

Document 6.4: Excerpts from the writings of British evangelical Protestant missionary J. Hudson Taylor regarding the foundation and functioning of the China Inland Mission in 1865

James Hudson Taylor, an English evangelical Protestant missionary, founded the China Inland Mission in 1865. Its goal was to send proselytizing Christian missionaries into interior sections of China, where no other Christians had previously gone, to make converts. Funding for the missionaries' work was not directly solicited; rather, they believed that prayer would provide the necessary financial gifts. And it did! The Mission began with male missionaries from England and was pan-denominational from its inception; within three decades it expanded to include female and multinational missionaries.

Taylor blazed his own trail in China when he chose to live among Chinese people rather than in the foreigners' compound. He was also among the first missionaries from the West to dress as the Chinese did and to require all members of the China Inland Mission to do so, too.

From *The Autobiography of a Man Who Brought the Gospel to China*

Chapter 9: Early Missionary Experiences

On landing in Shanghai on March 1, 1854, I found myself surrounded with difficulties that were wholly unexpected. A band of rebels, known as the “Red Turbans,”¹ had taken possession of the native city, against which was encamped an Imperial army of from forty to fifty thousand men, who were a much greater source of discomfort and danger to the little European community than were the rebels themselves. Upon landing, I was told that to live outside the Settlement was impossible while within the foreign concession apartments were scarcely obtainable at any price. The dollar, now worth about three shillings, had risen to a value of eight and ninepence, and the prospect for one with only a

¹ See Chapter 5 for information about the Taiping Rebellion.

small income of English money was dark indeed. However, I had three letters of introduction, and counted on counsel and help, especially from one of those to whom I had been commended, whose friends I well knew and highly valued. Of course I sought him out at once, but only to learn that he had been buried a month or two before, having died from fever during the time of my voyage.

Saddened by these tidings, I inquired for a missionary to whom another of my letters of introduction was addressed; but a further disappointment awaited me—he had left for America. The third letter remained; but as it had been given by a comparative stranger, I had expected less from it than from the other two. It proved, however, to be God's channel of help. The Rev. Dr. Medhurst, of London Mission, to whom it was addressed, introduced me to Dr. Lockhart, who kindly allowed me to live with him for six months. Dr. Medhurst procured my first Chinese teacher; and he, Dr. Edkins, and the late Mr. Alexander Wylie gave me considerable help with the language.

Those were indeed troublous times, and times of danger. Coming out of the city one day with Mr. Wylie, he entered into conversation with two coolies, while we waited a little while at the East Gate for a companion who was behind us. Before our companion came up an attack upon the city from the batteries on the opposite side of the river commenced, which caused us to hurry away to a place of less danger, the whiz of the balls being unpleasantly near. The coolies, unfortunately, stayed too long, and were wounded. On reaching the Settlement we stopped a few minutes to make a purchase, and then proceeded at once to the London Mission compound, where at the door of the hospital, we found the two poor coolies with whom Mr. Wylie had conversed, their four ankles terribly shattered by a cannon ball. The poor fellows declined amputation, and both died. We felt how narrow had been our escape.

At another time, early in the morning, I had joined one of the missionaries on his veranda to watch the battle proceeding, at a distance of perhaps three-quarters of a mile, when suddenly a spent ball passed between us and buried itself in the veranda wall. Another day my friend Mr. Wylie left a book on the table after luncheon, and returning for it

about five minutes later found the arm of the chair on which he had been sitting shot clean away. But in the midst of these and many other dangers God protected us.

After six months' stay with Dr. Lockhart, I rented a native house outside the Settlement, and began a little missionary work among my Chinese neighbors, which for a few months continued practicable. When the French joined the Imperialists in attacking the city, the position of my house became so dangerous that during the last few weeks, in consequence of nightly recurring skirmishes, I gave up attempting to sleep except in the daytime. One night a fire appeared very near, and I climbed up to a little observatory I had arranged on the roof of the house to see whether it was necessary to attempt escape. While there a ball struck the ridge of the roof on the opposite side of the quadrangle, showering pieces of broken tile all around me, while the ball itself rolled down into the court below. It weighed four or five pounds, and had it come a few inches higher, would probably have spent its force on me instead of the building. My dear mother kept the ball for many years. Shortly after this I had to abandon the house and return to the Foreign Settlement—a step that was taken none too soon, for before the last of my belongings were removed the house was burned to the ground.

Of the trials of this early period it is scarcely possible to convey any adequate idea. To one of a sensitive nature, the horrors, atrocities, and misery connected with war were a terrible ordeal. The embarrassment also of the times was considerable. With an income of only eighty pounds a year, I was compelled upon moving into the Settlement, to give one hundred and twenty for rent, and sublet half the house; and though the Committee of the Chinese Evangelization Society increased my income when, after the arrival of Dr. Parker,² they learned more of our circumstances, many painful experiences had necessarily been passed through. Few can realize how distressing to so young and untried a worker these difficulties seemed, or the intense loneliness of the position of a pioneer who could not even hint at many of his circumstances, as to do so would have been a tacit appeal for help.

² See “A Closer Look” in Chapter 6 for information about Peter Parker.

The great enemy is always ready with his oft-repeated suggestion, "All these things are against me." But, oh, how false the word! The cold, and even the hunger, the watchings and sleeplessness of nights of danger, and the feeling at times of utter isolation and helplessness, were well and wisely chosen, and tenderly and lovingly meted out. What circumstances could have rendered the Word of God sweeter, and the presence of God so real, the help of God so precious? They were times, indeed of emptying and humbling, but were experiences that made not ashamed, and that strengthened purpose to go forward as God might direct, with His proved promise, "I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." One can see, even now, that "as for God, his way is perfect," and yet can rejoice that the missionary path of today is comparatively a smooth and easy one.

Journeying inland was contrary to treaty arrangements, and attended with much difficulty, especially for some time after the battle of Muddy Flat, in which an Anglo-American contingent of about three hundred marines and seamen, with a volunteer corps of less than a hundred residents, attacked the Imperial camp, and drove away from thirty to fifty thousand Chinese soldiers, the range of our shot and shell making the native artillery useless. Still, in the autumn of 1854 a journey of perhaps a week's duration was safely accomplished with Dr. Edkins, who of course did the speaking and preaching, while I was able to help in the distribution of books.

Chapter 10: First Evangelistic Efforts [excerpts]

A journey taken in the spring of 1855 with the Rev. J. S. Burdon of the Church Missionary Society (later the Bishop of Victoria, Hong Kong) was attended with some serious dangers.... We went to Tongzhou [in Jiangsu Province], and of our painful experiences there the following journal will tell....

Our native teachers did their best to persuade us not to go into the city; but we determined that, by God's help, nothing should hinder us... Walking was out of the question, from the state of the roads, so we availed ourselves of wheelbarrows, the only conveyance to be had in these parts. A wheelbarrow is cheaper than a sedan [chair], only

requiring one coolie, but it is by no means an agreeable conveyance on rough dirty roads....

A respectable man came up, and earnestly warned us against proceeding, saying that if we did we should find to our sorrow what the Tongzhou militia were like.... After this my wheelbarrow man would proceed no farther, and I had to seek another, who was fortunately not difficult to find....

Before entering the suburb we laid our plans, so as to act in concert, and told our wheelbarrow men where to await us, that they might not be involved in any trouble on our account.... For some distance we walked along the principle street of the suburb leading to the West Gate unmolested, and were amused at the unusual title of *heh-kwei-tsi* (black devils), which was applied to us. We wondered about it at the time, but afterward found that it was our clothes, and not our skin, that gave rise to it.... Long before we reached the gate, a tall powerful man, made tenfold fiercer by partial intoxication, let us know that all the militia were not so peaceably inclined, by seizing Mr. Burdon by the shoulders.... At once we were surrounded by a dozen or more brutal men, who hurried us on to the city at a fearful pace....

We demanded to be taken before the chief magistrate, but were told that they knew where to take us, and what to do with such persons as we were, with the most insulting epithets.... He all but knocked me down again and again, seized me by the hair, took hold of my collar so as to almost choke me, and grasped my arms and shoulders, making them black and blue....

As we were walking along Mr. Burdon tried to give away a few books that he was carrying, not knowing whether we might have another opportunity of doing so; but the fearful rage of the soldier, and the way he insisted on manacles being brought, which fortunately were not at hand, convinced us that in our present position we could do no good in attempting book distribution....

Having succeeded in getting my hand into my pocket, I produced a Chinese card (if the large red paper, bearing one's name, may be so called), and after this was treated with more respect.... I requested them to bring us chairs, but they told us to wait; and when I begged them to give us some tea, received only the same answer. Round the doorway a large crowd had gathered; and Mr. Burdon, collecting his remaining strength, preached Christ Jesus to them....

On the road [again] we felt so glad of the rest which the chairs afforded us, and so thankful at having been able to preach Jesus in spite of Satan's malice, that our joy was depicted on our countenances; and as we passed along we heard some say that we did not look like bad men, while others seemed to pity us. When we arrived at the magistrate's office...our cards were again sent in, and after a short delay we were taken into the presence of Chen Da Laoie (the Great Venerable Father Chen), who, as it proved, had formerly been Tao-tai of Shanghai, and consequently knew the importance of treating foreigners with courtesy. Coming before him, some of the people fell on their knees and bowed down to the ground, and my conductor motioned me to do the same but without success....

After a long stay, we asked permission to see something of the city, and to distribute the books we had brought, before our return. To this he kindly consented. We then mentioned that we had been most disrespectfully treated... and not desiring to have such an experience repeated, we requested him to give orders that we were not to be further molested. This also he promised to do, and with every possible token of respect accompanied us to the door of his official residence, sending several runners to see that we were respectfully treated.... It was amusing to us to see the way in which the runners made use of their tails. When the street was blocked by the crowd, they turned them into whips, and laid them about the people's shoulders to right and left...!

Chapter 11: With the Rev. William Burns [excerpts]

After the retaking of Shanghai by the Imperialists, in February 1855, I was enabled to rent a house within the walls of the native city, and gladly availed myself of this opportunity to reside amid the crowded population left to inhabit the ruins that had survived the war. Here I made my headquarters, though often absent on more or less prolonged itinerations.

At the suggestion of the Rev. Dr. Medhurst, the veteran leader of the London Mission, I was led at about this period to adopt the native costume in preference to foreign dress, to facilitate travel and residence inland. The Chinese had permitted a foreign firm to build a silk factory some distance inland, with the proviso that the style of building must be purely Chinese, and that there should be nothing external to suggest that it was foreign. Much benefit was found to result from this change of costume, and I, and most of those associated with me, have continued to use native dress....

I, among others, had sought to reach Nanjing; but finding it impossible to do so, turned my attention again to evangelistic work on the island of Zongming. After some time I was enable so far to overcome the prejudice and fears of the people as to rent a little house and settle down in their midst. This was a great joy and encouragement to me; but before many weeks were over complaints were made by the local authorities to the British Consul, who compelled me to retire; though the French Consul had himself secured to the Roman Catholic missionaries a property within three or four miles of the house I had to vacate. Sorely tried and disappointed by this unexpected hindrance, I reluctantly returned to Shanghai, little dreaming of the blessing that God had in store for me there....

Source: Taylor, J. Hudson. *The Autobiography of a Man Who Brought the Gospel to China*. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1986. 59–75.

From *Three Decades of the China Inland Mission: 1865–1895*

Chapter 2: Establishment: The First Decade [excerpts]

Not long after the organization of the Mission in 1865, the first missionary party was selected, and, after a short period of training, it was determined that they should sail in the spring of the following year. As the time drew near, and the funds hitherto received were only adequate to sustain the missionaries who had gone out previously, and to cover the current needs at home, a daily prayer-meeting was commenced on February 6th, 1866, to pray for from £1,500³ to £2,000, as might be needful, to cover the cost of outfits, passages, and other preliminary expenses of the work. Up to this time, since the beginning of the year, £170 8s. 3d.⁴ had been received in unsolicited contributions. On March 12th, a second period of a month and six days, it was found that £1,974 5s. 11d. had been contributed in answer to daily prayer. It is interesting to compare with this a third period to April 18th, and to see that a further sum of £529 had been received, showing that when the special needs were met, and the special prayer for funds ceased, the supply was no longer so abundant.

The *Lammermuir* party, consisting of seventeen adults and four children, sailed from London on May 26th, 1866, and arrived in China, after a voyage of a little more than four months, to find that, though inland China was open for purposes of travel, it was not so as to residence....

Women's Work

One of the most noteworthy extensions of the second decade, and one fraught with far-reaching issues, was that of women's work in the interior of China. In January, 1876,

³ Equivalent to \$1,809,000 purchasing power in 2006

⁴ British pounds used to be divided into 20 shillings per pound (*s.*) and 12 pence (*d.*) per shilling. So this figure is roughly 170 ½ pounds. Now each pound has 100 pence.

when Miss Wilson, of Kendal, sailed at her own expense for China, there was only one unmarried C.I.M. lady in the field: Miss E. Turner, now in Henan [Province]. A good many others followed Miss Wilson; and not only were stations opened for women's work in the interior of the nearer provinces, but within the short space of three years, from October 1878, to December 1881, women had been able to enter and settle in six of the inland provinces, besides bringing the Gospel to hundreds of women in Henan and Hunan, where permanent residence was the unattainable....

Only those who know the difficulties and trials of life far in the heart of China and the dangers and hardships of long journeys in such a land can fully appreciate all that these facts mean; only those who have experienced continued loneliness, isolation, and peril among the heathen, can know what those pioneer women endured; only those who, under such circumstances, have faced sickness, far from any medical aid, acute suffering, and even death itself, can understand what the sacrifice involved that was sealed by the first missionary graves in far off Shanxi and Yunnan [provinces]....

In closing the account of the second decade, it will be interesting to note the position of the Mission at the beginning and end of these ten years.

Instead of 9 unoccupied provinces there were	2.
“ ” 52 missionaries “ ”	225.
“ ” 75 native helpers “ ”	117.
“ ” 52 stations and out-stations “ ”	117.
“ ” 28 Churches “ ”	59,

in which there were 1,655 native communicants in fellowship.

Chapter 4: Development and Consolidation: The Third Decade [excerpts]

Mainly one of development and consolidation has the work of this decade been. No new province has been entered; no new method of work has been introduced, but work has

been subdivided; the number of missionary workers has been increased; the methodical evangelization of districts around established centres has taken the place of the widespread evangelization which was the first need, and was all that could be undertaken at an earlier stage.

During this period the work of the Mission, which from the first has been pan-denominational, has become international. Very early in its history, individual workers from Switzerland and Belgium joined the Mission; but only during the last decade have Councils been formed abroad, through whom contingents have reached the Mission, and Committees in various countries sent missionaries to be associated with the Mission and to work under its direction....

At the end of the year 1893, the number of associates in connection with these Missions stood as follows:—

Bible Christian Mission	.	.	.	10
Swedish Mission in China	.	.	.	18
Norwegian Missions	.	.	.	9
German Alliance	.	.	.	7
Swedish Holiness Union	.	.	.	9
Scandinavian China Alliance	.	.	.	58
Free Church of Finland	.	.	.	3
			Total	114

In drawing to a close the sketch of this decade as far as it has progressed, comparison with the statistics of the year ending December 1893, shows that during these seven years the number of missionaries, of native helpers, of stations and out-stations, has more than doubled; the organized Churches have increased from 59 to 134, and the number of communicants has nearly trebled. The progress of the work of 1894 is full of encouragement, and gives promise of greater things in the near future.

Source: Taylor, J. Hudson. *Three Decades of the China Inland Mission: 1865 – 1895*. Toronto: China Inland Mission, 1895. 6–8, 17–22, 26, 27.