

Foreign Missions

W. B. M. U.

"We are laborers together with God."

Contributors to this column will please address Mrs. J. W. Manning, 240 Duke St., St. John, N. B.

PRAYER TOPIC FOR SEPTEMBER.

That God's special blessing may rest upon all departments of our work for the coming year and many souls be won for Christ at home and abroad.

NOTICE.

All parcels for India must be sent without delay to the following address: Miss Laura Peck, Wolfville, Nova Scotia.

J. HUDSON TAYLOR.

The death of J. Hudson Taylor removes from the Christian ministry one of the most devoted men of the present age. His life and work are full of most interesting and instructive incidents. As the head of one of the largest missionary organizations in the world he stands without a peer. He may be classed with General Booth of the Salvation Army, as an organizer of men.

It is proposed in what follows to give a brief sketch of his early life and conversion and the beginning of his work in China.

Mr. Taylor was born in Barnsley, Yorkshire, on the 21st of May, 1832, so that at his death he was 73 years of age. He was the first, and afterwards the only surviving son of his parents. In his early days, Mr. Taylor was extremely delicate, and it seemed as though all hopes that he, the child of answered prayer, should become a messenger of God to the heathen, must be given up. So far as his parents were concerned, this appears to have been done. In his boyhood, he was under religious influences continually; but he came to a point when, after striving hard to make himself good and acceptable to God, he got into a despairing condition, and felt that, if there were any salvation, it was not for him. At a later stage, he came under the influence of skeptical companions older than himself, and imbibed their views. He has stated since that he is thankful for having passed through such a time of doubt, for in those days he often said that if he believed the Bible to be true, he would at least put it fairly and honestly to the test, seeking to live by its teachings; but if he found it wanting he would cast it aside altogether. He adds, that since then he may reasonably claim to have tested and proved the verity of the promises of God's Word, and he has never found occasion to cast aside the Bible; it has never failed, and the promises of God have always been fulfilled in his experience.

His conversion came about in a somewhat remarkable manner. His mother had gone from home to visit friends some eighty miles away, and he, on a holiday afternoon, went into his father's library in search of something to read. He found nothing suitable among the books, and looking carelessly over a basket containing tracts and other papers, he took up one that contained, as he supposed, a story. He said to himself, "There will be a story here with a moral at the end; I will take the story and leave the moral for those who like it," and he went into an old disused warehouse and began to read. The story, among other things, spoke of the finished work of Christ, and he asked himself "Why does the writer speak of the finished work of Christ? Why does he not use the words 'the propitiatory work,' or 'the atoning work,' of Christ? 'and then the words of our Lord on the cross came to him, 'It is finished,' and he asked himself, 'What is finished?' Then his early training enabled him to recognize that the work of redemption was entirely finished, and he asked himself, 'If this be so, if Christ has indeed paid all the debt, what is left for me to do?' The conviction came into his soul that all that was left for him was, not struggling, or long effort, or tedious seeking, but just acceptance; and that he should fall down before God and praise him for the fully accomplished work. This he did without delay. That same afternoon, his mother rose from the dinner-table with her heart yearning intensely for the conversion of her only boy. Having more time than was usual at home, she went to her room, and turning the key in the door, knelt in prayer, with the determination—taught by the Spirit of God doubtless—that she would not leave that place until she knew that her boy was converted. She prayed, and prayed on, until, without any outside message, God spoke to her soul, and her prayer was changed to joyful

praise for that which she was sure was accomplished. And so, with eighty miles of separation between them, the hearts were joined together before the throne; and he in the old warehouse, and she in the guest-room at her friend's house, were praising God together for his finished work. When Mrs. Taylor came home she was greeted at the door by her son; and as he kissed her, he began to tell the good news that was filling his heart. He says, "I can almost feel that dear mother's arms round my neck as she pressed me to her bosom and said, 'I know, my boy; I have been rejoicing for a fortnight in the glad tidings you have to tell me.' 'Why,' he asked in surprise, 'has Amelia broken her promise—she said she would tell no one?' His mother replied that no one had told her anything, but that God's Spirit had assured her that he had led her son to himself." And so Mr. Taylor adds, "Do you wonder that I have great confidence in the power of prayer?" He felt that, from that time forward, he was not his own;—that another was the Lord of his life, and that he must order all his concerns in agreement with the will of another. Although but a boy, still under sixteen, his joy in the Lord and his sense of God's presence was so great that, as he says, he lay on the floor "silent before Him with unspeakable awe and unspeakable joy," and at that time he had the strongest assurance that his offering was accepted. It would be a long story. Suffice it to say that he purposely put himself in positions of need, where his dependence must be only upon God for temporal supplies, in order that he might test his ability to rest upon God alone, and thus get the endorsement by God, of his desire and purpose to be a missionary in China, for he felt that if he could not trust God at home, he had no assurance that he could trust him fully on the mission field.

When Mr. Taylor landed in China on March 1st, 1854, it was a time of turmoil, for the red-turbaned rebels were in possession of the city of Shanghai. He saw a great deal of war and bloodshed while still only a young man of twenty-two. The greatly enhanced cost of house rent and food, owing to the rebellion, drained his slender resources, and brought him into new tests of faith, and new proofs of God's reliability. Soon after this, he undertook a missionary journey along with Mr. Burdon (afterwards the Bishop of Hong-kong), and later it was his great privilege to travel for a length of time with that saintly man of God, Rev. William C. Burns. About this time—that is, the year after his arrival—he was influenced by the advice of good Mr. Medhurst, the leader of the London Missionary Society in China at that period, to adopt Chinese dress as a means of getting into the interior. In travelling together, Mr. Burns—a much older and more experienced missionary, and one who spoke the language much better, of course, than did Mr. Taylor—noticed that his companion was better able to get among the people, and attracted far less annoying attention from the crowds than he did. Sometimes, indeed, people would invite the younger to their homes, whilst the senior missionary was left out of the invitation, because he was in foreign dress. Mr. Burns at once recognized the situation, and changed his dress for the native costume. From that time onward it has been the custom of Mr. Taylor, and almost all those associated with him in the China Inland Mission to wear Chinese dress, and this is still maintained in the interior of the country.

As a result of this leading, Mr. Taylor worked with Mr. Burns for a short time at Swatow, in the Province of Canton, and only left for the north to get his medical and surgical appliances, with the expectation of returning to rejoin Mr. Burns. A chain of circumstances however, prevented his going south again and led to his entering upon the work in the city of Ningpo.

In January, 1858, Mr. Taylor was married to a Miss Dyer, a missionary in Ningpo and the daughter of Samuel Dyer, who worked as one of the first representatives of the London Mission in the Straits Settlements from 1827 to 1845. Mr. Taylor took charge of the Mission Hospital in Ningpo for Dr. Parker, in 1860, about nine months.

It was during his period also that Mr. Taylor and his companion, Mr. Jones, returned from the Chinese Evangelization Society, and experienced many trials and rewards of faith.

On January 16th, 1869, Mr. Taylor put into writing his first appeal for fellow-workers for China in these words, written to a relative in England:—"Do you know any earnest, devoted young men, desirous of serving God in China, who, not wishing more than their actual support, would be willing to come out and labor here? Oh for four or five such laborers!

They would probably begin to preach in Chinese in six months' time, and in answer to prayer the means would be found." The work of the Ningpo hospital, together with his own evangelistic work, was rapidly breaking down his health; and it became necessary for him to return home for a time. He hoped that his stay in England might be but brief; the doctors, however, saw the necessity for a prolonged stay. With reference to his prayer that God would raise up fellow-laborers, he said at this time—"We had no doubt about this; for we had been enabled to seek them from him in earnest and believing prayer for many months previously. Throughout the voyage our earnest cry to God was that he would over-rule our stay at home for good to China, and make it instrumental in raising up at least five helpers to labor in the province of Cheh-kiang." During the years from 1862 to 1865, this prayer was answered, and five laborers preceded Mr. Taylor to the province of Cheh-kiang and the city of Ningpo. It was whilst he was laid aside by weak health and was occupying his time in medical studies and in the revision of the New Testament in the Ningpo dialect—a colloquial translation—along with Rev. F. F. Gough of the Church Missionary Society, that his heart became burdened for a larger sphere than that of his own little mission in Ningpo. He says:—"In Ningpo, my mind was occupied with my immediate surroundings; but during my stay in England, I was as near to the inland province of China, as to Ningpo itself." Looking upon those eleven unentered, untouched provinces, with their 130 millions or more, and the very considerable portions of the entered provinces which were still practically untouched, his heart became burdened with a sense of deep personal responsibility. He came to the point—for his answer to prayer had taught him this—when he realized that, if he, little, unknown, insignificant man, as he considered himself, would but go to God to pray for fellow-laborers, God would answer his prayer, and send those who should accompany him, and labor with him in the inland provinces. He shrank from this for a time, and he approached the leading missionary societies with the desire to get them to do something for the inland province of China; but the burden was his, not theirs; and none of them took the load upon their hearts as he was constrained to do. The thought that, in a meeting such as this, during the time between the opening psalm and the benediction, much more than one thousand souls in China alone would pass beyond the boundary of hope into the land of hopelessness, oppressed his heart so that he could neither rest nor sleep; and it was not until he surrendered his will in this matter to God, as he did on the shore at Brighton, on June 25th, 1865, that God gave him rest of heart. He could sleep well after he had penciled in the margin of his Bible—"Prayed for twenty-four willing, skilful laborers. Brighton, June 25th, 1865." The burden was rolled from his heart, and he could go forward, counting upon God to fulfil all his promises; and this, we may say, was the genesis of the China Inland Mission. From that time, God led his servant out and on, and less than a year later, on May 26th, 1866, the ship "Lammermuir" carried the first party to China, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Hudson Taylor, their four children and nurse, a lady friend, and fourteen young missionaries.

As a result of the labors of this devoted servant of God, there are at present in connection with the China Inland Mission 830 missionaries. When it is remembered that there is no denomination behind this movement we are compelled to say of the work, "What hath God wrought."

Foreign Mission Receipts.

A member of the Board, \$37.50; Mrs. A. D. Hartley, \$20; Parrsboro, \$10; Diligent River, \$5; Port Greville, \$5.08; Advocate, \$2.42, (per R. E. G.); Kentville, S.S. Sup. Miss. A, \$6.40; North Ch. S.S. sup. P. David, \$40; L. E. D., \$100, Total \$226.40.

Support of Mr. Freeman.

No. Brookfield, \$25; Milton, \$13.16; Liverpool, \$7.45; Friends, (Queens, \$2; Minus Gut, \$15; Halifax, West end, \$5; Halifax 1st, \$15; Bear River, \$17.88; Clarence, \$25; Windsor, \$33) \$158.44.

Support of J. A. Glendonning.

Jun. Miss. Band, Zion Ch., \$5; Germain street S.S. \$56; North Ch, Halifax, \$25. Total \$86.

Support of E. E. Gullison.

Mrs. H. H. Saunders, \$5; Japan B. Y. P. U., Sup. Kunchan, \$1.50.

Legacy.

Estate Shubert Dimock, Newport, \$1,000.

J. W. Manning,

Sec'y-Treas. F. M. B.

St. John, Aug. 5th, 1906.

As you grow ready for it, somewhere or other you will find what is needful for you in a book or a friend, or, best of all, in your own thoughts—the Eternal Thought speaking to your thoughts.—George MacDonald.