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Instructions of the Prudential Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, to the Rev. Peter Parker, M.D., about to proceed to China as a missionary of the Board.

Dear Brother,

The churches of Christ, thus engaged in conducting missionary operations, never engage in a more solemn interesting business, than when, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, his authority, they commission their agents, as his ambassadors, to make known to an unhearing and unbelieving world, the claims of Jehovah, the terms of reconciliation. To say that God has assembled for such a purpose, we are now standing in Christ's stead, is far from true. The scene under which we act, the obligation which binds us to this work, have their origin in his command, and human enactments cannot give the authority or impose the obligation. The word you, dear brother, if you go, for no other, yet which manner, or principally, concerns the narrow limits of this world, or of time. Our aim, it seems, is the sole salvation; our views are limited to a single generation. The word you, if you go, to offer pardon, and not to attempt to save perishing in ignorance and sin.

The Transactions of this evening, if your labor as a missionary in the field to which you have been despatched, may, it probably will, more or less directly, affect the eternal allotments of thousands of millions of immortal souls. It would lie in respect to a missionary to any portion of the unoccupied world, the solemnity of interest attending these services are greatly enhanced by the extent of the field.
The Chinese empire, though geographers differ in their estimates, probably covers about a tenth part of the habitable surface of the globe. It contains not far from one third of the whole human family now on the earth. Extending from the China Sea to Birmah, on the south, from the Indus to the west, and as far as the Yellow Sea, on the east, and Indochina farther north, from the Yellow Sea, on the east, to Indochina farther south, on the west, its territory is more extensive than that of any other empire except the Persian. Its population, embracing a number of great and formerly independent nations, is, probably, more than three times as numerous as that of Britain, with all its other dominions. To the Christian philanthropist, it is a subject of deep and painful interest. That one vast territory, for centuries extending back beyond the reach of history or tradition, almost unknown, is now in the hands of a people, in whose spirit a profound respect for the rights of others has reigned for thousands of years, embracing millions, inculcating virtues greater than the human mind can grasp, has through this long period of ages been judging of the higher things of life, has raised the standard of the world in the eternal warfare of good and evil, has taught the purifying influence of the truth and spirit of God.

The prominent divisions of the population of this empire, in respect to religion, are three: Confucians, the followers of Lao-tze, or the Buddha. Various other systems of idolatry exist; but the number of these is very small, and their respective votaries are so limited, as to render their comprehension unimportant. In this sketch, a more particular notice of these principal sects is not made; the Confucians are described.
The most ancient. This founder of the system may be regarded as the great Chinese moralist. The fundamental principle of his system seems to have been—
the same with that of certain bodies of philosophizing religious men of the present age— that it matters little or nothing what a man worships, who have, the articles of his religious belief, if his outward conduct is correct.人民网
particularly avoids explaining himself respecting the incumbent nature of the gods, only
inculcates the necessity of reverencing those whom the ancients had worshipped. The
great aim seems to have been to promote the social order. Having all his coun-
ty men, independently of the influence of particular systems of religion. He, therefore,
proceeded a strict observance of the external ceremonies of the prevalent systems
of religion; it bestowed his chief attention upon the regulation of the relative
duties of life.

Such a system would, of course, have very little attraction for the people, and the deficiency in this respect was strongly
felt by the contemporaries of Confucius. Lao-tzu, who may be characterized
as the great mystic philosopher of China, stepped forward to supply the wants of
the multitude. According to him, all nature is filled with demon spirits, who constantly influence the fate of man. He increased the number of gods
to an enormous amount. He attempted to define, with scholastic precision, their
various offices. He attempted to give a comprehensive system to a number of
gods and demons. His system of mysticism promotes the system being gen-
erally received. Some Thibetans have even declared themselves as true Confucians, as
the system is called. It has, for its professed believers among the learned Thibet-
ians, but no influence exerted in its behalf has been able, at any time, to
obtain for it the sanction of a general belief.

China, therefore, a popular creed, and Buddhism supplanted the ten-
The first priests of Buddhism were doubtless in A.D. 65 C.E., the two reigning emperors; who, having the Chinese historians relate, informed in a dream that "the Holy One" was born in the country, went to find an envoy to bring to him some of the descendants of the newborn sage. In the中科河 there was also found a palace, which, in depois turn, the

of the doctrines. According to this system, all things are transient, during the present

itself the present destructions of any country in which it obtains an entrance. It teaches the doctrine of metempsychosis or transmigration. From this it obtains, as its highest

an introduction in Nirvana or nonentity. It is by no means rigorous in enforcing its own precepts of morality. It teaches that, to expiate sins, offerings to the gods of the

its most mighty powers; it has its mighty prisons; it has its mighty thoughts; it has its mighty reading in an unknown tongue; its mages for the dead; its prayers to offerings to

Nearly all the learned men of the nation, of those who are high in rank or office, are followers of Confucian or of Laozi. The Confucian is the religion of the people. Yet it is said to have very little hold upon the general respect. The government has generally tolerated it, favoring it merely as an instrument for keeping the lower classes in quiet submission, not adopting it. Both the system of Confucianism has been zealously pressed by the learned and intelligent. Its priests, who are very munificent, are taken from the lowest of the people, are extremely poor, notoriously debauched, and

most of its temples are held to be in a disgraceful existence.
All these systems seem also to be on the decline. It is remarkable in the valuable work just referred to, that "though the kinds of false religions, that once flourished in the earth, seem to have found their way to China, where, with various modifications, they now exist; yet they exist without any believing principle. Systems they are, without foundation, without order, pointed in darkness, upheld by ignorance & superstition. They do not, they cannot, of 

But though natural without purpose, it is from the state that has been made of them regarded by the reflecting as useless, except, perhaps, politically, in fact of a corrupting tendency. It now actually in the decline. They must be rejected to offer formidable impediments to the progress of Christianity. They occur 

I am also vol. 1. p. 509.
in their life, it to substitute in their place a humble, heart-stirring religion. The
forces of darkness will not cease how much the delusions which he has continued,
to mislead and destroy men, are severe, while his victims embrace nothing which
of the church, and to deliver them from his power. But when they begin to
break away from his thraldom, he may be expected to use every artifice to
delude them more fatally. It to lead them more incautiously to his service.

In the eighteenth century Mohammedanism was introduced into China; but
now made any considerable progress. It still has an existence, however itsognito condi-
tion one of the minor sects, bearing the name in mosques, of the name in the com-
paign of government.

Christianity, there is reason to believe, was introduced into China, as early as
the seventh century, by the Nestorians, the most interesting of the various sects into
which the Christian church was early divided. They introduced the country from Syri-
and continued their labours for the propagation of their faith till the thirteenth or
fourteenth century. It did not become a fact till the sixteenth. Little can now be
learned respecting the extent to which their doctrines were formalized or embraced.
Churches are said to have been established in many cities, it was generally regarded by
the government, but it is not known that any traces of them now remain. The
Roman Catholics entered China, from the same quarter, about the thirteenth cen-
tury, it, giving them the power of the courage. It was, indeed, a zealous,
meditation of purposes, that spirit of compromise, that spirit of martyrdom too, for which
the Jesuits have been remarkable. The progress of this corrupt form of Christianity
was, for a time, rapid. It augmented with the political ambition of the missionaries,
and the jealousy of the government; but triumph might, see the time, have
been completed. After suffering incredible persecutions, the European priests were
all at last to death, destroyed from the country under the brute of this
15th, June 1816.
fatigable labors have nearly disappeared, these being known to exist at the present time, only a few churches in the western part of the empire, it individually being now found in other parts of the country, retaining in privacy, their attachment to the Papal superstition. There is also a Greek church at Peking, the capital of the empire, under the protection of one of the Russian Commercial agents.

The first Protestant missionary to China, the now venerable Dr. Morrison, arrived at Canton in the year 1807. It was not long after this that the late Dr. Milne, who was a member of that society, commenced his labors in the western provinces. He labored with commendable zeal, not without encouragement, success, in acquiring the language; in preparing and translating the Scriptures and other religious books, publishing them in circulation among the numerous Chinese scattered in the adjacent countries and islands. But in the recent voyage of the missionary vessel "Zephyr," a new and more successful attempt was made to penetrate the empire itself, to open again in its interior, the standard of the Gospel. The mission's glorious results is known to every one who takes an interest in the advancing cause of Missions.

And then we are constrained to remark, how instructive the history of the recent feelings of Protestant Christians, of the Providence of God, in respect to this most interesting portion of the missionary world. Until quite recent years, this wide field, in which the work of evangelizing the idolatrous population of the globe was to be performed, was deemed comparatively little interesting. It has since been known that none of almost any other heathen country, a knowledge of its language was thought unattainable. Its jealousy of foreigners
The restrictions imposed upon intercourse with them were so severe as to entirely exclude them from its shores. Its government was behind to be influentially hostile to Christian society. It determined to prevent all efforts for its propagation. Under the manifold difficulties, the various Protestant churches, with all their missionary zeal, seldom did a thought of benevolence to China, or if it came to its quick recall, it in the feelings of despair or at most, made only a few cautious, indirect efforts to throw upon its head. Only a few scattered rays of hopeful light, while the Prince of darkness has reigned within, have distantly shone. But, while Christians were waiting for some special, if not miraculous, intervention of Providence to open a way of access, God has, at length, most convincingly shown them that they have been criminally deficient in zeal. The efforts of Michael, H. Melville, Mr. Dyer, Marshman, have shown that the language presents no insuperable difficulties. It has furnished facilities for acquiring a knowledge of it, surpassing those for acquiring the languages of most other heathen nations. The whole Bible has been translated, published, and furnished to them, may he read by more than a third of the estimated number of the human race. And now, the Christian entailed is broken, and of great benefit. It has shown that the journey which the population of China was supposed to entertain in regard to foreign, it were so easy to intercourse with them, were rather imaginary. The road is not likely to afford any insuperable barrier to the introduction of true Christianity. Even commercial enterprises, now deemed absurd, if it were forbidden, seem to have been outstripped. It may be obliged to submit itself indelibly to the adventurous heroes of this missionary pioneer. To the whole continent of eastern coast, he has found free access, and penetrated the country from distant points, hundreds of miles, as yet unknown to every one, distributing Christian books, and declaring the truths of the Gospel, to glowing and eager multitudes.

The whole Chinese empire, then, constitutes one vast missionary field. It
This wise mending post it is the determination of the divine Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, acting as the agents of the Protestant churches of the United States and of the country, to occupy the whole of the long neglected and unoccupied spaces of the earth, with the objects that are their just and solemn commission. It suits the interests of the non-Christian powers, for greater than the whole world to become a Christian kingdom.

It is yet, with its almost countless millions of people, to be added to the kingdom of Christ. It is incomparably the richest field that the world ever afforded to call forth Christian beneficence. It presents ample opportunity for Christian Apostles, martyrs, to exhibit their amendment for Christ's sake; their self-denial, zeal in the cause of the holy Father, is the result of the love of His Son, and they have the Holy Ghost to help their memory to bear burdens, to suffer, and Christ know it has not yet been given to the Church. And now in this age, in the age of that same Christian kingdom, we are to continue, to continue, for greater, than the whole world, and to be the fruits of the Gentile, the Gentile kingdom.

This is a Christian kingdom.
speaking Christ compassed, working or moving to flee from the world, they shall be absolutely silenced. But the Apostles to the peoples of foreign nations forbidden to preach make known the Gospel in other countries, till they knew that the rulers would be severe and severe, many of them now in mind the country from Jerusalem round about unto Antioch in Pisidia, or in any other country, have fully found the Gospel of Christ. In your own time, especially, doctrine, and from wanting to obtain the sanction of civil rulers, that much of this preaching was in direct opposition to their command. In modern society, the command, not to speak at all, nor to teach, in the name of Jesus, is evicted. Whether it be right, in the sight of God, to teach men to judge, for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. It is questionable whether, if the profession were formally made, the government of any heathen nation on earth, would sanction the preaching of the Gospel within its bounds. It may even be doubted whether any nominally Christian government is now in such a state, that, if the question should arise, if in such a government, we were to sanction the preaching of such men as Peter and Paul, all history testifies that most of the eminence of the apostles which have attended the propagation of Christianity have originated with civil rulers, that most of its corruptions, if its consequent insufficiency, bave been occasioned by its connexion with government, the support given it, which they have intended to be. Probably resistance can be furnished when such Christianity has been designedly introduced. Propagates among people by the authority, or by the sanction of the civil government, as a general fact, it has not at the other extremity of society. I am not prevailingly received, nor am I understood, nor am I listened to. In the barbarous parts, I give you a rotation of it, speaking the Gospel. The Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, to the barbarous parts, I give you a rotation of it, speaking the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, to the barbarous parts.
tincture by the populace; it often has it achieved its noblest triumphs; it has had the influence of its doctrines most happily exemplified, among the poor and despised classes of the community. "Shall any of the rulers of the Hebrews believe on him?" "Not many indeed; many after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath despised the things which are esteemed in the world; and God hath set forth things which are not to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence. "So the poor, the outcast, is made. While Christianity exhibits the spirit to be christ, the principles which should govern man, in all the stations and relations of life; to the community, specifies the duties appropriate to each, it does not, as a scheme of salvation, absolve itself of rulers, in the official capacity, as to duties of man, but its accords them; lays its claims upon them, as individuals, in rebellion against God, in ruin of the kingdom of Christ, bound to an eternal servitude, when they will be found in contrivance in their individual capacity. The Christian ministry is not, then, to seek, the sanction of government to his efforts to extend the gospel, but is to go, with its heavenly message, directly to the people, as known he can find them, and he is to proclaim its requirements to them, as individuals, having claims for the salvation of life, which they are themselves responsible. He must know it obey the gospel each for himself, expecting that if the truth is to spread its influence the government under which he labors, it will be led by its being first diffused through the community, extending its light. It is reforming power throughout all ranks, till it rise to those who occupy the highest places in the state. And if he finds a people willing to receive him, he is to presume in proclaiming to them, the message of salvation, though law are not professed, it even at the expense of liberty of life. He is not invited to court prosecution, if prosecuted in society, he may flee to another. But a people willing to receive the gospel, are not to be abandoned, though all the sum of its forms of their rulers should be opposed against this instruction. In such a case, they must see that an ambassador of Jesus Christ does not cast away his life clear unto him, on the countenance of the wickedness of the human.
...so that I may testify the gospel of the grace of God. The prophecies, it is altogether
that the government of China will, sooner or later, stand against the propagation, with-
...so that it is not to do. The very genuine structure of the government tends
is toombat the power of this cause more certainly than from any other government on earth. The
fundamental principle of the whole system morality of the religious of China is the obliga-
tion of universal obedience to the government. As the supreme as the great parent of all, who
of course, feels himself responsible not only for the civil and social, but also for the domestic
private conduct. For the opinion of all, the subject of the nation, thankful, in
view of this fact, should as much to the wisdom and favor of Providence, in maintaining
the hand of the government in this manner, to help back the authority. Of the applica-
tion of the civil authority, unless the people shall get a taste for Christian in
stitution; the preservation, if it can be a direct means of furthering the propagation,
of the truth. It may not come. God can prevent it. But it is not probable that
he will. And if the government, it may come from popular support in
prejudice, excited to struggle with desperation for its malignant empire over the souls
of the human race. But come when it will, the worthy oppos-
tion of the spirit of God to his kingdom, will fail. No millions, will not be able to
his work by force. Knowing that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the
Church," he will be ready to scatter them that did call to it. By the com-
mand of his Son, as the universal comforter in his reign
in the spirit of God, it will find by in his body for grace to sustain His holy determina-
tion; he will say, "I am ready not to be bound, but also to die for the name of
the Lord Jesus." For the missionary at the present day, it is especially a missionary to China,
must be in spirit conduct in prosecuting his work, not only almost, but altogether,
such as Paul.
by which you are to be guided in giving your declaration. The two principal objects of our plan are to benefit you, as a Christian teacher, after having acquired a knowledge of the language, will help the circulation of the Scriptures. The religious books, we trust, will do the direct teaching of the Gospel.

The medical and surgical knowledge you have acquired, you will also play as you have occasion, in relieving the bodily sufferings of the people, and you will also be very, as you can, to do in giving to think of our arts and sciences. But then, you will never forget, are to receive your attention, only as they can be made handmaid to the Gospel. The character of a physician, of a man of science, respectable as they are, is useful as they may be in everything. In China, you will never suffer to be deprived of interest with your character of teacher of religion.

For the circulation of religious books, in China, produces great good. In every other portion of the kingdom under a larger proportion of the people can read, than of any other kingdom. They are fond of reading, they are accustomed to be influenced by books. The circulation of religious worksprevailing among them, now all of them is propagated by means of books, while in preaching to every they like public speaking, they have been little stronger. The art of printing, too, has been understood among them for many centuries, and probably in no part of the world, can books be manufactured at so little expense, and about printing from stereotype plates has introduced, which, by an instrument recently made, has been found perfectly practicable. The facility of rapidly multiplying copies of books will be greatly increased. You will carry with you a set of stereotype plates (made in the country, from wooden blocks sent from China) for printing Chinese common on the subject, with a number of copies of the Sharon, as a specimen prin-
But, while you labor diligently, as you have opportunity, in this department, never forget that preaching the Gospel, with the living proving God affords, must prove the scratching conscience of man by giving, by the power of his Spirit, an afterthought effect on their minds, to the solemn realities of God’s eternity, the unchangeable love of Christ, and bringing them to repentance and belief the Gospel. That he “pleased [God] by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.” This is the means by which he has always, without most of it being seen by the conversion of souls, in heathen, as well as in nominally Christian nations. And in the latter he sees, the Redeemer sets an anvil fly in the midst of heaven, having the evangelizing Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, “unto every nation, kindred, tongue and people.” And quickly, “they fell one upon the other, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen! It is another, singing in a loud voice to one that sat on a cloud. There in the midst of the earth, the earth is split in two.” And now the millions of China, exempt from this law of Christ’s spiritual kingdom. The fact that the religions now prevailing among them, have been propagated without preaching, does not prove that they are exempt from it — a false religion, which has nothing to do with the conscience and moral affai
time, may he prosper solely by books. Not so the true religion. Its propagation begins with the working into life of the moral sense, the changing of the radical temper of the soul, and such is the constitution of the mind, that this will never be entirely accomplished, instrumentally, but by the communication from a soul already thus affected, of its own moral feelings, by means of the living counterpart of the living voice of God. With the word, then, in season, sent out of seclusion to congregations, if you can have the opportunity; to clusters of persons, whenever you can. Be, therefore, ingenuously, whenever you will have your advocates, the single people of the grace of God, learning to them the apostles' claims of Jehovah, shewing them their last condition; and help them, thou art in the coming salvation. But chiefly, first, in all your preaching do, as the apostles did, as Jehovah did; when God comically helped him, as the Moravians have so successfully done, i.e. tell the story of redeeming love, hold up the obligation to a divine, incorrupt, almighty, reigning Redeemer, reminding that "God is love," that alone is "to both feed and multiply," as when it always, "the power of God, the wisdom of God." And let all your efforts be made, in prayer, in feeling, most deeply, that it is the Spirit of God alone, that can give them any saving efficacy; it that the gift of the Spirit is to be expected only in answer to fervent believing prayer. And so preaching, effect the confidence, that God will crown your labors with success.

Upon your arrival at Canton, you will confer with the American missionaries already there, if you have opportunity, with Dr. Morrison. With Mr. Gutzlaff, regarding your future course, you will regard yourself as a member of the mission, of the American Board of Foreign Missions, will, as the rules of the Board require, submit yourself to the decision of a majority of the mission, subject to the revision of the President. Committee. If you will labor to cultivate the your brethren of the mission, to the Protestant missionaries with
will whon you may be called to cooperate, not only outward harmony, but divine confidence and effect. Remember, it is that you must strictly comply with the change, having due that the fault shall in no degree be yours, if the operation shall be the unhappily result. Your first business will be to acquire both the written and spoken languages of the Chinese; and see that you acquire them accurately thoroughly. It will require two or three years of close, unremitting study. But let not the thought enter your mind, that you are spending so much time uselessly. And let no other idea, however rising it may seem, divert you from this plan. Meanwhile you will, as opportunity shall present, be making your self acquainted with the people, their manners, customs, getting information that may be serviceable in your future labors. When fitted by the acquiring the language, tenure for your great work, the mission will determine when, in what particular manor, you shall enter upon it. Proceed, it is the wish of the Committee that you, or some one or more of your associates, take a station; and as shall be practicable, at some favorable position within the limits of China; if we could not, especially to your consideration, that of the mission, with this view, we would recommend you to make frequent excursions in the country, visiting the body of the people, distributing Christian books, teaching the use of life. But special attention, also, be paid, from the beginning, to the founding, as soon as shall be practicable, well-qualified native assistants in your missionary work. This you will regard as an object of the first importance; yet, careful, in seeking its attainment, to exercise a sound discretion. Your interest and that of the mission, the Committee, you will have constantly fully informed of your proceedings. Of your difficulties, it is encouragement, if you to your associates, while you are careful always, to do thoroughly what you attempt, will lay your plans. And, in your work, expecting that you will be liberally assisted, I shall strongly recommend from this country, you will tell your brethren, hence step growing is the
interest in China, set by the Christians of this nation, let it encourage them with the assurance, that they show our warmest sympathy, as evidenced in our most fervent prayers. It will remain from us, as Christian, shall alone finish it, as He shall finish it, as His saint, help.

You go, dear brother, not to perform a service, the responsibilities of which are expressly upon you, to have it similarly employed. You go as our agent - the agent of all the Christians of this Church, to do their work, to perform it, for them, a most important part of the service assigned to you. They in common, by our ascending Lord, will remember it. We will think of you, not contribute to all you do in your work, to pray for you, under the influence of the truth, let the assurance sustain, comfort your heart. But let it be chiefly sustained by the assurance, that Christ will ever be with you. "Go, teach all nations," He shall be with you always, unto the end of the world. With such an assurance, what are difficulties, what "sorrows of affliction, what death itself, in its most distressing form? And the glorious result for which you go to labor, shall certainly be accomplished. How many millions of people shall have the command, "God is with me," said the man whom the Lord shall have in his service. I shall give thee the land, the land of Canaan. The Lord's, all the land that the Lord shall give thee; from the river of Egypt unto the great sea, unto the borders of the Euphrates, the whole land of the Hittites, and the Eshlon, and the Jericho, the use of the whole land, and all the inhabitants thereof. And the Lord shall be with thee, as he was with thy father David. And it shall come to pass, that, when thou goest down to battle, the Lord thy God shall be with thee, and he shall give thee success. And he shall give thee rest from all thine enemies. And the Lord shall make thee to be a terror unto thine enemies, and to all them that rise up against thee. And the Lord shall direct thy way always. And the Lord shall be with thee, and give thee success.
periodical prohibitions void. The struggle may be hard, for it is to be the last.
But the bulwarks of Satan will not withstand the shock, nor his armies from vic-

Theology. God will reign upon the subject."

Go, then, dear brother. Stand strong. Stay strong in the conflict.
Be faithful unto death. And we will mingle our sympathies with you again,
when you receive your immortal crown.

New York, Jan. 1, 1836,

In behalf of the Presidical Committee,

[Signature]

O. B. Anderson, for the
David Greene, A.D.G.