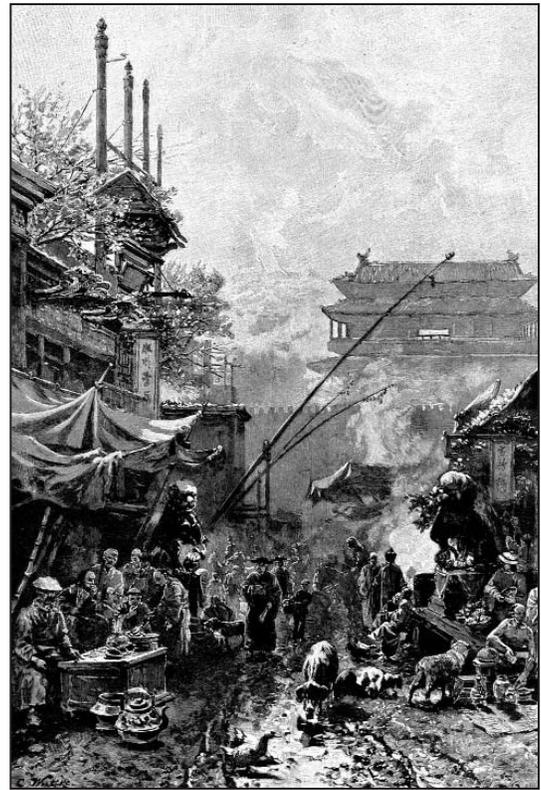


THE MAN OF PRAYER

Far away in China a man was riding slowly through the crowded streets of Taiyuan, capital of the province of Shansi in northern China, four hundred miles inland from the sea. As his pony threaded its way among the coolies and beggars and merchants, or stood aside for a mandarin's chair to pass, the rider would now and again acknowledge greetings from passers-by or smile patiently at the scowls of the ill-disposed. He wore a plain Chinese gown and cap, with his hair done in the customary pigtail, and only a second glance showed him to be a westerner—Harold Schofield, a brilliant young Oxford doctor who had sacrificed his prospects and immured himself in China for the sake of Christ.

Schofield dismounted at the door of the unimpressive house of the China Inland Mission and went inside. After a quick look at the dispensary, lest urgent cases had come while he had been out in the villages, he went across to the living room and greeted his wife. A meal was ready but he declined it, and after a few moments' talk, Schofield climbed the rickety stairs to the bedroom.

For a few moments he looked out on to the street, crowded, noisy, and with that constant stench of dung and offal, of unwashed bodies and the mingling smells of the shops and houses. As his eye traveled down the street towards the river, and then across to the distant hills, he thought once again of the teeming life of the city and province—nine million Christless inhabitants, and only five or six missionaries among them. He thought of the peasants, toiling in the wheat and rice fields, of the aristocratic mandarins in their palaces and estates, of the women and their cramped, cheerless lives, of the countless temples, and gods of plaster, stone or wood. And then his mind turned to home, so far away—twenty days to the coast, six weeks by sea and land to England. The Church in Britain cared little for these millions in the vast Chinese Empire, slowly waking from the sleep of ages. Few enough were ready to leave comfort and security to bring them the gospel. And of those who had come, and had penetrated inland, scarcely one was a university man, trained in



mind and body for leadership. Yet Schofield, a prizeman of Manchester, London and Oxford, knew from his own experience how greatly such men were needed.

The names Polhill-Turner, Hoste, Beauchamp or S.P. Smith meant nothing to him, but once again, this Spring evening of 1883, Harold Schofield knelt at the bedside and unburdened himself in prayer. He prayed that God would waken the Church to China's claims, that He would raise up men to preach His word. Above all that He would touch the universities and call men of talent and ability and consecrate them to His work in China. It seemed a prayer absurd enough except to faith. When Schofield had left England two and a half years earlier at the age of twenty-nine missionary recruits from

the universities had been scarce. Africa and India drew such as there were. His own mission was young and obscure. But the burden was on him; again and again in the past weeks he had found himself drawn to pray, leaving food and leisure for prayer to a God who answered prayer.

As the daylight faded in the little bedroom, Schofield was still on his knees, pouring out his soul for that which he would never live to see.



[It was during this exact time period, and soon after Schofield's death, that seven young men grew acquainted with each other and set sail together for China. Among them were S. P. Smith, and C. T. Studd, who before leaving England shook many university students to their depths by their testimonies of leaving worldly success to preach the gospel. All of England and the world have been influenced greatly by these seven men, and by the subsequent student revivals that have generated much fervor for missions including here in the United States.]



The Cambridge Seven

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