spiritual reality. For on the other side of death there is not nothingness, but God. Part of this imagining is negative: that we are carrying the cross on which our earthly life will be ended before the sun has set. To-morrow will go on its way without us. But there is a positive and deeper significance in this imagining. It is, in St. Paul's words, "to depart and be with Christ which is far better". The positive side is that it enables our imagination to grasp the Real, the Reality

of God, not for what we can do for Him or He this day can do for us, but for what He is in Himself, and what our life is in Him. This little exercise is like holding open the door of eternity and gazing into it before one sets out gaily and soberly to make the day that lies ahead part of the eternal life of God and man.

In this mood there lies the essential spirit of the missionary. Those who are preparing for missionary work should accustom themselves to live each day like this with God.

I have said that the missionary mood should make a missionary a little different from the Christian in his own country and that being a "foreigner", an American or an Englishman, is part of this difference. Negatively it is part of this missionary mood. We have already in this sense died to the life of our own country and our own family. It is therefore easier and more natural for us to be detached from the life about us and to see to-morrow and to-morrow's dangers without anxiety. Positively there is also a sense in which our American or British Christian heritage should come to our aid in giving us that something different that will be useful. China's age-old wisdom lies behind the unconscious actions of the youngest of her sons. We equally should bring with us something of the ancient wisdom of the Church so that our unconscious actions reflect what the Spirit down the ages has said to the Churches. Under the influence of the spiritual exercise, of imagining yourself to be living your last day on earth, this quality will be distilled. You will not care so much that the Church of China should copy this or that habit of the Church you come from; rather the wisdom of the Church will deepen its unconscious hold upon your

mind and heart. For you will be falling back on the central secret of the Church, who is your Mother, that she has depended always and only at her best and truest upon God, on His will and on His obedience. This, as a habit and a way of feeling about the world, should be part of your heritage, part of the very life of your country. As you yourself in discipline and prayer build yourself absolutely upon this dependence upon God there will be distilled through you more than you can yourself create of the faith and power that God has given to many generations of Christian men and women in our country.

You may well be impatient with my insistence that we should for a time consider cross-bearing only as an attitude of mind which is content to die rather than as something painful and very costly. I have been concerned to detach you from life. But the cross is in this way a contradictory symbol. It is at once the symbol of complete detachment from life and of the deepest conceivable attachment to life. The cross was our Lord's final sharing in the suffering life of men. "He became obedient unto death," says St. Paul, "even the death of the cross"; a death at once full of pain and full of shame, the lingering death of the convict and the slave. There is still no deeper depth of human misery and human failure than execution, the ghastly tragedy of capital punishment. In it man at his highest stage of civilized organization owns himself beaten by human evil. It was into this depth of suffering and evil that Jesus entered when He took up His cross. It was the final act of divine incarnation in the life of man. This way of living we must enter if we would be missionaries of God.

We don't want missionaries who are good. Good-

ness is powerless against evil. Goodness does not understand evil. It assumes always that evil can be changed by the infection of a good example, or by the acceptance of a new law of love. Goodness in itself has not and cannot learn that only those who suffer with evil can overcome it.

I hesitated to include the redemption of evil in this account of the missionary's life. It has been so overdone in the past. No one should think of becoming a missionary who imagines he will meet more suffering and more evil in China, or wherever he goes, than in his own home city or countryside. That is not blurb. I mean it. You will *notice* evil more in another country, just as the American people are more conscious of our failure in India and we are more conscious of their failure to solve the problem of the Negro. You will *notice* at first at any rate the evil in another country. It will come home to you much more vividly. What matters is that you should have a true standard of judgment in assessing evil. Infant mortality is a terrible thing, but is not so terrible as the "adolescent mortality" of England and America. For the adolescent mortality of England and America is a mortality of the spirit. It leads to more suffering and more separation from God than all the infant mortality in the world. If you are going to China to save babies' lives, you must be clear for what you are saving them. If you have been carrying out the spiritual exercise I suggested, by which you might come to terms with death and make friends with it, you will, perhaps, have come to wonder what is the value of living at all. Is it not "better to depart and be with Christ"? No one can understand the work of the missionary until they have thought

through from the bottom what is the value of life at all.

I know a heroic woman who, almost single-handed, has collected from the door of death over seventy baby girls. But well begun is not half done. What does the future hold for those children? Can she carry through what she has begun? The qualities which enable a woman to save a baby's life and bring it through babyhood do not necessarily qualify her to steer them through the difficult years of adolescence. Adolescence is difficult enough in ordinary home life for a girl, but in an orphanage infinitely more difficult. In an orphanage the affectionate discipline of home life has to be replaced by rules which badly rumple the emotional life of the adolescent and more often than not do permanent harm to it. The Roman Catholic sisters who are so often accused of being more interested in getting a child baptized than in saving its life would have, if the accusation were true, half the New Testament on their side. I am not, of course, advocating that no attempts should be made to reduce the rate of infant mortality. I am advocating very strongly indeed that no one should be allowed to be a missionary who thinks there is virtue in saving life just for the sake of life itself.

I have now, as I write, in my mind and in my prayers another picture. It is of Bishop Mok. He is seventy-five years young this week. He is as I write travelling in the interior as eagerly as if he was a young man of thirty-five. I wonder if I shall have the courage to face that discomfort and weariness when I am sixty-five. I shall more likely give way to the coddling that the young are always so ready to offer to their elders as some compensation for the inferiority of youth. They

said to me, these youngsters, "You should not let the Bishop do it. It will kill him."

The old Bishop and the rows and rows of tiny babies have both the same tale to tell. There is no death for the Christian except spiritual death. And no man or woman has any right to be a missionary unless and until the spiritual mortality in their own country has become such a nightmare to them that they will never fall into the trap of thinking that the redeeming love of God has more to do in China than it has in Oxford or in Philadelphia. You must be sharing the cross of Christ just where it hurts Him most in your own country before you know enough about it to come, bringing it with you, to another country. Until you know what it is to suffer more at the sight of souls that are spiritually diseased than at bodies that are physically diseased you must not be a missionary. Nor must you be a missionary until your reaction to spiritual disease is not that you know how to cure it but rather an immediate feeling of the pain that the diseased person is incapable of feeling for himself. God not only made Jesus to be sin for us but He has rooted in us the same "ministry of reconciliation". We must become "sin for them".

CHAPTER VII

At Once Care Much and Care Little

TO BE A missionary you must at once care most terribly about your work and yet care not at all. Everything you do is terribly important because the souls of men are at stake. And yet everything you do is unimportant because the souls of men are in God's hands and not in yours. It matters more than I can say that you should be good at languages or at least that you should work so hard and so steadily at this most costly grind that by the grace of God, and the defeat of the innumerable devils of excuses, you are able to speak and to read and to write as the people about you speak and read and write. And yet there are men and women who have been so full of the fire and the power of the charity of God that their indolence in the matter of language and their ignorance of what the folk about them think or say or feel have been no barriers to the free operation of the love of God in them and through them. For after all one does not understand a man by knowing what he is thinking but by knowing what God is thinking about him.

And yet for all that if you know God's thought—and are obedient to Him—you will be determined at all costs to master the language in order that you may share more deeply both their thoughts and God's.

It is in the same way important that your life should be disciplined and controlled and that you should not fall victim to the grosser and more notorious sins of the flesh. It is, of course, terribly important that you should not be extravagant and get into debt and have

to crawl into some business or government job in midstream. For in a sense your life is a testimony of God to the men and women about you. And yet those things—all of them—including the notorious sins of the flesh, are terribly unimportant and every missionary can laugh at them, provided he is the slave of the charity of God. If men see that in him, they will see God whatever else his sins may be.

A missionary must start each day's work knowing how much God and the whole company of heaven are counting on his work, and yet as carefree as a man who knows that before the day is over he will be dead and another must carry on what he began.

For in all these things it is clear that the work is God's, the world is God's, that the sins that do so easily beset us when they are our own and so easily upset us when they are other people's, are God's affair as much as they are ours. He made us human. He allowed China to grow into an old and hoary race before He sent us, the enlightened (God forgive us) Modern Missionary Movement, to thunder at her heart in the Name of the Lord and Modern Sanitation.

Do not be afraid of this levity. The closer God draws you to His heart, the more convinced you become that He is, and that He is God, the less important will your own life seem and at the same time it will matter to you unspeakably as it mattered to our Lord that that life of yours should reflect the living obedience of a beloved son.

The more deeply God draws you into His heart, the more He shows you of His holiness and of His love, the less will you be troubled by heathenism in all its forms because you will know that beside the holiness and the mightiness of God it is such a vain

and passing thing. The more deeply the vision of eternity unfolds its mystery to your bewildered mind the more surely will your life slow up to keep pace with the unhurried tread of the Creator.

What does it matter if every day thousands die in sin? They do not by dying pass out of reach of the God and Father of our beloved Lord. The resting places He has gone to prepare are not measured with any human measuring rod. They are as illimitable as the charity of God.

Are you fussy, eager, in a hurry? Forget it.

The nearer you are drawn to God the less will heathenism, idolatry and superstition matter. You will see in them, as it were, footprints of the eternal. Even in the most hateful of all heathen practices—the offering of human sacrifice, and in India in the practice of widow burning—there is an echo, as it were, of Calvary, of the mystery of death and of that greater love which gives its life for another. The nearer you are drawn to God the more you will feel the mantle of His charity thrown over much that to you is utterly abhorrent. And yet the nearer you are drawn to God the more deeply and more vividly you will feel the horror, the cruelty and the wrong. It will, in God's presence, at once hurt you more and hurt you less.

Unless our missionary life is begun, continued and ended in God it had better never be begun.