

# *James Legge and the Confucian Classics*

**Brilliant Scot in the turmoil of colonial Hong Kong**

Marilyn Laura Bowman



James Legge and the Confucian Classics: Brilliant Scot in the turmoil of colonial Hong Kong

Marilyn Laura Bowman  
Simon Fraser University  
Vancouver Canada

## Contents

<i>James Legge and the Confucian Classics</i> .....	1
<b>Brilliant Scot in the turmoil of colonial Hong Kong</b> .....	1
Preface .....	7
Introduction .....	11
Part 1 A brilliant country boy.....	13
Chapter 1 The family of James Legge .....	13
Chapter 2 A lad of intellectual talents and exceptional resilience .....	20
Chapter 3 Religion and education in Scotland.....	26
Chapter 4 Competing in a larger world .....	30
Part 2 Making a crucial decision .....	38
Chapter 5 Declining an offer promising status, leaving Scotland.....	38
Chapter 6 Deciding on a career.....	44
Chapter 7 Legge and the London Missionary Society .....	50
Chapter 8 Learning Chinese in London .....	59
Chapter 9 Britain and China; the decaying Qing dynasty and the opium trade.....	68
Part 3 A new life in Malacca as war with China develops .....	80
Chapter 10 Commissioner Lin attacks opium .....	80
Chapter 11 Voyage to an exotic world .....	89
Chapter 12 Malacca station history with Morrison and Milne .....	108
Chapter 13 A place of discord: Conflicts in the Malacca LMS before Legge.....	117
Chapter 14 Legge discovers Malacca problems .....	164
Chapter 15 Evans dies of cholera, Legge inherits a mess .....	182
Chapter 16 Legge creates a grand plan for the Chinese Classics.....	197
Chapter 17 Britain and China struggle; effects on missions .....	202
Chapter 18 Problems at the Anglo-Chinese College.....	229
Part 4 Busy in Hong Kong, with politics, poverty, scandal, and illness .....	247
Chapter 19 Diplomat Qiying enters negotiations .....	247
Chapter 20 Life in Hong Kong: crime, scandal, and promise.....	255
Chapter 21 Legge's Mission work .....	282
Chapter 22 Defeated by illness, abandoning Hong Kong .....	299
Part 5 Rejuvenation in Britain.....	302
Chapter 23 The LMS in Hong Kong .....	302
Chapter 24 Three Chinese lads in Britain, family challenges, and Queen Victoria...	304
Chapter 25 Rev. George Smith disapproves of Hong Kong, Ho is ordained .....	313

Chapter 26 The Delegates Version of the Bible: translation conflict continues .....	320
Chapter 27 LMS problems in Hong Kong and Canton.....	322
Part 6 Progress, struggles, and tragedy in Hong Kong .....	335
Chapter 28 The journey back to Hong Kong .....	335
Chapter 29 LMS in Hong Kong and Canton.....	342
Chapter 30 Translating God: the term question rages.....	354
Chapter 31 A huge conflict erupts over Gutzlaff.....	382
Chapter 32 Hong Kong mission work, struggles, and deaths .....	402
Chapter 33 An <i>annus horribilis</i> for Legge.....	441
Chapter 34 Legge, mission men, and the Taiping rebellion .....	467
Chapter 35 Life in the missions during the turmoil of 1853 .....	478
Chapter 36 Alone, working for a public education system, and helping Che .....	497
Chapter 37 Canton rebellion disrupts the mission, and Legge works on the Classics	512
Chapter 39 A year with the Classics, and a Chinese friendship .....	540
Part 7 Ink and marriage in Britain .....	556
Chapter 40 Legge in Britain.....	556
Chapter 41 The Hong Kong mission and Chalmers .....	563
Chapter 42 Harry Parkes and Canton with the 1858 trade treaty .....	566
Part 8 In Hong Kong with a new family .....	571
Chapter 43 Daily Life in Hong Kong .....	576
Chapter 44 The trade war ends in northern China .....	595
Chapter 45 Legge, Hong Rengan, Shifu, the term question, and a crisis with Wong	601
Part 9 The Chinese Classics 1861; volumes I and II.....	621
Chapter 46 Threats to the publication of the classics .....	621
Chapter 47 Family life, a Sailors' Home, and Union Church.....	634
Chapter 48 The tragedy of Che Jinguang .....	641
Chapter 49 Hong Kong: public education, the Osborne-Lay flotilla, crime, illnesses, and scandals .....	653
Chapter 50 The Chinese Classics volumes I and II are reviewed.....	677
Chapter 51 Chinese Gordon, the Lay-Osborne fiasco, a new church, and Legge proposes a library.....	682
Chapter 52 Legge hires fugitive scholar Wang Tao .....	694
Chapter 53 Family life, Union Church problems, voyage up West River, ship disasters .....	701
Chapter 54 Hong Kong life, Hannah leaves .....	718
Chapter 55 Final days in Hong Kong, Union Church troubles .....	741

Part 10 Legge works on the Classics in Britain .....	757
Chapter 56 In Britain: Robert Jardine & Wang Tao .....	760
Chapter 57 Union Church and LMS struggle, and Legge is honoured in Britain .....	768
Part 11 Alone in Hong Kong finishing the Classics, new conflicts between Britain and China .....	775
Chapter 58 Chalmers returns to the Canton mission.....	778
Chapter 59 The Tianjin Massacre of 1870 and its effects in Canton.....	781
Chapter 60 Legge returns to Union Church.....	791
Chapter 61 Upheavals with genii powders, Qing Circulars, and <i>feng shui</i> .....	798
Chapter 62 Legge completes volumes IV and V, Wang becomes important, Legge is injured, and Union Church thrives.....	806
Chapter 63 Political conflicts, Legge thrives .....	829
Chapter 64 Legge travels north to honour the Sage.....	846
Part 12 Unsettled in Britain, a new career emerges .....	855
Chapter 65 Unsettled in Scotland and London .....	855
Chapter 66 An Oxford appointment, complications, scandals, and controversies ...	861
Chapter 67 Travels and honours.....	879
Chapter 68 Memoirs and death .....	893
Part 13 James Legge's life, beliefs, and attitudes .....	899
Chapter 69 Legge the man .....	899
Chapter 70 Challenging life events, trauma, and resilience.....	906
Chapter 71 Social and political opinions.....	917
Part 14 James Legge's legacies: scholar, educator, mission leader .....	941
Chapter 72 Legge the scholar.....	941
Chapter 73 Legge the educator .....	953
Chapter 74 Legge the mission man.....	963
Chapter 75 China and Hong Kong after the 19 <sup>th</sup> c. missions.....	968
Epilogue; Why was James Legge forgotten? .....	968
On the other hand; beyond cliché in a new century .....	971
Notes and Sources .....	988
References.....	989

### Acknowledgements

I am grateful for grant support from the Social Sciences and Health Research Council of Canada, a Visitorship grant from the Lam East-West Institute (LEWI) at Hong Kong Baptist University, a grant from the British Columbia Scholars to China, and from the Simon Fraser University Dean of Arts Special Projects.

I also thank Sir Tim Lankester, President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford for his encouragement and help, Professor Lauren Pfister and his Research Assistant Ma Meilin at Hong Kong Baptist University for their welcome and generosity. SOAS archivist Rosemary Seton, and others at the archival libraries at the SOAS and the Wellcome libraries in London, and at the Bodleian and Corpus Christi libraries of Oxford were all helpful and I thank them. Finally, I have benefited from the warmth and generosity of the eldest son of the eldest son of James Legge; Christopher Legge and his wife Judy have been unfailingly kind and helpful to me.

### Preface

I could hardly believe the pages before my eyes when I started to examine the book I had opened. I was trying to find a minor piece of Chinese history from the classics for a small article on the history of psychological testing, and this 1861 translation by James Legge promised interesting information. My quest was quickly solved, but I became increasingly excited as I realized the vast scholarship revealed in my hands.

On most translation pages, each page had the same format. On the upper one-third there was Chinese character text in a large handsome font, in the next third below that there was an English translation in a medium-sized font, and on the bottom third were detailed Notes. These discussed the people, places, dates, and provided historical commentaries about the text that was translated above. The Notes were written in small elegant fonts including Chinese, Greek, Hebrew, and italics for Latin and accented vowels for French. The Notes assumed the English-literate reader also had literacy in these languages as they provided information, for Legge freely used all of them while illustrating a point or comparing with other texts, without providing translation. This was a set format for hundreds of pages in the book I held.

Not only was every page of translation dense with this scholarship, the book had a massive Prolegomena, an introductory historical essay that placed the book and its ideas into a historical context and examined many features of the original Chinese text in relation to its traditional interpretations. In addition the book had comprehensive indexes at the end, providing separate index details for all the subject topics in the text (in English), for all the proper Chinese names (transcribed into English), and for all the important Chinese characters and phrases in the text.

The Chinese character index was organized in the traditional Chinese dictionary system based on the “radical” or key meaningful visual element in the character. This creates order that would be otherwise impossible in a non-alphabetic written language. It customarily lists the characters in a fixed numerical order starting with radicals with only one stroke (followed by all the major words that are based around it), and continues on to add those with increasing stroke numbers. Legge included these words up to high radical numbers, more than are now used in standard dictionaries. For the volume that included the Confucian *Analects*, for example, he created a Chinese character index for words up to radical 213. The meaning of each character or group of characters is provided in English in this homemade dictionary, followed by a list of related Chinese characters, then an index to its placements in every part of the Chinese text of the work.

I soon found out that this fabulous scholarship was true for many additional books translated by Legge across the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, covering the major classics of Chinese literature and philosophy. There were thousands of pages of this three-sectioned pattern of Chinese, English, and Notes text across many volumes, in addition to his critical essays and wonderful dictionary-indexes. I was flabbergasted at the density and vast range of the knowledge that was represented in these books.

I was reading from a 1960 University of Hong Kong reprint that had been done as part of the University's fiftieth anniversary celebrations, and my curiosity was aroused. As I began trying to find out more about Legge and his books, I soon found out that the Curzon Press was still publishing reprints of some of Legge's translations in 2001. These were done as part of its reissue of the massive *Sacred Books of the East* series, books that had been originally created and edited at Oxford by Max Müller in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

As I began to realize the vast scholarship that Legge's work represented and its still powerful contemporary relevance, I became increasingly puzzled as to why the man who had accomplished such a massive quantity of both translation and scholarly comment was essentially unknown to me. Across my 55 years of obsessive reading, I had never encountered the name of James Legge. Some minor skirmishes into biographical dictionaries yielded little. The Cambridge Biographical Encyclopaedia of 1994 for example, describes more than 15,000 individuals in more than 1000 pages, yet Legge is absent.

I became increasingly curious about the story of the man who accomplished so much, and about the times and places in which he did this overwhelming effort. The search was well worth the effort, for Legge's story includes every powerful and romantic theme of the role of educated Scots in the 19<sup>th</sup> century British Empire, starting from its earliest reaches into the truly unknown Chinese Empire. Legge went to China and began his work at a time when sailing ships, pirates, opium wars, the swashbuckling East India Company, cannibals eating missionaries, and the opening of Qing China to trade and ideas from the West were all events in full flowering.

Legge wrote at night initially by quill pen lit by candle and lamplight because his "day job" as a mission man in Hong Kong required him to establish schools and teach in them, and to establish congregations and churches and preach and minister to them. He raised a large family while the bloody pseudo-Christian Taiping rebellion surged across the swath of southern China just onshore from Hong Kong. This was a rebellion in which probably 30 million Chinese were killed in the civil war, and in which Legge's most devoted Chinese convert and minister was murdered and dismembered by an



hysterical mob less than a week after Legge had gone to protect the man, knowing he himself was risking being beheaded.

The challenging historical and personal events that James Legge experienced seemed to fit peculiarly into my own life-long interests, “my own peculiar department”, as Legge described his interests. My professional life as a psychologist has centred on two broad themes of interest, individual differences in cognitive abilities and in responses to adverse events. As I learned more about James Legge, I realized that his life provided a rich blend of these themes. I also realized that I wanted more people to know about the dazzling Dr. Legge despite the modern distaste for “dead white males”, especially for Victorian Christian missionaries, and despite my own absence of faith.

My initial search for more information left me eager for more. At the time that HKU reprinted Legge’s Chinese Classics in 1960, the Vice-Chancellor Sir Lindsay Ride had written an introductory chapter outlining Legge’s life and work. The original volume had included an enigmatically autobiographical Preface written by Legge in a delicate manner referring to himself in the third person, as “the author”. Both these accounts were quite brief. In 1905 Legge’s daughter Helen wrote a biography emphasizing Legge’s missionary work and including some letters about life in Hong Kong written by his second wife. More recently a brief life relating Legge to the creation of Hong Kong social institutions was published in 1996 by Hong Kong historian Tim Man-Kong Wong, and major scholarship examining Legge’s religious and philosophical ideas has been published in recent books by Professors Norman Girardot, and Lauren Pfister.

These works were interesting, but all left me keen to find out more about Legge’s personal life, especially his life in Hong Kong during its most turbulent period 1842-1873. I was full of zest for some major detective work that might capture his personal character and style, and expand my understanding of his magnificent accomplishments.

Notes on Romanization and transcription of Chinese words

For names of most Chinese public persons or Chinese geography where the pinyin is known, I have used the modern pinyin followed by the old spelling in brackets for the first use, then have used pinyin for all subsequent uses, except for a few key names. The main exceptions include the use of Canton, Hong Kong, and Whampoa, because of their historical role as that spelling. For cities in other lands I have mostly adopted modern spellings, e.g. Jakarta for modern Djakarta, but I retained the use of Batavia as the name for that city as it was known in that period.

For the names of private Chinese individuals where I do not have the characters but only personal romanizations from that period, I chose one that represents the most frequently used, and then used only it. For the personal names in Cantonese format of A-sow, A-Gong etc., I have usually used the name without the prefix of 'a', using pinyin wherever possible. That method is not perfect, as the Cantonese A-Gong format was at times used with surnames for adults, whereas with children the a- form could instead be linked to the personal name. In general for adults I have used pinyin where possible (without the a-), while for servants and children whose characters are not available to me I have used the mission spellings that include the a- format. For adult Chinese names I have used the modern pinyin format in which the surname is first, followed by the personal names written without any hyphen, e.g., Wu Tingfang.

The master was mild, and yet dignified; majestic, and yet not fierce; respectful, and yet easy.

Description of Confucius in Legge's *Confucian Analects*, Book VII, chapter 37.

### Introduction

James Legge was so ill that he had to be carried on board the *Duke of Portland* in Hong Kong. He hoped to survive the return trip to Scotland but was more worried about the collapse of his great project and the survival of his young family. He was only 28 years old, and feared that his plan to translate the 13 Chinese Classics of the Confucian canon into English was shattered and his missionary career destroyed. His repeated bouts all the past year with "Hong Kong fever" (malaria), hepatitis, and dysentery left him feverish, exhausted, and finally so severely ill his life was in danger. His only chance was to flee to the cooler climate of Britain, and his most urgent hope was that he would survive the five-month trip by sailing ship. Although there was a quicker sailing route available, (the Overland route that sailed to Egypt, took a train to Cairo and Alexandria, a boat to Marseilles, train to Paris then on to Calais, a boat to England, then a train to London), that Overland trip was more costly, and the Legges could not afford it or the even quicker and more expensive steamer trip.

Legge was facing his own death. Already two of his four children had died within hours of their births in Hong Kong, and his young wife and one of his surviving daughters was also ill. He had faced down a gang of burglars during an all-night attack on his family, and the colony was still primitive, but Hong Kong had seemed to promise fulfilment of his great dream. It had allowed him to learn spoken Chinese surrounded by native-speakers, to preach and create a Chinese school and congregations, and to create type-fonts in which to print Chinese texts. Best of all, it had offered him a chance to grapple with the fantastic problems of reading ancient Chinese texts and translating them for the English-speaking world. It seemed that his persistent devastating illnesses would destroy the wellbeing of his family, his livelihood, and his scholarly hopes.

What Legge did not know was that he would return restored in health within three years, would over the next 53 years survive six typhoons and a massive fire, would avoid death by malaria and cholera, and would outlive five of his 11 children and both of his wives. He would enter China to rescue a Chinese friend knowing that he risked beheading if he were captured by a mob caught up in the Taiping frenzies, and would survive numerous mob attacks including stoning, using verbal skills and physical

alacrity. He would be poisoned twice by arsenic-loaded bread in a mass poisoning, and would save a sailing ship from the fire that threatened to destroy it and all aboard.

Despite these dramatic and intrusive events he would also write, translate, and publish a massive and wonderful series of books about China, ending his life as a revered Professor at Oxford. But in 1845, all seemed doomed. He was terribly ill yet had to support a wife and young family along with numerous Chinese employees of the mission churches, its school and printing press, and three promising Chinese students he had decided to take home to Scotland to be educated.

Legge's eventual triumph was not entirely unpredictable however. He had shown unusual scholarly promise as a poor young student in northern Scotland, with a capacity for intense concentration and long productive efforts under wretched physical conditions. He had also shown from an early age that he was capable of outstanding physical and emotional resilience in responding to many kinds of harsh, dangerous, and challenging events. All these talents were called into action repeatedly across his first 60 years.

### Part 1 A brilliant country boy

James Legge was born on December 20, 1815 into a family and into a community with educational and religious ideas that allowed him to flourish even as he contended with some very difficult events.

#### Chapter 1 The family of James Legge

James was the fourth and last son of Ebenezer Legge, a merchant in Huntly, a small town in Aberdeenshire. His father was already 43 and had lost three earlier children in infancy or childhood, but three sons had survived to be James' older brothers. Within two years his mother Elspeth also died, but two years later James had a stepmother Barbra. She was so loving and so integrated into the family life with Ebenezer and his four sons that James did not realize she was not his birth mother until he was 7 or 8 years old.

Although James had only two years with his mother Elspeth, she left an important legacy for James because she was fascinated with the Scottish Metrical Psalms, and left a memory of their rhythms that he was to use many decades later. Elspeth had a gadget rigged to her spinning wheel so that she could read them as she worked, eventually learning them all by memory and taking pleasure in reciting them as she spun linen, a major occupation in the small northern town. The Psalms, 150 Biblical poems, had been turned into a rhymed and standard meter by Scots in 1650, each turned into a poem with rhyme, and lines of 8, 6, 8, and 6 syllables. This helped congregations to learn the words, and church members needed only to learn one tune to this "common meter" in order to be able to sing every one of the 150 Psalms. Over time these easily-learned poems could be applied to the wealth of new hymn tunes based on the common meter. Most modern protestant congregations are still familiar with the widely-used Scottish Metrical version of "All people that on earth do dwell", and the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm phrased to the common meter as "The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want". Infant James was attracted by the rhythm and pace of his mother's recitations. Her early death left him with no memory of her as a person, but her love and her recounting of those rhythmical verses left a trace in his consciousness so accessible that he tried to use the idea in an unusual translation experiment 60 years later at Oxford. He attempted to create a similar metrical version of his translation of the Chinese classic the *Book of Poetry*, although he had to abandon it after realizing that it was not a great success.

### Ebenezer Legge and his family

The Legge family had a tradition of independent and radical ideas. His grandfather George was a tall, commanding, and strong-minded man who had defied local pressures to support the followers of Bonnie Prince Charlie. He had hidden in a wardrobe in 1746 before the battle of Culloden to escape being impressed into serving a cause he did not share. George had been outspoken in his opposition to the scheme to create a Roman Catholic kingdom in Scotland under the young Pretender Charles Stuart, and had suffered great economic hardship from this stance. Because of George's resistance the family was isolated, and James' father Ebenezer grew up in conditions of poverty and ill health that allowed only for the development of his intelligence and character. Ebenezer learned to read with the help of a blind woman who had memorized much of the Bible, and a few months of this provided his only schooling.

Despite these miserable conditions Ebenezer was exceptionally hardworking and showed great intelligence as he began to earn a living. He began a tiny draper's business and through clever reasoning he introduced radical change into the way that trade was done in the small northern community. The traditional practice of Scots merchants had been to seek high profits and to provide long terms of expensive credit to support these sales. Ebenezer understood that this placed a major burden on poverty-stricken customers and generated very slow trade, so he introduced the radical idea of lower prices, smaller profits, and short-term credit. He realized that this would allow his customers easier access to goods and stimulate more frequent trade. This model has recently become an international innovation in the increasing use of the "Bottom of the Pyramid" system of aid through microcredit programs, helping the poorest with small amounts of credit.

At first this radical change upset the senior merchants in the community, and the powerful local minister Rev. Cowie even denounced Ebenezer in a sermon. After Ebenezer's father George died owing money and Ebenezer showed his integrity by working steadily to pay off all his father's debts, the community and Rev. Cowie came to admire the honourable, creative, and humane young merchant. Eventually Cowie praised Ebenezer in a sermon because his innovation had truly improved the vitality of the community. Through his new method in combination with great effort and a reputation for integrity, Ebenezer gradually established a flourishing business, eventually becoming a small landowner and the mayor of the town.

Scotland had a long reputation for openness to new and liberal ideas, dating back to George Buchanan, a famous Scots poet, Latinist, liberal, and political author of the 1500s. He wrote a classic history of the Scots (in Latin) and laid down principles of

liberty that formed the core of the two English revolutions, the American Revolution, and the first French Revolution. In Ebenezer's time another period of rising liberalism had begun to sweep through the Scotland and England. In the small village of Huntly the citizens wrote a petition for improvements that would have to be taken to the local Marquis of Huntly, soon to take the title as the Duke of Gordon. The men were all afraid of the reaction of the Marquis, and asked Ebenezer to lead this daring venture, to be the first to put his name on their proposal and then to take it to the Marquis. Would he "bell the cat?" Ebenezer knew the cause was just, so he agreed to their request. No harm came to him from this venture, and instead he earned the respect of the Marquis. When he became the Duke of Gordon, his eventual widow became a fond visitor to Ebenezer in his shop in Huntly, so his willingness to take personal risks and stand up for rights was respected by people of all levels in the community. In memory of the Duke, the last Duchess founded the handsome Gordon School for the poor children of the district, still thriving as a wonderful school today.

The Gordons had seceded from supporting Mary, Queen of Scots in 1572, so represented a Protestant Scottish aristocracy. Despite his warm respectful friendship with his local aristocrats, Ebenezer was opposed to the Tory aristocracy and to the Established Presbyterian Church of Scotland. These views reflected powerful ideas about the independence of Church and State that had been the subject of major fights in Scotland starting in 1690 and not ending until 1929. Later in his life James was confronted with some of these issues in his mission churches in Hong Kong.

When he was 47, James wrote describing his father. He remembered that although Ebenezer was always very aware of his lack of education, his skills in reasoning were wonderful. His "conversation betokened equal acuteness and vigour of mind over a wide range of general information". Four years later he described Ebenezer as a genius; although Ebenezer could never speak anything but "Scotch", he was "as great a genius as Prof. (William) Thomson (of Glasgow University), weak in body but strong in mind, with a heart as big as the whole world". Ebenezer was only opposed to two things: Toryism and Establishment (the establishment of the churches as agents of the state). James particularly admired his father's integrity, for Ebenezer shared the outspoken style of his rebel father George and never backed off an argument "through fear of any man. If he were convinced a thing was right, nothing could daunt him from doing it, and standing by it". Ebenezer continued to learn across his life, but despite his eventual prosperity he was very aware of his educational deficiencies and was determined that all his children should have the chance to receive a university education.

### George Legge

James' brother George was 13 years older but his intense engagement with life provided inspiration to James. George found his father Ebenezer's combination of faith with rigorous intellectual argument, a style exactly to his taste. George was a brilliant natural iconoclast who became a congregationalist minister after a scramble through other careers. By 20 he was teaching in Huntly at the Dissenters' school, flourishing and eventually including James among his students. He began to study Hebrew in his spare time with Rev. Hill, read so prodigiously that he read all the books in Huntly, then had to seek more in Aberdeen's libraries. He began a life-long habit of making notes summarizing everything he read, making historical tables, lists of facts, and reasoned arguments, even before he was 21. At this point George came under the influence of a wonderful uncle, Alexander Allen, who lived in Aberdeen.

This witty and genial man had gone from humble origins to an adventurous life that also showed his outstanding intellectual gifts. At that time he managed a company, but he had mastered Hebrew and Greek so that he could read the Bible in its original languages, then had also learned Latin and French. In his spare time he promoted various charitable societies intended to remedy social problems. He was a popular man with the Legge children, so when he urged George to study for the ministry, George resigned from the Huntly school when James was only 8 years old, and went off to King's College Aberdeen for four years' study for an MA. George quickly got into intellectual arguments at university, in particular with Hercules Scott, his professor of Moral Philosophy and a keen follower of the Scots philosophers Reid and Stewart. Scott required his students to follow his own preferences in the world of ideas, thus he and George quickly tangled. At first Scott was furious, but he soon recognized that George was in fact brilliant and they became lifelong friends.

After graduation George didn't know what to do. Ebenezer didn't want his talented son to leave Huntly, so, although George definitely knew he didn't want to be a merchant, Ebenezer bought a bookshop for George to run hoping that this proximity to books would provide a salve for the necessity of business. This solution ended within eight months of misery, so George next tried a creative but nutty idea. He decided to write eight additional books to complete Milton's Paradise Regained. After completing hundreds of lines he gave up, but all the time he was still reading in all directions – Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, Cowper, Akenside, and all the masters of 19<sup>th</sup> century song. He memorized vast numbers of poems and songs. With such unusual and driven interests it became clear that he was going to have to leave Huntly to get a job, and when James was just turning ten, George left for England.



London was a destination as exotic and distant as Asia because of the rudimentary travel arrangements, and this was a major expedition into a distant and alien culture for a Scottish lad in 1825. There were no railroads yet (George Stephenson's Rocket train would not win its public trial until four years later), and steamers did not yet work the east coast of Scotland. The finality of George's departure was overwhelming during the family's final meal together. Brother John's voice quavered as he tried to sing the morning hymn, while father Ebenezer prayed that God would take care of his boy, and the whole family was close to tears during their last breakfast together in December 1825. The family was close, throughout his life James had great respect for all his three brothers, John, William, and George, and late in his life bestowed a great tribute on them, describing them as "chun-tsze", the Chinese term from Confucian writings for a virtuous, benevolent man.

Once in London, George first obtained a teaching job in a seminary, then had a life-threatening event that changed his life. He fell into the Thames and almost drowned before being rescued by a student. George reviewed his life and decided to dedicate it to the service of God. By late 1826 he had a new teaching job in Yorkshire as headmaster of a fine Dissenters school where he spent four happy years. His diary of that period is filled with lavish language ranging across romantic, philosophical, theological topics with dramatic intensity. A part-time job as chaplain led him to think more about his future, and by 1830 he quit teaching to enter the ministry. Over these years he had become convinced that the very idea of a religious Establishment, with one religion accorded special rights and privileges by the state, was completely unchristian. That led him to Highgate College, a seminary to train ministers of independent congregational churches that refused to accept the idea either of religious authority or any combination of religion with state powers. George was beginning this new program just as James was studying for his first Bursary examination to enter university, and within two years George was ordained at Bristol.

Meanwhile in Huntly, Ebenezer and the missioner kirk provided a program of religious education for James. As he grew older he found parts of the Westminster Creed increasingly "strange and distasteful to my moral nature", and when he tried to have his questions answered he was only scolded. He heard a visiting preacher claim that a majority of "our race" went to heaven, reasoning that as there was such a huge rate of child mortality, and as the New Testament reports Christ saying, "bring the little children unto me", therefore all those infant deaths represented Britons in heaven. James was quite troubled by this bizarre claim and tried to get clarity by asking first an old farmer, then his brother John.

The Calvinist farmer told James that the preacher was completely wrong, that only the “elect” went to heaven and this did not include all children. John referred James to some verses in the New Testament, but James was not satisfied with any of this. There is no evidence that the family or congregation debated related ideas in an amazing Scottish novel of the day, William Hogg’s 1824 *The memoirs and confessions of a justified sinner*, a wild story that took one of the core Calvinist beliefs to an extreme that was labelled the heresy of antinomianism. The Calvinist idea that faith alone, rather than good works, “justified” or identified the elect who were to go to Heaven, was extended in this heresy into a version that argued that God’s elect are therefore not bound by any moral laws. This novel would have been a wonderful topic for debates in the local community, for Hogg’s protagonist takes this idea to its logical and extreme conclusions. James would have been fascinated by the logical twists in the religious reasoning.

#### Religion in Legge family life

James’ grandfather George had been an exceptionally strict man in terms of the application of religious values in daily life, even criticizing his son Ebenezer for reading a religious book on the Sabbath, believing that the Bible was the only book that should be read that day. Ebenezer was softer and more tolerant, mixing a fine recipe of allowed and forbidden activities into a careful cake on Sundays. In the early morning the children could read their Sunday school lesson, then after breakfast they could play in the garden and pick flowers but not fruit. After attending chapel they returned home for a light dinner at one, then back to chapel for two hours of worship then Sabbath school. Scottish Sabbath schools were different from those in England in a crucial way, in that children of all classes attended in Scotland, whereas only poor children attended in England thus maintaining traditional class distinctions. The Scottish Sabbath school studies consisted of very rigorous examinations of texts from the Bible. The children rushed home for another meal, tea, then returned to chapel for the final evening service. At home after supper, the family worshipped with prayers and hymn-singing, then everyone was expected to contribute to a discussion of the sermon of the day. The children were given practise in memorizing the questions and answers of the Shorter Catechism, and Ebenezer would muse about some theological point as the younger children began to fall asleep. They would finish with prayers and bed.

This amazing program of piety and intensive educational training ran across James’ entire childhood, and he later wrote that some might consider this program “repulsive”, but in fact his father’s simple faith and goodness gave the whole day a very fine quality. The Scots dissenting tradition from John Knox forward had emphasized a

very pure connection between church practises and the Bible and this affected the observance of many celebrations that we now take for granted in Christianity, because these Scots eliminated many of the popular festivals of the Roman Catholic calendar on the grounds that there was no Biblical authority for them. In this way celebrations of Christmas, Easter, and saints' feast-days were all forbidden as worldly inventions. The chanting of psalms in Latin by choristers was discarded, replaced by metrical versions of the Psalms sung by the whole congregation. In Geneva John Calvin had organized the translations of the Psalms into verses with an 8,6,8, 6 meter in common that made the creation of new melodies very easy. Neither were individual birthdays celebrated, instead the main communal festivity was the welcoming of the New Year, with Hogmanny. This simple approach to life in the village may not reflect repressive authoritarianism as much as an avoidance of over-determined and ritualistic celebrations in favour of more spontaneous joys.

### Chapter 2 A lad of intellectual talents and exceptional resilience

Across his school years James gradually showed outstanding intellectual abilities and personal resilience when confronted with extreme events, all starting under very modest circumstances. For his earliest schooling James attended a little home school run by “the Dame”. She belonged to his father’s church, but James remembered her mostly for her terrible temper, “and she certainly did not spare the rod”. James learned to read, write, and spell very easily, and soon had the “Westminster Catechism” of 1647 memorized. This was a set of 107 questions and answers based on the creed of Scottish and English Calvinists and created during Cromwell’s rule in England. While he was attending the Dame’s school the orphans of the Parish minister joined the school and the Dame quickly showed such excessive favouritism toward them that James was aroused to a strong feeling of injustice that he remembered to the end of his life. She punished him for his doughty insistence on fair treatment, but he was unrepentant, understanding that her punishment was even more unjust. His dislike and contempt for her became so extreme that he finally refused to go to school. For this he was punished at home and carried bodily to the Dame’s home, but his feelings were so strong he immediately ran away again. These battles continued for months, a “troubled and unhappy time” until he became old enough to transfer to a boy’s school supported by the Dissenters church.

By 1824 when James was eight, his teacher was his older brother George, now 22. The children were too poor to use ink and consumable paper, instead using chalk and a slate for their lessons. The great disadvantage of this method of learning is that there is no permanent record to consult. Its offsetting advantage is that it enhances the probability that children interested in learning will work hard to learn and remember what they have written before they have to wipe their work away forever. In the case of James his capacity to remember was outstanding from the earliest period, so this demanding method of learning was not the handicap it may have been for others with less capacity to learn. It may even have enhanced his natural learning skills, for he soon showed exceptional talents in learning Latin.

During this period James had an emotional experience that left an impact he still remembered 50 years later. He was included in a party of children and adults all sent off on a long jaunt to the healthful air of the sea on the northern coast. The group was piled into two carts loaded with hay for comfort; it included seven or eight children supervised by a woman bringing her own invalid son. As the expedition crested a small

hill to be suddenly confronted with the vast noisy sea at Portsoy, the woman's son began to cry in terror. James' response was entirely different. He was completely exhilarated by the immensity and power he saw. "I was thrilled through my whole being as I never had been before". Although he was still a small boy he reflected on this startling experience then had a great insight, that within himself there was something even more grand and sublime than this fabulous display of nature. The memory of this transcendent experience and his reflection about it never left him. While the other children played close under watchful eyes, James was infatuated with the dramatic new landscape and trekked out on a spit alone and out of sight for hours, terrifying the adults. Rather than fearing new things, James was relishing novelty in a way that he showed across his life. His reactions also show that he was disposed to reflect on experience, and to consider the human aspect of it in a way unusual for a schoolchild.

His relish for the challenges of physical risk also showed up in an escapade closer to home that also revealed some moral cowardice. James had learned to swim before most of his friends had, and they were all playing in the Bogie River just above a spot where it narrowed to a deep and fast current. James started to show off his skills, but after a few easy manoeuvres found himself caught in the current then trapped in a whirlpool that kept dragging him under to the point where he lost consciousness. His terrified friends called for help from a nearby tramp who jumped in and dragged James onto the bank. It took some time for him to come to. As he became aware that his life had been saved by a rough man he first thought he should ask the man to come home with him so that father Ebenezer could provide a gift of money in thanks. Then James had a second thought that was of fear; perhaps his father would punish him for his recklessness. Giving in to this ignoble thought, James just thanked the man and left with his friends. Although he forgot about this episode for more than 50 years, when he eventually remembered it he was freshly ashamed and unforgiving of his youthful act of cowardice.

James began to show his interest in learning from every possible source, and from this developed a wonderful intellectual and warm friendship with an old woman "Old Susie". She lived nearby with a rough husband who often had to be put to bed drunk when he came home rowdy. She knew an immense range of Scottish and Robin Hood ballads, and told him about the novels that Walter Scott was writing about Scotland. James was fascinated with her conversation and knowledge, and she showed great interest in him and in his pet rabbits and pigeons. James often helped write letters in his good hand for Susie on behalf of her illiterate husband's business. James later

recognized that she was the most intellectually cultured woman in the town, in addition to having a wonderfully kind and gentle character.

James showed little talent for business. The fortunes of his family had increased to the point where his father owned farm lands being rented by tenants, and at an early age James was sent around to collect rents. He remembered being entirely unsuccessful on these trips, but the income problem for the Legge family was wider than his poor business skills. Around 1825 the summer was so hot and dry that crops were shrivelling up and being cut far below their usual mature size. Businesses were going bankrupt, and James remembered his mother weeping out of fear that the family would suffer the same fate.

Not long after James came down with typhus, terribly ill and in a delirium for an extended time. After some weeks he recovered full awareness, weak and having lost a great deal of weight. He was supposed to return to his Dissenter's school, but the master had "fallen into loose and dissipated habits" so James was sent instead to the Parish school run by the established Church of Scotland. Discipline at home and school was still very strict, and in his later years James concluded that more of Christian love and "less of Moses' rules" would have been better for the children.

Despite its church support, the master was mostly interested in Latin and the Latin scholars. In his last year in the school there were seven students in Legge's Latin class, a mixture of children from all the different churches in town. Competition between the students was intense because all the boys were poor enough that they would need to compete for scholarships in order to be able to attend King's College in Aberdeen. The master was keen to help them master Latin in particular, and had figured out many different ways of helping them become fluent in reading, writing, and translating between English and Latin. James appreciated these methods and still remembered many of the specific Latin authors his class had studied seventy years later when writing a memoir.

Although the term scientist was not invented until 1833 and science had not become a term for non-classical studies, the Scottish curriculum included what we would consider basic elements of a scientific education, with mathematics and "natural philosophy" (mostly biology, with some chemistry and physics). James and the other students were entranced to have a chance to learn the novel subject of geography, helped by their master's purchase of a mid-sized globe that was the wonder of the whole town. Legge's own interests complemented this rudimentary but broad education in science, for over his childhood James also enjoyed studying birds and their nests. Ebenezer was pleased with this somewhat solitary interest, often going out with the lad

to study a special nest James wanted him to see. Once they disturbed a herd of deer that went bounding off in movements so graceful that James never forgot the beautiful sight.

By the spring of 1830 James' father and brother John realized that James was intellectually gifted, and were determined that he should take the scholarship entrance examinations for King's College, Aberdeen, in the autumn, at the age of 14. This was a year earlier than normal, and his schoolmaster wanted James to wait for another year and write the exams with his classmates in October 1831, when he would be 15. The exams were written for a university term that would begin in November.

Arising from his father's plan, James was sent into Aberdeen in April 1830 to attend a cram school for the last six months before the entrance examinations and their possibility of a bursary. Dr. Melvin's Aberdeen Grammar School was famous for its Latin training throughout northern Scotland. James was to lodge with his step-uncle Rev. Spence, a congregational minister and a strict disciplinarian. When time came for his departure for the city 40 miles and a four-hour's journey away, James was exhilarated. His leave-taking from his family "hardly gave me any sorrow, for I had long looked forward to it". The only person he regretted parting from was his dear friend and intellectual companion, Old Susie.

James was 14 years old and was heading into a larger world, showing promise as a scholar but not yet tested in a world larger than his small village.

#### Aberdeen Grammar School

In the spring of 1830 James was sent off to the Aberdeen Grammar School presided over by its famous Latin scholar, Dr. Melvin. Young Lord Byron had attended this school 35 years earlier, and it was known for its high academic standards. When James arrived there, the class was given a trial translation to do over the weekend so that each student could be placed in the most appropriate class. To everyone's astonishment James, the young new boy, had done the best job. This heady success turned out badly, for James became overconfident and careless, and when he wrote the two-day Bursary examination that October he discovered to his great surprise that although his scores would enable him to enter King's College, he had not succeeded in winning the Bursary. Sobered by this evidence that he was fallible, he insisted that his father allow him to return to grammar school for another year of studying and another attempt at the Bursary. This early insistence on mastering substance rather than taking an easy but shallow route to a goal reveals a theme that would be shown across his life.

Two of the boys in his class were twins named Milne, and their connection with James and his family and his career in China became one that lasted most of his life.

Their Huntly father had been a missionary in Malacca starting in 1813. When their father Dr. Milne died there in 1822 of hepatitis and malaria aged 37, his orphans were sent back to their Scottish home as their mother had died three years earlier. Milne sent letters and Chinese books to his friends the Legges, and the Chinese books had fascinated James.

Within a few months James showed an unusually stoical character and intellectual perseverance after he suffered a very bad accident. While he was walking home from the grammar school one night just before Christmas in 1830 in the dark, narrow, crooked streets of Aberdeen, a cart knocked him down. He was seriously harmed with such badly injured legs that he had to be carried to his lodgings and then home to Huntly. His injuries were so severe he was forced to stay confined to bed for many weeks before able to take even tentative steps.

Far from being demoralized by this pain and isolation, he later reported that this accident was “the best thing that could have happened to me” even though the recovery was “tedious”. Ashamed to be seen by his former Huntly classmates at the Parish school with a halting limp over the next months, but temperamentally incapable of using his injuries as an opportunity to enjoy idle time, sharing his father’s zest for learning, James indulged his fascination with Latin. He plunged into intensive study, translating texts from Latin to English then the reverse, and studying the construction of sentences. He loved the challenge of these language games all across the winter, becoming so embedded in Latin that by the time he returned to school he found it easier to write a letter in Latin than in English.

By spring 1831 he was recovered enough to return to school in Aberdeen. He convinced his father to allow him to change to the “Old Aberdeen” Grammar School, which although it was less famous, was known to be more effective at teaching. During this period James lived alone in lodgings near the school rather than with his uncle. When he first attended this new school he and the other students (including men in their thirties who were already schoolmasters) were given a long dictation in English for translation into Latin. They were expected to write the English on their slates, and then were allotted three hours to work on the translation. James had become such a master of the language during his convalescence that he translated the material directly into Latin as the teacher dictated the English, handed the slate in to his teacher and was able to leave school for the day. He realized that he was far better in Latin than the other students, and in particular was better than a man who had achieved a university Bursary of £14 in the previous examinations, so his confidence began to return.



James was fascinated by Latin, and found it so easy to learn and remember that he was soon able dictate the Latin for Caesar's Gallic Wars from having the English text in front of him. Some of the other subjects were also taught using the medium of Latin, and he learned the history of Scotland from the classic in robust and elegant Latin written by Calvinist republican historian George Buchanan. Life was focussed very intensely on Greek and Latin translations and James worked on these until late evening, explaining to his father that some new students were joining his class and they would interfere with his goals unless he worked to stay at the top of the class. He found himself obsessed with the translation tasks, his mind "in a boiling fever" to the point that his brother wrote that he hoped this competition would not "annihilate" James. This school also taught James a new approach to translation. His new teacher stressed that translation should be done for "the spirit of the meaning" rather than to provide a literal rendering, a lesson that he later applied across nearly 60 years of translating Chinese texts. James thrived in this school across the spring and summer.

In working on his Latin texts at home James began a practice of waking to study at 3 AM, working from the lamplight into the morning. He maintained this schedule across his entire life until weeks before his death in Oxford in 1897. James had discovered joy in working alone deep in the night on ancient texts. His great curiosity, his unusual capacity for sustained effort in the face of challenging problems, and his exceptional intellectual talents were emerging as the basis for a lifetime of outstanding accomplishment.

### Chapter 3 Religion and education in Scotland

Legge's home village of Huntly is a small pretty place at the confluence of the Deveron and Bogie Rivers as they emerge to the east of the highlands in northern Scotland. The town lies inland about 40 miles west of the northeast coastal city of Aberdeen, the nearest substantial city, and about 20 miles south of the North Sea. The Duke of Gordon, whose title to the land was granted in 1314, had established Huntly as a planned town in 1769. It still has an ancient Gordon castle as a site of interest to visitors. The Gordon Arms still occupies the site of a long line of taverns and hotels that served as the station for stagecoaches still travelling to Aberdeen when James was a child. From its time of founding by the Duke of Gordon in 1769 until modern days, the population of Huntly has shifted only slightly, ranging from 2,000 to 4,000. Life in Huntly was strongly affected by ideas about religion and by a belief in education, and the two systems were strongly related.

#### The churches of Scotland and Huntly

At the time of James' birth in 1815 Scotland was still raging with religious arguments and plans. In Huntly there were five churches in a community of less than 2000. The Established Church (of Scotland), the Secessionist, the Episcopalian, the Roman Catholic, and a radical "missioner kirk" mostly lived in harmony despite very recent traditions of vicious conflict. A schism in 1733 had led to a Secession movement that had left the Church of Scotland. A later schism in 1747 within the larger Secession Church had led to the creation of an "Anti-burgher" group. Anti-burghers refused to give an oath of adherence to "the true religion presently professed within this realm and authorized by the laws thereof" because they considered that this implied recognition of the Established Church of Scotland, from which they had seceded.

In Huntly the Anti-burgher Presbytery and its powerful preacher Rev. George Cowie were strong advocates of Sunday schools, a radical program that provided basic education on Sundays for poor children working during the week. Rev. Cowie further challenged even Anti-Burgher tradition by allowing both laymen and visiting evangelists from other denominations to preach and to talk of foreign missions. He supported the idea of active church outreach using foreign missions and the London Missionary Society. For these radical ventures Rev. Cowie was "excommunicated" from the Anti-burgher section of the Secession church in October 1799, and his congregation was expelled by the synod of the Secession Body six months later. The Huntly congregation supported its free-thinking minister, retained ownership of the church property, and

reconstituted themselves as an independent church, known locally as “the missionary kirk”, scorned for its evangelizing interest in mission work (McDonald, 1990).

Ebenezer and his family belonged to this freethinking missionary kirk. After Cowie died in 1809 his place was filled by Rev. John Hill, who eventually became a great help to James. Rev. Hill served as minister to the church for 40 years until his death in 1849, effectively across all James’ life in Scotland. John Hill also played what James called “a wee sinfu’ fiddle”, suggesting that music for fun was accepted among church members, although this shocked some members “a little”. Across Aberdeenshire similarly rejected congregations became Independents or “congregationalists”, known for a progressive liberal interest in the well-being of the oppressed, and the Huntly Anti-burgher church eventually joined the congregationalist movement. While these churches were often described as “independents” they were not isolated; their defining feature in common was that each independent congregation did not yield any authority to a higher church “court” to settle disputes between minister and congregation.

In their view the Church of Scotland as the Established National “Kirk” had acquiesced to State control of many church activities in return for grants from the State and the support of local rich patrons. The independents viewed these arrangements as representing the heresy of Erastianism, putting State interests ahead of kirk interests. In particular these highly independent Scots resented having either the State or a rich patron force them to accept a minister not of their choosing. They were willing to cut themselves off from all State support and from patronage that they considered often to be corrupt, and to instead provide their own voluntary support to the ministers of their own choosing. This was a radical and costly idea that eventually led to attacks on the entire idea of any Established church.

This also had implications for education because since 1696 the Established Church of Scotland had been required to provide parish schools and teachers, and through the Church, the resources of patrons and the State supported these schools. Adam Smith had written in 1776 that education was a basic civil right, and Scotland’s schools had become the best in the world, considered the source of the nation’s prosperity by the 1840s. The independent churches were taking on a costly program by refusing to accept the devil’s bargain of State and patron support and control, for they believed that the churches should run the schools free of all State interference. That meant each independent congregation had to support both a minister and a school, thus their thirst for freedom from State control had a significant cost.

Increasingly across the early 1800s in Scotland there was also a rising evangelistic movement in which mere participation in the routines of the church was seen as

inadequate, lacking in true religious feeling. The new idea was that each individual had to have a conversion experience in which religious ideas became a vividly personal experience. The majority within the Established Kirk was extremely distrustful of this emotion-laden enthusiasm, which it considered fanaticism, but the independent and Seceder churches took a serious interest in this personal religious experience. In Legge's later life in Hong Kong his early experiences with this tradition led him into a fierce public battle with a rogue missionary Carl Gutzlaff, who did not seem to know or care about the actual beliefs of his Chinese "converts" even as he boasted about his thousands of conversions. To Legge Christian experience had to be fully understood and sincerely felt by "converts" before he would consider them for membership in his churches, and anything less than this was empty show and a perversion of faith.

The Legge family connection to the congregational church in Huntly has persisted into modern times. When the church needed new windows in 1936 the congregation included one commemorating James Legge. A more recent building of this church still stands in Huntly, now de-consecrated as are so many of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Scottish churches, and functioning as a bakery.

James Legge was born at the end of the year that had seen the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo by the "Great Duke" Wellington. It was in that same year that Abel Rémusat (1788-1832), the pioneer of modern European studies of Chinese, made his inaugural lecture at the Collège de France, beginning the first formal studies of Chinese language and literature in a European university. With peace established in Europe, Britain was in a mood to explore the world, and James was growing up in a region uniquely capable of developing his talents to enable him to take part in that increasingly imperial adventure.

### Scottish education

James Legge was growing up in a country particularly able to foster his intellectual talents. Scotland at that time had the best education system in the world, developing across the centuries after John Knox argued in 1560 that every person should be able to read the Bible rather than having it filtered through clergy. In the same period Calvin had distinguished the roles of church and state in his creation of an egalitarian reformation community in Geneva, and Scots experimented with different versions of this concept across hundreds of years. Through an act of Parliament of Scotland in 1633 each parish was provided with tax income to pay for a schoolteacher, required since 1561 by the Church of Scotland. The Scottish School Act of 1696 ensured that every parish employed a teacher and set aside a building for a school, and students

typically learned even Latin at these small local schools. By 1790 there was virtually universal literacy among eight-year olds in some parishes, the highest rate in the world; the overall literacy rate would not be matched in England for nearly a century. Scottish universities had become international centres for all of Protestant Europe as early as the late 1500s and by the time James was ready to attend, the Scottish Enlightenment had generated wonderful progress in medicine and science, as well as new directions in philosophy.

#### Chapter 4 Competing in a larger world

Just as James was thriving at school, convinced he would be able to win the examination contest in November 1831 for the First Bursary of £20, he suffered another serious accident less than two weeks before the great examination. There was a general expectation in his school that James would be the winner of this “First Bursary” even though he was a student from a small town and was competing with 97 others for the prestigious prize. Just 10 days before this exam, these expectations were suddenly threatened when James suffered concussion and serious chest injuries in a life-threatening accident at a protest meeting supporting Earl Grey’s Reform Bill, and against the House of Lords.

#### Protests against the House of Lords refusal of the Reform Bill

James was attending a protest meeting in October 1831 that was being held against the House of Lords decision to throw out Grey’s Reform Bill. This Bill was the first of a series of outstanding Victorian attempts to bring more democracy to the institutions of government. During the autumn and winter of 1830 and the spring of 1831 famine was spreading in England, militias were forming, and rioters were being seized and transported to Australia, By early winter cholera swept London, adding to the suffering of starvation.

The Reform Bill represented a radical restructuring of Parliament and the extension of the vote to large unrepresented groups in the middle class. It was inspired in part by fearful reaction of British elites to the Paris Revolution of 1830, and involved extinguishing some powers of the aristocracy, modernizing, and bringing more fairness to Parliament. Within two years additional reform bills in 1833 included the Slave Emancipation Act (the trade had been outlawed in 1807), and a bill for the termination of the Hon. East India Company’s monopoly of the China trade, opening it up to free traders under the supervision of a British Superintendent of Trade. This boldly democratizing reform led to war with China in 1841.

In the United Kingdom, the Lords’ initial rejection of the vastly popular reform measure had led to attacks against Churchmen and aristocrats. Workmen in the north of England were arming and drilling. The army had been largely disbanded, and Robert Peel’s Police Force only existed in London, so there was neither an army nor police force sufficient to control events by force. Scottish Dissenters shared the outrage at the Lords’ attempt to frustrate the popular will and Parliament, and meetings were being called to protest this frustration of needed changes.

### James crushed and concussed at the Aberdeen protest meeting

Scotland had great enthusiasm for the reforms and fury at their frustration, so the Grammar School students were given the day off to participate in a protest meeting in Aberdeen in late October 1831, as part of the huge popular outrage. A sudden violent “pitiless” storm broke over the crowd that had marched and gathered to hear speeches against the Lords’ action, and James decided to seek protection from the storm’s fury. He extricated himself from the massive crowd by creeping under the wooden speakers’ platform toward an easier exit route, when the platform suddenly collapsed with the weight of all the speakers. It crushed James with chest and head injuries so severe that he lost consciousness. After he was eventually discovered and lifted out, he began to recover partial consciousness and found himself crying out “murder, murder” in the typical confused state that occurs with concussion. He then struggled up and ran off in confusion down Broad Hill. He heard people crying out “that one will die” as he ran. He collapsed, then rose and ran into the sea.

The icy water shocked him into a greater level of awareness, he grabbed the meshes of a salmon weir to prevent drowning, then struggled back to the shore. There he wandered in confusion, staggering up and down until he was recognized by student friends and taken home. The doctor hired by Reform agitators for his care, told James he had almost died. Unable to leave his bed for a few days, he eventually began to walk but was unable to return to school the next week. Everyone around him believed it would be impossible for him to write the prize examinations set for two weeks’ time.

### The First Bursary: “exam hell” and triumph

James was a determined young man however, and despite this horrific experience and his serious injuries, he wrote the two days of examinations with the group of 97 others “all eager for the fray”. They had from 10 AM to 2 PM to translate English into Latin, and although James at first felt he was below par, he set into the task and had completed it by 11 and handed it in. His competitors were relieved, believing he had found it too difficult in his injured condition. The next day the examination required dictated Latin text to be turned into English, and James found he finished even more quickly, to more ill-judged relief among the other competing students. The next day a large assembly was gathered to learn the results of the scholarship examinations. James Legge’s name was called out as the winner of the top scholarship.

As he made his way to the podium, his appearance horrified the professors and everyone else in the hall. James still had two large black “raccoon” eyes, and the whites of his eyes were still completely bloodshot from the serious head injury he had suffered.

James was surprised at the response to his “dilapidated” appearance. The alarmed Principal asked what had happened, expressed great concern and sympathy, then noticed that James seemed a bit young. He was small and slight for his age (his family had promised him a watch if he could gain 15 pounds), and the bursary could only be awarded if the winner was at least 14 years old. James was uncertain about his age because his family did not celebrate birthdays, so he was advised that he must get his Parish clerk to send a certificate. He was able to prove his age (15) by return post and was awarded the scholarship.

Throughout James responded to the whole event with aplomb and simplicity. At the end of it all he wrote a brief, sweetly laconic letter to his father, mentioning none of his tribulations. “My dear father, I have been successful in getting the first bursary. William Macdonald got the third, no more of Mr. Hay’s (pupils) got anything. I am, your affectionate son”.

His stoical disregard for his body and his enthusiasm for competition elicited a bit of mischief in someone who recognized this and gave him a tantalizing piece of information. The student told James there had never been a winner of the First Bursary who also won the top graduation prize examination, the “Huttonian”. James responded as expected to this tasty lure by promising himself he would be the first to do this.

#### Studies at King’s College Aberdeen.

James attended King’s College Aberdeen in the MA program from November 1831 to spring 1835. The College had been founded in 1505 on a European model in which students and teachers lived there and worshipped in their own chapel. It brought Renaissance ideas to Northern Scotland, and was intended to provide scholars, doctors, teachers, lawyers and priests for the region. Students could obtain first and higher degrees there that were recognized throughout the Christian world. Following the religious upheavals of the 1500s it had become Protestant, then it supported the Roman Catholic Stuarts in 1715, later again purged of Roman Catholics when that movement failed. Since 1860 it has been combined with a rival later College, Marischal, to form the University of Aberdeen.

At King’s College, James studied Greek and Latin intensively in his first year, and his classmates voted him the best in the class in Latin and second in Greek, winning him prizes. During this year he wrote a letter to his brother John, showing some of the adolescent uncertainty and loneliness that we might expect in a 15-year old living alone away from home in a competitive and challenging situation. He ended the letter with an expression of resolve however that moves beyond adolescent moodiness.



“Here I have been studying for full ten minutes how to eke out a few sentences and no happy thought – no thought at all, I may say – has found its way into my brain. What shall I say? That I’ve been very gloomy since I’ve been here, except two or three hours I was in Mr. Grant’s on Wednesday afternoon. Well! It is strange – just a strange as this letter is, how I get into such good humour, no, not humour, into such good – I don’t know what – when I’m there. I feel then inclined – my bosom opens wider – to love all mankind better than ever. My comfort, I feel, must depend altogether on myself this winter, and really I must exert myself to provide that comfort” (H. E. Legge, 1905).

Student life in Aberdeen was rowdy and unfettered, and James was exposed to activities new to his sober upbringing. His reactions showed a combination of a willingness to be open to new things melded with a steady inner ground of values that sorted these out for him. The other students tormented a master known for his bad temper, but James felt this was unfair. They played cards and had parties on Saturday nights with singing and Scottish dancing. James had been taught that card games were the work of the devil, and even though he tried them he was never able to find them interesting. At the parties his problem was that did not have any “ear” for music. While his brothers were more musical and could sing and play the flute and fiddle, James never succeeded in following a tune in spite of hours of practice. He went to see a play, “Rob Roy” and enjoyed it so much he went to two others, including a comedy, before his landlady sent word of this loose living to his Aberdeen uncle, a congregationalist minister.

Rev. Spence came immediately to scold and threaten James. Spence told James he had written his father in Huntly and his father’s support would be withdrawn. James was outraged at being spied upon, and pointed out that with his Bursary and some tutoring he could support himself without any help from home. Spence then threatened to tell the professors, reasoning they would take back the Bursary. James responded that one of the professors was a patron of an annual theatre performance and would be unlikely to regard the theatre as immoral. The upshot was that Spence prayed over James then eventually left him alone. Although James never heard a word of reproach from his father, he lost interest in the theatre.

When the term ended in spring 1832 he decided to prove that he had completely recovered from his injuries by walking the 38 miles home to Huntly. He set off at 2 AM

and made Huntly 12 hours later; his mother was especially pleased that he had saved the coach-fare.

James was developing confidence in his ability to stand up for himself and to figure out how to manage his own affairs even when faced with strong criticism from a powerful figure representing authority – religious authority in fact, the type his community was most likely to honour. At a deeper level however, James came from an independentist tradition that honoured individual moral responsibility and distrusted all hierarchical authority structures, whether royalist or episcopal. In James this robust insistence on individual responsibility in the face of authority became a basic theme underling his social and political views across his life, which were liberal and reformist without calling for massive social engineering.

That summer James reviewed his past education in “arithmetic” to prepare for the fall term because formal courses in mathematics and chemistry would be new subjects for him in his second year. He was not as interested in chemistry and mathematics as he had been in Latin and Greek, but was keen to master algebra and geometry because these subjects were included in the Hutton scholarship examination for the top graduating students. He plunged into the mathematics with such intensity and speed that he “startled and frightened” the Parish schoolmaster whose help he sought. He quickly mastered all that could be learned that summer in Huntly, then spent the rest of it reading all the novels he could find. Although his father and brother disapproved of novel-reading, they left him undisturbed.

On return to King’s College James discovered that a new system had been established in which he would have to write examinations to be allowed to enter the next level of courses. He would also have to write examinations for the course-prizes that had been previously awarded by the votes of classmates. This sudden addition of examinations caused him no anxiety and he passed into the courses with honours. This year he studied Latin and Greek, algebra, geometry, and chemistry, and at the end of the year he won first prize in the examinations for Latin and Greek, and 3<sup>rd</sup> prizes for mathematics and chemistry. Despite winning prizes in math and chemistry he was a cool realist and knew that his competence in these was relatively weaker. He observed that if he could win the third prize with such an inadequate understanding of it all, the capacities of the students below him represented a very low level of performance, and in later years he was scornful of the academic standards in this education. He called the teaching methods “miserably inefficient”, students’ work was “slovenly” and they all (himself included) graduated “far too easily”. In the summer of 1833 he began preparing for another new subject in the fall term, “Natural Philosophy”, or physics.

This subject was about as displeasing to him as chemistry had been, but his summer improved greatly with a huge family reunion. Brother George returned that summer after seven years in England, and the whole family was ecstatic at seeing him again. Father and sons all trekked to the grave of their mother Elspeth, who had hoped 30 years earlier that her eldest son would become a minister. They considered that God had led George to fulfil that wish.

Sitting at her gravesite Ebenezer told a story of a cousin who had gone to Trinidad as a planter, then commented that he would far prefer one of his sons would become a missionary rather than a businessman. The conversation drifted elsewhere but James wondered if his father referred to him; at the same time he considered that his father was being excessively pious in this comment. James reasoned, "Why shouldn't a young man go abroad simply on considerations of worldly advantage? God has given the whole earth to the children of men. Our father was narrow in his opinion on this subject". The rise of the Industrial Revolution was beginning to create both new wealth and new social problems in England and Scotland, and James was aware of the Scottish economists such as Adam Smith who were describing how individual trade could also be the source of wealth for nations.

Apart from dissenting from Ebenezer's excessively religious values for his sons' employment, another problem James had about the idea of becoming a missionary was that he did not consider himself a real Christian. He thought that only if he did become a Christian then it might become his duty to become a missionary "to some heathen people". Being a true Christian was an important quality for the Scots dissenters, who considered that the easy rituals of the Established church were empty and disguised a lack of sincerity. In contrast, the Christianity of the Nonconformists required a strong feeling for the truth of the faith, and a pervasive desire to act in a Christian manner.

George was a kindly big brother and asked to read all the essays James had written; together they concluded that James was better than George in Latin and Greek. His father and brother urged him to read more history and to make personal judgments about events and characters as he read, rather than simply learning the facts. As George and James walked in the streets of Huntly with their father, James was surprised to realize that Ebenezer was very proud of his sons, "feasting his eyes on us". George however, was worried to observe also that Ebenezer looked pale and ill, in early days of illness he suffered the next 20 years until his death.

Across his third year at King's College James continued to thrive, winning the Latin prize and coming 3<sup>rd</sup> in Natural Philosophy, but losing the Greek prize. He was writing his brother John of his struggles with the classic issue in Scottish theology, the

problem of reconciling the idea of free will, with that of God's predetermined knowledge of the worth of each person. On returning home to Huntly in the spring of 1834 he began more serious reading, including famous works in philosophy and history by Thomas Browne and Scot Dugald Stewart. James also studied Hebrew with his minister, then after three months he went to London by boat to visit George in Bristol where he had now a congregation.

James was astounded by the crowds in London, and during a long walk searching for his brother he saw the crowds parting before a man with a striking face who was casting sharp fast looks around. James realized this "was no ordinary man", then found out it was the Duke of Wellington as the crowds began to shout his name.

When James and George eventually found each other they went to Bristol, where James discovered his brother lived in a large and luxurious home with a fine garden. Even more wonderful, James soon discovered that George was part of a lively group of young intellectuals who were ministers of dissenting churches and keen to talk about religion and politics. George arranged a number of pleasure trips for James and found a teacher in natural philosophy to help James prepare for the courses of his final year.

James took his first railway trip on his return to Aberdeen. Railways were a new and thrilling feature of the industrial revolution in Britain, and James remembered the wonderful benefits of railway travel 40 years later when he travelled weeks by clumsy oxcart in China to visit the home of his revered Sage, Confucius.

At King's College in his last year Latin and Greek continued, but the main subject was "moral philosophy". In this course Professor Scott regurgitated the Scots thinkers Dugald Stewart and Thomas Reid, who taught Scottish "common-sense" philosophy, or "natural realism". Stewart was a prize pupil of Reid, and they contested both the idealism of Bishop Berkeley and the scepticism of a fellow Scot David Hume. Hume argued that because all we can ever know comes only through our senses, we can never truly know about God or external reality. Reid and Stewart argued in contrast that the mind is an organ of reasoning as well, and that "common-sense" allows us to recognize valuable knowledge through reasoning and to use our ideas about reality in behaving in ways that make sense. The philosophy held that even though true knowledge about the world and about the connections between occurrences is impossible to know with absolute certainty, yet this does not justify denial of the reality of the visible world. During these classes James had the same tussles with Professor Scott that George had had 10 years earlier, and for the same reason: James criticized the teacher for failing to let the students think critically as they encountered new ideas.

That October in 1834, the Houses of Parliament burned down, eventually to be replaced by the astounding Victorian structures of today.

### Brutal examinations for the Huttonian prize

Now in his final year, James still remembered the taunt from someone after he had won the First Bursary, that no one who had won it had also won the final Hutton prize. The “Huttonian” consisted of a modest cash award worth only £15 (half in money and books), but was sought for the distinction and honour that it represented. It was awarded to the most brilliant graduating student after a series of long and intense examinations that surveyed the candidates’ mastery of the entire four years’ curriculum. Examinations included Greek, Latin, mathematics, natural philosophy, and moral philosophy, and were written with quill pens. The idea of winning the Hutton in addition to his First Bursary seems to have been a goal just right for James’ appetite. In order to prepare for it he took additional tutoring in advanced mathematics and philosophy. In the final event he competed with only two others, Miles, and Burns.

The brutal examinations lasted for four long days ending nightly at midnight, by that hour under the supervision of the college porters. The College provided the competitors with a sumptuous two-hour dinner break, and the students arranged for six bottles of good port to sustain them across the ordeal, to be paid for by the winner. On the first day the candidates had to translate Greek into Latin, and James finished by 5 PM. The second day examination of algebra and geometry went beyond James’ training into trigonometry and astronomical problems, and he struggled until nearly midnight. After resting one day they returned to the examination of Natural Philosophy (not a favourite topic for James), and on the final day they wrote on Moral Philosophy, finishing just at midnight. The college porters then brought in friends of the three so they could celebrate and finish up the last two bottles of port.

James was soon exhilarated to learn that he had won, and he received his A.M. and the Hutton prize in the spring of 1835, aged 19. Despite his success at King’s College, James Legge had no idea of what direction he should take to earn a living.

## Part 2 Making a crucial decision

James was now faced with the job of deciding what to do with his life, and it was not at all clear. He was not sure that he was a Christian, thus a career in the church was not appropriate. He realized from his earlier experiences helping his father manage his rental farms that he had no skills or interests in business. He considered studying the law, but realized that he was not interested and couldn't afford to study it. Medicine interested him a bit more, but not enough to build his life on it. That left his skills in scholarly work, suggesting a possible career in education. Before he had given his future much thought he was confronted with a tantalizing offer that challenged him at a deep moral level.

### Chapter 5 Declining an offer promising status, leaving Scotland

A few months before James completed his MA, his Latin master Dr. Forbes (who held the Chair in Humanities) asked what James planned to do in the future, and proposed that he enter the ministry of the established Church of Scotland. Forbes assured James that as soon as he would become ordained, Forbes could find him a parish.

The first problem this offer posed was that James had not considered becoming a minister in any church at all and was not even sure he was a Christian. When James demurred, Forbes wanted to know what other plan James had, and he confessed he would most like to teach Latin and eventually become the Chair of Humanity after Forbes.

They both laughed at the jolly thought that Legge wished for Forbes' demise, yet Forbes was extremely enthusiastic about such a suitable plan from his brilliant pupil, for his proposal represented the same idea. Forbes explained how a parish ministry could lead to that goal. He offered to support James as his Assistant, as the opening to a career that could eventually yield James the university Chair, a progression that would follow logically and independently of any university authority. At that time there was only one category of academic appointment; you either were a Professor or an Assistant paid directly out of the Professor's own resources, as there were no formal junior appointments such as tutors or lecturers. Both James and his Professor understood the custom in which Professor Forbes would "adopt" his favourite pupil, pay him out of his own funds, and use his position to ensure that James succeeded him in the Chair upon his own death.

Both Legge and Forbes knew that the only way James could be taken on in this way was if James changed church membership, because the law of the day required holders of university appointments to be members of the Established church, in Scotland, the Church of Scotland. James would have to leave his home dissenting church and become confirmed as a member of the Presbyterian Church, thus allowing him to be given a parish in the established church. Forbes' offer would provide him with good support and with ample opportunities to continue his Latin studies. In time this would place him in a position to take up the Chair of Humanities upon the death of his mentor.

This offer created a moral challenge for James because he and his family were members of an independent church that was part of the congregational church movement that insisted in individual congregational control rather than rule from a hierarchical presbytery. James understood that he was being offered easy access to a life of worldly advancement and affluence, with full support for his continued studies in Latin, but only if he renounced his church.

In short time James realized that he was unwilling to abandon the beliefs of his dissenting church in order to advance his career. "I told the Professor that I thought it would be a bad way of beginning life if I were, without any conviction on the subject, to turn from the principles of my father merely because of the temporal advantages which such a step would bring me". Over the next 10 years the Church of Scotland was involved in a series of conflicts within its membership over the relative powers of church and state in the regulation of religion in such an Established Church. By 1849 the Church created even more rigid rules and powers for itself within Scottish schools and universities, rules that would have been entirely uncongenial to James.

James thus rejected a job offer that would have given him entrance to a career path to a highly prestigious appointment and the opportunity to continue as a Latin scholar, on the grounds that he would not abandon his belief in the importance of congregational controls and acquiesce in a more centralized system of church authority and state interference. Even though it was a costly decision he was not ambitious for these readily offered rewards but determined to do something consistent with his beliefs.

While he stayed true to his values in rejecting this attractive opportunity for worldly success, James was not at all clear about what direction he should take. At the most basic level, he was not even sure if his life's work lay in the church. A life in the church might be possible if he had sufficient faith. He had grown up in a community that gave high value to church ministry as a life's work. Not only was his family and town filled with religious interest, but across the English-speaking world there was popular interest in the idea of sending Christian missionaries out to distant regions of

the world. Huntly's churches were especially intensely interested in missionary work and James knew his father specifically hoped that his sons would become missionaries. Ebenezer would accept it if his sons wanted to go into business and make money, but if they became missionaries he would be even more pleased.

#### Disadvantages of being a Nonconformist

James Legge and his family were congregationalists at a time when within the past generation there were still vivid memories of vicious religious and political wars between Scotland and England. Congregationalists were part of a larger group called Dissenters and later Nonconformists, so-called because their beliefs about church governance differed so much from those of the members of the Established churches of England and Scotland. The career advantage of becoming a minister within the Established church was that its members always included all important government officials in England and the colonies, as they were compelled to take communion in the Established church. The Dissenters' system of church organization gave each individual congregation far more power than the centralized system used in the Established church, and James's father had been a strong supporter of maverick minister Cowie who represented this new egalitarian approach. James had grown up within this more liberal and open church community and was enough of a believer in this new form of Protestant governance that he was unwilling to set it aside for the tempting career offer in the older, richer, and more powerful established church. Realizing this, James understood that the career options of interest to him were shrinking.

#### Uncertain about his faith and a career

At a most basic level James was not certain that he had sufficiently deep religious feeling for a life in the ministry. He knew that his knowledge of Christianity was extensive and that he was fully acquainted with the Bible. He reasoned that if he became a "true Christian" then he would have to become a missionary, because Christ commanded believers to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature", but considered that he was not a true Christian.

While confused about his future James stayed in Aberdeen and took private lessons in French and Italian, where his teacher was surprised at how easily he learned these new languages. Years later James wished that he had extended these lessons and topped them up with trips to France and Italy to develop his language-learning skills in a way that could have helped him learn Chinese more quickly.



### Chinese Mission influences on James: the Milnes and the Legges

If James became clear that the depth of his religious belief and feelings suited him for the ministry, he was in a setting with strong personal missionary influences that might further focus his career. These influences started within his family, which was close to one of the earliest Protestant mission families to China. Rev. William Milne (1785-1822) had been born in Aberdeenshire a generation earlier and had been a member of the Legge's dissenting Huntly church. Milne went to Malacca in 1813 as a missionary and in 1818 became Principal of the recently founded Anglo-Chinese College there. When he died in Malacca in 1822 his orphaned children were sent back to Huntly to be educated, where James became a classmate and friend of Milne's twin sons, especially William Charles.

During his years in Malacca, father William Milne had been determined to educate his children to read, write, and speak the Chinese language. He hoped they would also become missionaries, and believed that mastery of the language was crucial for missionary work. From 1815 until his death seven years later Milne had written letters back to his friends, the Legge family. Milne also sent the Legges some of the Chinese-text Christian treatises he had created and published on the Anglo-Chinese College printing press in Malacca. As a young boy James was enthralled with these books, with their fragile foreign paper and mysterious characters. He "admired the silky feeling of the yellowish paper... and wondered how it was to be read, and what its contents could be". He wondered if he too would become a missionary to China, although that question arose more from his fascination with the exotic than from a religious interest.

### A year of uncertainty teaching and discovering new ideas

Whatever his uncertainties, there was pressure on James to become productive. He went down to London, and by mid-1835 he decided to follow the example of his older brother George, who had first been a schoolmaster. He encountered his competitors for the Hutton prize, who were also looking for jobs as teachers. With the help of George's friends James obtained a teaching job as Classical Master in a Congregational secondary school in Blackburn, a small Lancashire town. He tried to negotiate a salary of £80 per annum but was very pleased to accept £75. Before leaving London for this job James was at loose ends for a while, and began to visit different chapels around the city. Dissenters typically referred to their congregational homes as chapels, while the Established religion referred to its buildings as churches.

James was beginning to be interested in some of the sermons he heard, and was beginning to recognize a moral style and religious interest in himself as he encountered

life in the big city. He was tempted to attend a theatre to see Maria Malibran (1808-1836), a famous 27-year-old Spanish dramatic mezzo-soprano who had taken Paris and London by storm. She restored text in which Mary Stuart calls Queen Elizabeth I a “vile bastard” in Donizetti’s opera *Maria Stuarda* in its 1835 premiere in La Scala, defying the Italian censors. Malibran also championed folk songs and had a mischievous streak that she showed when she had once fooled a pretentious British audience by singing “Molly put your kettle on” in Spanish and at a languorous pace with variations that they all acclaimed as superior continental music until she revealed the joke. A year later and pregnant, she died prematurely after a fall from a horse<sup>1</sup>. While waiting in a coffee shop and considering what his father might think of such entertainment, James decided against going to her performance. He made this decision under circumstances in which no one would have known either way, an individual judgement consistent with the sobriety of his upbringing.

In the meantime his brother George’s life as a minister had been complicated and unsettled. He had been having troubles in his Bristol congregation with a faction unhappy with his preaching. He decided to leave it in order to allow the members to heal their rift, although that did not happen as the conflict was deeper than the issue of George’s sermons. James knew that George was still a master of “sarcasm and invective”, as he had been all his life a fiery combatant in physical or verbal contests, but years later defended George by explaining that his arguments were never mean-spirited and he never showed “sullen enmity” but overall had a generous temperament. In January 1836 George accepted an offer from a congregation in Leicester, where he stayed until his premature death in 1861, age 59. That congregation had originally wanted George at the time he chose Bristol, so had hired a man in default who turned into a heretic, a convert to “Socinian” views denying the divinity of Christ<sup>2</sup>. Although the congregation was happy to get George, the heretic’s activities had split the Leicester congregation and by the time George arrived it had dwindled to a shell that took him years to repair. These experiences continued to support another aspect of the independentist beliefs of James and George, in which most formal creed or doctrine was a bad idea because it suppressed thought, and tendencies to “creedism” needed to be well suppressed so they would not divide a congregation.

---

<sup>1</sup> Recently Cecilia Bartoli has become a champion of Malibran’s career and repertoire.

<sup>2</sup> Socinianism was a scientifically-oriented religious reform movement from the 16<sup>th</sup> century that denied the divinity of Jesus Christ. Over time it shifted into what is now known as Unitarianism.

Taking up his job as a schoolmaster James arrived in Blackburn in the autumn of 1835, where he discovered the headmaster was a fine man with an attractive family. He enjoyed teaching even though some of his students were older than he was. In the evenings the masters enjoyed talking about politics with friends of the headmaster, and James attended a congregational church, evaluating the quality of the sermons both in terms of logic and eloquence. Legge always loved books and enjoyed buying ancient second-hand books at a market stall, discarded “from the libraries of decayed families in Lancashire”. One of the treasures he found was a book of Euclidean geometry translated in 1570, and some ancient Latin and philosophy books (Lantantius, Boethius, and Erasmus) ranging from 1539 to 1760. Headmaster Mr. Hoole was so pleased with Legge’s work and his interest in the church that by Christmas he raised James’ salary to the original £80 he had wanted.

Although he did not yet have a clear idea of his future work life it seems that James considered that teaching job only a temporary plan, because while he taught there he began an intensive course of additional studies in French and Italian. Although he had long shown exceptional skills in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, James had discovered that his talent for languages was more general, and that language learning was easy for him. In later years he believed his intensive early language training in Latin had provided him with a strong basis for his mastery of Chinese, attributing his talents to the education he had received, not noticing that others who also learned Latin were not also able to learn new languages as easily. Legge’s skills in language learning were simply part of his overall outstanding verbal intelligence. Of more importance, during this year of teaching James discovered what he wanted to do in life.

### Chapter 6 Deciding on a career

By the summer of 1836 James Legge had concluded that he was a Christian, and decided that he wanted to be a minister. He went home to Huntly to talk with his father and brother John about his plan. He would teach at Blackburn until Christmas, then in early 1837 would live with George until September, then begin studies for the ministry at the Nonconformist theological Highbury College in London, where George had studied. While living with George he studied more Greek and theology in preparation for his next program. He was fascinated by a friend of George's, a clergyman strongly opposed to the Establishment of religion and its network of power in universities and other civil institutions. He also watched as George and other ministers preached in styles ranging from eloquent to abstract, from sombre to humorous or even sarcastic. James taught Sunday school, and attended a great election campaign debate in which the Conservative Prime Minister Robert Peel came out to help a Tory candidate and was shouted down for supporting slavery; the Liberals won the seat.

Churchmen were also busy with vigorous public debates. One day Legge attended a great event that was intended to be a debate between a leading Protestant and a leading Roman Catholic priest, on the merits of each belief system. He found himself in a heated argument with Sir Charles Wolseley, who was considering the merits of the Roman Catholic claims under the close guidance of two priests. The crowd was starting to shout approval at every new riposte from James as he confronted the ideas that Sir Charles proposed, and James was becoming very excited when suddenly he found himself being pulled back. His brother George had hooked his cane around James' collar and was removing him from the fray, while another friend Mr. Tait counselled meekness to Sir Charles, quoting a psalm. In the end the public debate failed to occur because the warring parties couldn't agree on basic conditions. Sir Charles broke himself free of the priests to come back to offer his hospitality to Mr. Tait should he ever be in the neighbourhood, but pointedly told James that the offer didn't extend to him because "you are too fond of giving me hard knocks".

This was not the first time that Legge had responded with vigour in debates, but it was the first time that he realized that soft words could be more effective than tough ones. His logical mind, mastery of language, and intense conviction led to many such encounters across his life, and he wasn't always able to remember the lesson of this exciting then humbling day.

Highbury College; deciding to become a missionary

Legge's studies at Highbury College were initially based on his decision to become a minister, but he had no more specific plan. He entered directly into the third year of a four-year program at Highbury in 1837 on the basis of the Latin, Greek and mathematics he had already mastered during his King's College degree, and after an entrance examination. Although he was poor enough that he could have received free room and board as a charity case, he paid £20 for it and was pleased with the good food and quarters. He loved going to the library to track down every obscure reference that a tutor might have made in a lecture, and developed good friendships. His brilliance as a student soon drew the attention of the masters, and again he thrived under their interest.

Despite its freethinking reputation there were elitist attitudes within the college that Legge discovered after they directly affected him. The theology students were often given weekend preaching jobs in outlying towns, and as James took on these jobs he developed a good reputation for his preaching. This was an advantage as the local congregations paid visiting preachers for their efforts. His success led to the minister in charge of the assignments telling James that he could look forward to a very successful career in the ministry. Suddenly this encouragement changed after James mentioned that he had decided to become a missionary rather than a minister in a settled church in Britain. Mr. Wilson was extremely displeased, because even the Nonconformist churches had status-biased ideas about the value of an intellectual such as James staying within Britain for a distinguished career, rather than joining artisans in remote and possibly fatal missionary ventures. Following his revelation, James came under great pressure to stay in Britain and pursue his ministry there. Everyone recognized his outstanding intellectual gifts and argued that he would have a wonderful contribution to make if he stayed in Britain.

James resisted these pressures, then very soon discovered that Mr. Wilson no longer placed James' name on the list of available itinerant preachers. He also discovered that the same was true for another man planning to be a missionary. The other man was extremely poor and needed that extra income, and his hardship roused James' indignation when he realized they were being penalized because of their plan to do mission work. James complained about this injustice to his favourite tutor, Dr. Halley. Halley was a superb scholar of Greek and Christianity who had appreciated James' brilliance. He was also a just man who recognized the injustice that was being done by Mr. Wilson to the aspiring young mission men, and he acted to ensure that they were reinstated on the preaching list.

Mr. Wilson's discriminatory actions were not that unpredictable because missions were seen as more appropriate for the less intellectually gifted, and in the early years most missionary societies sent out more artisans and small shopkeepers than educated and ordained men as missionaries. This was a matter of general preference and even explicit policy in the early operations of the London Missionary Society (LMS). The first boatload of missionaries that it sent to the South Pacific on its ship the *Duff*, consisted almost entirely of artisans. Their fates were entirely dismal and eventually the policy changed.

Legge passed the examinations from his first year at Highbury, then did some itinerant preaching to help his brother George, called to help because he had broken his arm while visiting on the Isle of Man. In June 1837 Britain was excited with the new 18-year old Queen Victoria, and James went to Pall Mall to watch her carriage pass on her way to the coronation ceremony on June 28. Four years younger than James, she was "looking so pure, serious, and happy". James and George eventually took a train to Liverpool, George returned by train to his home in Leicester, and James returned to Huntly for the summer. There his family was very happy that he had decided to become a missionary, and more specifically, that he had decided that his hope was to go to work in China. This plan almost foundered on a number of unforeseen problems.

#### Applying to the London Missionary Society

While Legge had been able to settle the ructions within Highbury arising from his mission plan, he encountered new snags when he tried to become accepted by the LMS. Once the Highbury faculty realized how determined James was to embark on a mission career, they gave up their efforts at dissuasion and recommended him for admission to the London Missionary Society. He applied in May 1838, aged 21, and the LMS assured him it was interested in his application.

Notably, in working for the LMS James would not have to sign any formal creed. This was important to him because in the congregationalist way of thinking, neither church members nor ministers were required to affirm any formal doctrine. If it had been asked of him James would have refused for he was stubborn and convinced of the value of his own opinions, later writing that he had "never read any theological book without finding objectionable views". This stubbornly individualistic approach to church life was perfectly compatible with the broad principles of the LMS. At the same time, both the Scotsmen of the nonconformist church and the LMS "theology" took the idea of beliefs seriously, including the beliefs of people in their mission lands. In contrast, the Church Mission Society for the established Church of England, was more closely allied

with government and establishment social organizations, and had less interest in the inner beliefs of its adherents in Britain or of its converts in remote missions. This contrast led James into conflict in his first mission at Malacca, where his purity of intent clashed with that of others with far more pragmatic values that operated in the fading town.

### Mission societies and their critics

The LMS was the most appropriate organization for a man from the Nonconformist tradition. Lord Byron was a strong supporter of the society and especially of its mission in Hawaii. The LMS was interested more in getting mission men into the field to preach a basic message and bring people into a Christian community, than it was in doctrine and church structure. This LMS tolerance of Christian diversity contrasted with other mission societies forming in the same period, typically created from within a specific sect that was relatively jealous in protecting its own doctrines and systems of church organization.

The LMS had been founded as a non-denominational Protestant mission society in 1795, and it does not map easily onto modern stereotypes about missions. Modern and post-modern critics of colonialism have painted a uniformly dark picture of the iniquities of the missionaries of the British Empire as agents of imperialism. This is not a clever or original critique because even during the Victorian era the rise of secular thinking led to missionary efforts being scorned for naïve assumptions of the value of their religious and cultural ideas. This continued across the twentieth century as Marxist critiques emerged, and missionaries were seen not as doing what they thought they were doing (bringing a new and “better” religion), but were considered to be dupes of capitalism and purveyors of inexcusable notions of cultural superiority. With the transformation of Marxism into post-modernism, critics have continued with updated versions of these views. They accuse missionaries of destroying indigenous civilizations that are construed as being morally and culturally of equal or superior value, if not also spreading deadly diseases. In these views missionaries, often “orientalists” who studied the languages and literatures of their foreign settings, are scorned because their work was ambiguously bound up with the push for capitalism and free trade, yet they professed higher motives. Versions of these critiques have become the popular wisdom of magazines and newspapers for a century. The critique is on shaky ground when its assumptions are actually tested in specific cases.

Not all mission societies had specific and rigid theologies that they wanted to impose on their converts. While there were some specifically denominational

missionary societies, in fact there was considerable diversity in the approaches each society used, and the LMS was notable for considering its efforts to be Protestant but beyond sectarianism. It was founded in 1795 in London following excited conversations that developed first in a coffeehouse, and then in rooms rented above a public house. Its founders included two Scots who had a very clear idea that its missionaries were not to focus on matters of church governance, which was a topic of contention among all the homeland churches. Its missionaries were “...not to spread Presbyterianism, Independency, Episcopacy, or any other form of Church order and government (about which there may be a difference of opinion amongst serious persons), but the Glorious Gospel of God” (Ride, 1960). Instead, the LMS took an ecumenical approach.

By 1830 and the peak of Scottish missionary recruitment into the LMS, the doctrinally independent approach that Legge encountered was peculiarly compatible with Scottish thinking. The LMS had begun with a policy of recruiting pious artisans rather than educated men, but this policy led to significant problems. Relatively uneducated men went into alien cultures and either “went native” and lost their faith, or felt superior to local cultures, aroused hostility, and created wreckage. By the time James applied the LMS had begun to appreciate the need for some missionaries to be educated men, as well as men with specific skilled trades such as in printing press operations.

### The British Empire disaster in Afghanistan

While James was completing his final year at Highbury College in late 1837, dramatic and horrible events were unfolding in India that shook the very concept of the spread of British influence in Asia. India was not a British colony, but instead was a mighty trading arena for the East India Company (the EIC) under the supervision of a Governor-General George Eden (Lord Auckland). Auckland had embarked on a Grand Progress from Calcutta to the Punjab to initiate an alliance with a pro-British ruler to replace Dost Mohamad Khan, the Emir of Afghanistan. This was part of a plan to fend off Russian advances during the Great Game. British Indian troops left the Punjab in late 1838 to march on to Kabul. Complex but transitory military victories and political drama in Afghanistan over the next two years ended when the 16,000 strong column of British troops including 12,000 camp followers left Afghanistan in January 1842 to return to India through the Khyber Pass. By the time numerous ambushes were completed in the fierce Afghan winter, only one Briton made it back to India, Dr. William Brydon. Except for a British captain and six soldiers captured, all the rest of this massive convoy



were killed. The British Empire was still a volatile emerging entity, and its activities in Asia were evolving in diverse ways that soon affected Legge's plans.

### Chapter 7 Legge and the London Missionary Society

It was not easy to become a missionary with the London Missionary Society, and Legge's problems started with his reference letters. One letter questioned his assertiveness in selecting China as his destination, and another doubted his general health and suitability for a hot climate. Dr. Halley's reference letter implied that James specifically wished to work in the East, and James had to work hard to convince the admissions committee that he was not setting down any conditions, but was eager to accept any assignment. One doctor concluded with great specificity and firmness that while James might retain his health if he were assigned to the South Seas or the Cape of Good Hope, he was not strong enough to survive India. The other concluded that if he were sent to Macau he would probably die within six months, describing James' countenance as "indicative of a tendency to consumption", even while acknowledging that the chest sounds were all clear. Tuberculosis was a major cause of premature death at the time even among very advantaged families in Britain and Europe.

#### A struggle to prove he is healthy

Legge responded to these reports with a vigorous counterattack during his last year at the college, suggesting that he was now clear that he had discovered his life's goals. He argued that he should be allowed to seek a third opinion from a doctor of his own choosing, won approval for this, and sought the best chest doctor in London. James explained that his whole life's plan was at stake and described the conflicting conclusions of the previous doctors. Dr. William Jenner, later to become Sir William, used a stethoscope to discover that Legge's "lungs play beautifully", and the crucial letter was sent off to the LMS. Jenner's later fame was based on his success in differentiating typhus from typhoid fever, and he became physician to Queen Victoria.<sup>3</sup>

When Dr. Jenner's letter was shown to the doctor who had written the most pessimistic opinion of James, the doctor begrudgingly wrote that "the station of Canton with frequent changes to Macau" was less unhealthful than India, and might be a setting in which James could maintain acceptable health if there was "a want of well qualified labourers" for the mission (Ride, 1960).

---

<sup>3</sup> Another Jenner, Edward Jenner was already renowned for discovering the principle of viral attenuation that made vaccination with cowpox pus a safe procedure against smallpox. The two Jenners' research reflected the actively empirical and natural science approach that was starting to transform Victorian medicine.

Just as James was battling the LMS bureaucracy in London to try and enter mission life, in Canton Robert Morrison's son John was founding the Morrison Educational Society, the first-ever formal plan to teach Chinese students to read and write in both Chinese and English. Pioneering missionary Robert Morrison had gone to China in 1807, and his talented son John was to provide James with excellent mission and school advice within a few years.

### The LMS examines James Legge

Legge's final year at Highgate was one of intense activity for James on two fronts as he waited for the decision of the LMS committee. In addition to his struggles to prove that he was healthy enough to become a missionary, he had to complete an extensive application and preordination examination for the LMS that required him to outline the nature of his calling to mission work, and explain his marital status and prospects.

In Legge's candidate's paper, he wrote answers to a series of 17 printed questions on large sheets of paper. He wrote although he was reared in a pious family he had not taken religion as a serious personal matter until three years earlier, when he joined an independent church in Blackburn. His feelings shifted after he made a visit with his father and brother to the grave of his mother; they all spoke of her goodness, increasing his interest in the demands of being good. He had started reading the New Testament again but had no sense of personal connection to the texts until he was teaching in Blackburn. He responded to a question about "infant baptism" by replying that he was indifferent to the mode of baptism or legitimacy of infant baptism. As long as a parent wished an infant baptized, James considered that was reasonable, and he did not think it worth worrying about details such as "sprinkling or pouring" or total immersion. He believed that infants who were the children of parents who professed the faith could be properly baptised, and "those who oppose infant baptism know neither what they say nor whereof they affirm". Scots tradition was opposed to adult baptism.

In answering "what books have you read?" Legge's answer showed his amazing confidence, approaching cockiness, as he replied testily "...to specify the books which I have read would be tedious." When pressed as to a preference for mission work "at home or abroad" he was even less forgiving, "the present application is in any circumstances a sufficient answer to these 2 queries". He considered that his services were most needed abroad, "not just from a sense of duty, but because I like it, if we may speak of liking what is only in contemplation". His most interesting answer described the qualities that he considered necessary for a good missionary. Such a man "...must also be a watchful student of human nature – and be himself circumspect, vigilant,

sober, ... acquainted with the records of history and the principles and details of science”.

Legge was asked to explain why he wanted to become a missionary, responding that his decision was tied to his recognition that he was a Christian, and to two events specific to missions. Many years earlier his father had been asked to help a friend deal with a headstrong son who wanted to go to the Caribbean to become a planter and Ebenezer was asked to dissuade him during a journey of 10 miles' walking. The young man ran away when he learned of the plan, but Ebenezer explained his views to the boy's mother and then told his own sons about this visit. He told them “if any of his sons went abroad for the purpose of gaining wealth they should not have his blessing, but if they went for the purpose of diffusing Christianity's gospel they should have his blessing and his prayers”. At another early event James had been so severely ill as a boy in Huntly that he was delirious, and he remembered drifting in and out of consciousness, part of the time believing that he was working as a missionary.

The next part of the examination asked Legge to outline which doctrines he believed were contained in the scriptures. He was so self-confident that he criticized this question for its “indefiniteness”, announced he would not review them all, then embarked on a long rational and logical argument covering topics from Adam to Christ. He concluded “It was my object knowing my time to be brief, to disregard the shell and present the kernel”.

In response to the final question he wrote that in order to minister to “the heathen” his first goal would be to learning their language or languages. Until he could speak and write like a native of China everything else would be subordinate. He expected that mastering Chinese would give him “joy... which the acquisition of wealth and worldly fame could never bestow”. He also emphasized that a preacher must also know the history, philosophy religion, poetry, customs, and manners of the Chinese in order to reach them, not just their language. This detailed review of his interests at age 22 presented the core of his interests across his entire adult life.

The LMS examination also posed a highly convoluted question that tried to be specific as to all James' marital possibilities and intentions. He answered, “I am not married, neither am I engaged, and should circumstances render it desirable, I am willing to go out unmarried. But who is to be the judge of those circumstances? The latter part of the query has frequently engaged my thought, but as I would neither do nor say anything rashly, I decline answering it in the meantime”. After writing this, he crossed out the first three sentences. His detailed but spirited response to this question

may have troubled the committee by its exquisite reasoning yet inconclusive answer, and it was nearly a year before the admissions committee made its decision.

At the same time James began courting Mary Morison, member of a congregation at Trevor Square near Brompton Road in Knightsbridge that James was attending. Mary was one year younger than James, and the daughter of the minister John Morison. James described Dr. Morison as a kindly and fascinating man with strong interest in missions; he edited the *Evangelical Magazine and Missionary Chronicle* (EMMC), and was also a member of the LMS Board. Mrs. Morison knew Scottish history and the popular historical ballads that James enjoyed. She was also a spirited woman who publicly attacked a grain-hoarder during a shortage, quoting Solomon.

James soon realized that both Morison parents loved “anything with the element of hazard and boldness in it”, and stories from missionary life met their “heartly appreciation”. Mary was accomplished and active, teaching Sunday school and helping provide services to the poor. By the spring of 1838 James had won Mary’s favour and wrote seeking her parents permission to marry, explaining that he intended to go to Malacca and then China as a missionary. By the time he returned for his final year at Highbury in September they were promised to each other, and in December 1838 they became engaged to be married. James then recommended her to the LMS committee as a person who would be a great help to him in mission work, settling all the complicated questions from the earlier LMS examination.

In April 1839 James and Mary married; he was 23 and she was 22. While the committee was pleased with this development, further work had to be overcome in documenting her good health, and in preparing James for some competence in Chinese.

#### Social ideals in London during his time at Highbury

During his final year at Highbury James was exposed to powerful ideas about improving the wellbeing of people through laws and systems of social organization. On August 1, 1838 the British government finally gave freedom to all slaves throughout the empire, the culmination of years of increasing restrictions over the practise arising from years of agitation started by pious dissenting Christians outside the Church of England establishment, campaigns in which the LMS was active. Lord Mansfield had ruled in a lawsuit in 1772 that slavery was illegal in England and 15,000 Africans in England were freed, Adam Smith wrote against slavery in the 1776 *Wealth of Nations* on the grounds that it violated free trade, evangelical Wilberforce made a powerful anti-slavery speech in the Commons in 1789, and the Commons voted to ban it in 1792. An 1805 law outlawed the trade, an 1811 act outlawed the transportation of slaves across the Atlantic,

and The Antislavery Act of 1833 and final work in 1838 remedied most of the unfinished problems. The LMS as an organization of dissenters, was active in Africa trying to stop slavery, with its man the tough obsessed Scot David Livingstone the most famous missionary in this work.

Other social idealists were busy in London and Legge had a more personal connection with another interesting movement in London when he met Robert Owen in late 1838. Owen was founder of English socialism and a great theoretician about the importance of civil societies formed for mutual help and improvement. Only four years earlier he had founded a cooperative labour movement and unions that gathered more than 500,000 members within a week. Strong responses by factory owners and prosecution by the government had led to the union's collapse by August 1834, but the ideas did not die.

James heard Owen give an address claiming that his system of communal society was superior to Christianity and organized religion, and challenging any Christian minister to a public disputation on this argument. James had a cousin William Legge, a congregational minister, who took up the challenge and invited James to attend. The two combatants met a number of times prior to the debate to review the ground rules, and James was invited to sit in on these negotiations, which were extremely interesting to him. The debate aroused great popular interest and the hall was packed for the event. By then both of the experimental communities that Owen had founded (in Scotland and in Indiana) had "ignominiously failed" as Owen told James, but he was not at all discouraged and had complex rationalizations to explain their problems. Owen was 67, still vigorous and confident, and he urged James to take Owen's "system" with him to China, "and I can assure you of a grand success".

For his part James thought that Owen's mind seemed off balance and that he seemed "beyond the reach of any argument, and would go on to the last misled by his own delusions". Despite this James admired Owens for his work in founding infant schools, improving cotton mills, reducing hours of labour, supporting schools and factory inspections, and laying the foundation for English socialism, and felt honoured to have met him. There were many aspects to Owens thinking about the public good that matched the Scottish and congregational egalitarianism James had absorbed across his childhood. In time these ideas led James into active advocacy for civic institutions for public well-being in Hong Kong before these kinds of public institutions were accepted within England.

The importance of a wife

Mary also had to provide a character reference and pass a medical inspection for the LMS. Missionary wives had to have health as robust as their husbands' because they had to share all the rigours of life in remote, health-threatening outposts. In February 1839 Mary's father wrote the LMS admissions committee recommending his daughter's fine qualities for missionary work, noting that he and his wife both approved of the venture. The medical report concluded that Mary was in good health, the physician noting that she had "a mind peculiarly placid and amiable" and concluding that he could see no reason why she should not live in the tropics or in the Far East.

### Missionary life and death

The physical rigour of James and Mary for life in China was no small issue, as the physical survival of missionaries and their families was a huge problem at the time, continuing across most of the nineteenth century. In the wake of first-contact European exploration, mission families were going to remote regions in Africa and Asia where general public health conditions were often unspeakable and the climates extreme.

In China in particular, missionaries and natives suffered epidemics of sudden death from mysterious fevers and digestive disorders across the late 1800s. Reports in the *Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal (CRMJ)* included lists in every issue of all the sick and recently deceased missionaries, mission wives, and children. The missionaries often fled for home (on slow-moving ships) once they became ill, and many died during their homeward journeys. Within a few years of Legge's eventual arrival in Hong Kong, S. Wells Williams, an American missionary in Canton, calculated that average years of survival for Protestant missionaries in China was 7 years, with only about 4.5 years of active service and the remainder sick time (S. W. Williams, 1851b).

The medical missionaries who went to China benefited from the advances of Western medicine starting in the Renaissance. In China they were prized because of their expertise with cataract and tumour surgery, bone-setting skills, and their modest array of effective medications for pain, cardiac disorders, and digestive problems, skills and remedies that were all superior to those found in Chinese traditional medicine. Apart from these specific skills, Western doctors still had limited means of fighting infections and fevers, and these were major sources of missionary deaths in China and Africa, most were still deadly and without effective remedies in East or West.

### LMS accepts James and Mary for the Chinese mission

Legge was thrust into a flurry of official events in early 1839. He was welcomed into the LMS by the Board of Directors in early that year, on April 25 he was ordained as a minister in a service at the nonconformist Trevor Chapel in Brompton London, and he

married Mary five days later. At the ordination Rev. William Legge of Reading opened the service, James' brother George delivered remarks to the congregation, and his Chinese teacher Sam Kidd delivered the ordination prayer in a ceremony presided over by his father-in-law John Morison. James's father came down from Scotland to attend the ceremony, and the wedding days later. On July 19 William Milne from Aberdeen was also ordained for the mission in China, at Wycliffe Chapel, soon to join James and Mary on their voyage to China.

They would go to the LMS station in Malacca until China opened to foreigners, because it would provide James with a chance to master written and spoken Chinese with the help of the local Chinese populations and the men already at the mission.

The LMS described its Malacca mission to James as a thriving operation that included a senior college, the Anglo-Chinese College founded by pioneering LMS man Robert Morrison (1782-1834), a wide network of junior schools, and a long-established presence in the community. James could study Chinese and teach senior students at the college. This was exciting to him because of his strong scholarly interests, and the plan had a rationality to it that promised an orderly preparation for his eventual work in China, even though it was not clear when this might take place as missions in China had a scattered history dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

#### Early Roman Catholic missions to China

China had an ancient experience with missionaries starting with the Italian Jesuit Matteo Ricci (1562-1610), who established himself at the court in Beijing after an incredibly arduous trip that that took years. He and other Jesuits established themselves in the Imperial household, not as with more modern missionaries, expecting to be sent home for regular furloughs, but with the expectation that they would live out their lives in their mission homes. The Jesuits stayed for nearly two centuries before the Qing/Manchu dynasty became anti-foreign and the Pope disbanded the order in 1773. At the time of Legge's acceptance into the LMS, China had tough exclusionary rules for all foreigners.

#### Opium trade struggles, Britain and China

In the years 1828-1838 leading to Legge's move to Malacca, relations between Britain and China were becoming increasingly volatile. China's rules about foreigners had long been very strict. Foreign traders could come only to the port of Canton and only for a specific period of trading months each year. They were required to live only in a specific place, on a small island in the Pearl River just off the city coast. Missionaries were not allowed anywhere in China. In addition, a Qing Imperial Edict of 1757



threatened death to any Chinese person teaching a “foreign barbarian” the Chinese language, so few foreigners knew the language.

Further, there were very strict Qing rules governing trade, in which foreign traders were not allowed to sell anything, but only to buy Chinese products. This unbalanced trade meant traders had to bring massive quantities of silver bullion in a one-way trade that was costly and inefficient. Illegal importation of opium gradually became the solution to this, providing a currency to balance trade. This led to decades of struggles between the Qing dynasty and foreign traders, including volatile changes in the rules about opium.

It had been legal trade in China until 1796, and foreign traders used opium from India beginning in 1713 as a means of operating a balanced trade by providing silver bullion income the Europeans could use to buy Chinese tea, silk, tin, sandalwood, and specialty food products such as bird’s nests for soup (Ingrams, 1952). The East India Company had a monopoly on the China trade until 1834 and banned the opium trade from its ships, but did not interfere with private coastal traders both Chinese and Europeans. In 1813 the Jiaqing Emperor prohibited the use of opium but Chinese merchants and officials were profiting massively from the trade, and the Qing Viceroy for Canton had his own opium ship in the 1830s (Eames, 1909). This traditional but illegal trade did not turn into direct conflict between Britain and China until after the balance of trade turned against the Chinese in 1828. In 1836 Canton Hong merchants had written the Daoguang Emperor (1782-1850, reign 1821-1850) favouring legalization of the trade, advising their British trading partners in August that they expected legalization soon. All the traders expected it would become a new taxable open trade.

But the Emperor, (possibly a user, as were his three sons), was persuaded by court officials that the trade should remain illegal on moral grounds, “the people enervated by luxury”. In 1838 the Emperor added strength to his prohibitions on the opium trade by ensuring that some Chinese opium traders were publicly executed by strangulation. The leading British naval officer at Canton was Capt. Charles Elliot, responsible for the general supervision of British-Chinese trade after the British ended the EIC monopoly of the China trade in 1834. Elliot responded to the Emperor’s actions by posting a public notice to the British traders warning them that their illegal opium trade was a danger threatening all regular trade, and “was rapidly staining the British character with deep disgrace”.

Across the rest of 1838 and 1839 the pressures increased on the Chinese and British opium traders and their political leaders, affecting the plans that James and

Mary were making. In the meantime James needed to learn Chinese and this was a big challenge because of the very limited resources in Britain.

### Chapter 8 Learning Chinese in London

In London, Legge began to study Chinese in late 1838, even before learning in early 1839 that his application to the LMS was successful. At that time almost no educated person in any European country knew the Chinese language because of the Qing Imperial Edict of 1757, part of its strict rules about all foreigners.

Although old traders occasionally returned from the China trade with oral skills in pidgin, almost no European learned the written language. Pidgin or “business” language was a trading language that used mostly English words but Chinese syntax, used by both Europeans and Chinese. It was not an inferior “baby talk” language, but an orderly and efficient business language with a very tight vocabulary effectively focused on business terms. While many foreign traders and their counterpart Chinese hong merchants became fluent in pidgin, most foreign merchants never learned to read or write Chinese. Eventually, out of need for literate bilinguals against the background of disinterest in Chinese culture, both the merchants and foreign governments in Canton hired mission-educated Chinese converts or the sons of Chinese-educated missionaries to handle crucial documents in business or diplomacy, but that was some time in the future. Missionaries naturally had strong incentives for mastering the written language, but the Edict meant that missionary literacy in Chinese had to be developed outside China and there were only paltry resources available to Legge in London.

#### Missionary translations from and into Chinese

In London one resource was Latin-Chinese dictionaries done centuries earlier by Jesuits in China. The Jesuits created dictionaries to use in accumulating materials about written and spoken Chinese, but the European language that they used was Latin. Because they were resident in Beijing, the phonetic transcription into alphabetic sounds in their Latin translations reflected the oral language of the northern Chinese capital. This has since been called “mandarin” probably because the mandarins who were the officials of the Qing Empire spoke using this dialect. By the time the Jesuits were long vanquished and the Protestants were starting to plan Chinese missions, these ancient Latin-Chinese dictionaries and their mandarin-based phonetic transcriptions were among the few written materials that were available for the education of the new wave of Europeans.

#### Sir George Staunton and the Macartney Embassy of 1792

In Britain there was only one person with excellent oral and written skills in Chinese, Sir George Staunton. Sir George (1781-1859) was the striking exception to the general state of ignorance in the West about the Chinese language. He was the first

Briton able to read Chinese, and as recently as 1805 he had been the only Briton who could read, write, and speak the language (Lovett, 1899). Staunton had gone with the 1792 Macartney embassy to the Chinese court as a young child of 12. He had been with his father Sir George, as part of the talented Lord Macartney's miserably convoluted diplomatic mission from Britain to the Chinese emperor. Almost the only Europeans with skills in the written and formal spoken language were young Chinese theological students being educated in the Matteo Ripa College in Naples. Their normal languages were Chinese, Latin, French, and Italian. These young Jesuits had been sought out to take with the British embassy to serve as interpreters, and during the long voyage, child George had learned to speak and write Chinese from them.

The actual official negotiations of Macartney's embassy to Beijing were done in a complex sequence of languages. The Emperor's Chinese was translated by the Chinese Jesuit students into Latin or French, then the Britons who could understand Latin or French considered the comments in English. They formulated their responses into Latin or French for the Jesuits, who again turned this into Chinese. Soon child George was the only member of the British embassy able to speak directly to the Emperor in Chinese, to his great surprise and delight.

A modern Chinese study of the Jesuits' translations from English into Chinese has shown that some of the diplomatic problems of this embassy arose directly from subtle bias in the translations. The young Chinese Jesuits turned all British expressions that related to diplomatic communications between equals (as intended by the Britons), into a different form using the character "pin" (or bin) that was used in China for providing reports submitted by subordinates to their superiors (Ge, reported p. 42 in (L. Zhang, 1998). Given this revelation, it is not surprising that the Emperor was permanently annoyed that Macartney refused to kowtow in the way required of inferiors in greeting the Emperor. For its violations of respect and protocol, the embassy was ushered out of the China without reaching any agreement for mutual diplomatic recognition, with the Emperor issuing two Edicts explaining why he would not consider any changes in the rules governing the interactions of the British with his empire. He understood his empire to be the Central Kingdom with all others subservient to it, and the Britons' gross violations of this hierarchy were completely unacceptable.

After young George had returned to Britain and completed his education at Trinity College Cambridge, he had returned to Canton and worked for the EIC. Eventually he returned to Britain in 1817 where he established himself in a large holding in Hampshire and served as an MP for nearly four decades. His skills in Chinese were widely recognized as a rare and exotic quality. But although Staunton's Chinese skills

were known, he was not a teacher and there were no formal educational programs for anyone wishing to learn spoken or written Chinese until well into the 1830's. At the time James needed to learn Chinese there was only one accessible scholar in England able to help, Samuel Kidd.

#### Professor Samuel Kidd from Malacca

In the spring of 1839 the LMS sent James to study Chinese for a few months with Samuel Kidd (1804-1843). He had just been named the Chair of Chinese at University College, London after LMS work in Malacca in 1832, returning because of illness. Kidd was a talented scholar who had gone to the Anglo-Chinese College in Malacca as a missionary in 1827, had become sick within his first year there, and had served at the other Straits Settlements of Penang and Singapore before illness forced his complete retirement in 1832. In addition to the typical tropical fevers and ailments affecting liver and gut, he had developed epilepsy that was so intrusive and unresponsive to the horrific treatments of the day that he had been forced to return to the UK. Remaining ill after his return, in May 1833 he had to seek a temporary pension from the LMS while he hoped for recovery. Initially they gave him an allowance of £200 for one year but in July they fired him for his actions in Malacca supporting Thomsen, a contentious mission man in Singapore, although Kidd did not yet know of this decision when in September he resigned from the society because of continuing seizures.

While he had worked at the Anglo-Chinese College (ACC) in Malacca Kidd had learned, then taught Chinese language and culture. On his return he began working on a large book about the culture of China, but he was desperately in need of an income, so persistently ill across his first return year that he was unable to work. Eventually the LMS granted him a second year of support, this time only £100. He supported himself briefly through preaching to a congregation for a year then decided to move to a "remote" region, and by April 1837 was again so desperate for support for his wife and now six children that he begged the LMS to send him back to Malacca even though he was still suffering seizures every two or three weeks. Alternatively, he proposed that he could teach Chinese language or culture to prospective LMS mission men.

Kidd's letter seeking support is heart-breaking, and eventually he was appointed as the first Professor of Chinese at University College. Kidd had been in his academic position for two years when James and two other mission students were sent to him by the LMS for training in Chinese, and he died not long after James and the other students went to their mission postings.

Kidd's book was published in 1841 and it showed that his vision about China was broader than simple gospel work. He explained that he wished to encourage "the study of an important branch of general philology, and oriental philosophy" (Hiney, 2000). He died in 1843, age 46, leaving his wife and seven children so destitute that the missionary magazine ECMM set up a donation plan that elicited help from Queen Victoria and Prince Albert.

Although the LMS had a pension system for widows and orphans by this time and had been providing some erratic support to Kidd during his illness, for some reason Kidd's family was not considered eligible for the standard pension, and the operations of the Widows' and Orphans' fund were mysterious and complicated. A Mr. Chapman wrote the LMS that it should not provide for the widow and orphans of the highly honoured and martyred LMS man Rev. John Williams (killed and eaten by cannibals in the South Pacific in 1839) until all his estate was settled. Chapman was worried that then other mission widows and orphans would make similar claims, and the estates of other men might not be able to repay similar payments in the way that Rev. William's estate could. Chapman made conflicting recommendations that each widow's case be examined on its own merits, but also that the LMS Board should not take up isolated cases "now and then".

In Kidd's class in London, James developed lasting friendships with the other two LMS students. One was his childhood friend William Charles Milne, the son of his family's Huntly friends. The other was Benjamin Hobson, a young English doctor destined for Canton to work as a medical missionary. Hobson showed additional scholarly and educational interests matching the similarly broad intellectual interests held by James, and the two became close friends across their lives on the Chinese coast until Benjamin's departure with ill health in 1859. In the spring of 1839 James went north to Northamptonshire to meet Benjamin's family, later praising his congregational minister father as "an old Israelite indeed", "... a Nathaniel in whom there was no guile". This was James' first close acquaintance with a "purely English" family as most of his movements in England had been within the Scots community, and he was very impressed with Benjamin's fine old parents.

### LMS and China missions

At the time James was studying Chinese with Kidd, the LMS had had few missionaries for China for some years. Its strategy was to send men intended for China, to ports in SE Asia where there were sizeable Chinese immigrant populations. In these towns including Malacca, Jakarta (Batavia), and Singapore, the LMS men could learn

Chinese in preparation for the expected “opening” of China. LMS man Robert Morrison had died in 1834, and in 1836 the LMS had offered the Chinese mission to his talented son John Morrison (1814- 1843), who declined on the grounds of youth and inexperience. He had been educated by his father and others to become fluent in written and oral Chinese, but was too deeply involved in translation projects in the foreign settlement of traders in Canton to consider a mission life. Walter Medhurst had learned Chinese starting in his LMS work in Malacca, but had left his station in Jakarta in 1836 to return to England. Legge and his fellow students were a new wave of men being prepared for work in China as international pressures continued to engage China with the rest of the world in formal diplomatic and trade treaties.

### Chinese texts in London

During the few months of the Chinese lessons with Kidd, the students had very limited textbooks. They had Robert Morrison’s 1826 giant three-part woodcut *Chinese-English Dictionary* of 4,595 pages, Morrison’s *New Testament* in Chinese, part of the Confucian *Analects* in Chinese, and a religious tract put into Chinese by Milne’s father and published by the LMS press at the ACC in Malacca. The students did not realize that Morrison’s giant Chinese-English dictionary had many errors and contradictions, and lacked words across whole domains including commerce, diplomacy, government, and the law<sup>4</sup>. Not knowing these problems, and with this scanty and flawed set of teaching materials, Legge and the other two students went to Kidd’s lecture room several evenings a week for an hour of teaching that concentrated on reading the Chinese radicals. In written characters the radical is a visual element typically on the left, which gives a hint at a core part of the meaning of the character. In their own studying they could learn pronunciation from Morrison’s Dictionary.

### English books about the Chinese language before 1838

There were few books about the Chinese language in English in 1838, although the LMS China mission men in Malacca and Jakarta had gradually been creating documents in Chinese. When James had still been attending Grammar School, the LMS Press at the ACC in Malacca had begun publishing the first books to open the Chinese language to the English-speaking world. The College had been set up by Robert Morrison, who

---

<sup>4</sup> Robert’s son John Morrison knew this and had planned to work on an entirely new Dictionary, just as he had recognized along with some Protestant missionaries that a Chinese translation of the Bible that his father published, was deeply flawed.

believed the best way to bring Christianity to China was to educate Chinese students to read English, master the scriptures, adopt the faith, then take Christian books in Chinese back to their home communities.

At the time of Legge's Chinese studies the ACC had published two books about the Chinese language, Morrison's *Chinese-English Dictionary* in 1826 with a Chinese Grammar, and an English-Chinese phrase handbook, *The English and Chinese Student's Assistant, or Colloquial Phrases, Letters etc. in the English and Chinese*, with the Chinese by Shaou Tih (Xu Dilang). Shaou was a student in the ACC who had been baptized by Medhurst at Malacca before he had moved on to Jakarta. The handbook was notable for its impressive section of commercial and trade-related vocabulary, topics of great interest to the Chinese students. The father of James' friend, the senior William Milne, did the English. These were among the earliest English works about the Chinese language.

#### Chinese dictionaries, and problems in creating English-Chinese dictionaries and translations

Learning Chinese through the medium of Chinese dictionaries is quite a challenging task because they are very different from dictionaries using the Roman alphabet. The core problem is that Chinese characters have no inherent order in the way that an alphabet sets, and have no fixed character-sounds across all the dialects to use in some phonetic organizing the placement of characters.

There is a system to order the placement of characters but it is complex and challenging for any new student. Characters are placed in the dictionary using a system standardized in the Kangxi Emperor's Dictionary of 1716 in which characters are listed in order of stroke-count. They are further positioned within the stroke-count using their radical-root, the part of the character that hints at meaning. There are 214 radicals that are individually numbered and thus have an assigned order-number. Without the stroke-count and the radical-number there would be no means of organizing a dictionary of ideograms because the characters are pronounced differently in different regions. Without this visually-based system of sequential order for the dictionary it would be completely impossible for a new learner to find a new character in a dictionary in order to learn its meaning. Even with this assistance, figuring out the location of a character in a Chinese dictionary is still a daunting task. Minor variations in the strokes that may arise from handwriting variations can easily confuse the tyro who is trying to track down a character and its meaning.



James put his terrific powers of concentration into learning characters in between the rather sparse lessons. He initially used the Reading Room of the British Library as his study, but found it too noisy much of the day and returned to the old study habit he had developed as a teenager in northern Scotland, rising at 3 AM and stopping for breakfast at 8 (Sansom, 1965). James found the ideograms captivating and brought his brilliance in language-learning to this new interest. He loved the characters' mysterious complexity, and described working all one night trying without success to identify the root (radical) of a certain complex character, systematically working his way through the entire dictionary. Even Kidd struggled with that character, trying to find it in the Imperial Kangxi dictionary, until he finally realized that the character had been incorrectly written.

Over these few months of language training James became fascinated by the Chinese language, but what he did not know was that he was learning a very flawed version of the written language and an even more flawed and inappropriate version of the spoken language. While Morrison's giant woodcut dictionary was the key book that opened up the fabulous world of Chinese characters to Legge, soon after his arrival in Asia he began to discover its major shortcomings arising from the problem that Kidd's oral Chinese experience had been very provincial with the Hokkien-speaking Fujian migrants used in the outpost of the Strait of Malacca. Finally, the other few Chinese books that Legge and his friends were consulting were deeply flawed and amateur translation attempts by non-Chinese. In fact in Britain the resources for learning literacy in Chinese were close to useless for any English-speaking person in 1839.

In addition, there were significant problems in creating a good Chinese-English-Chinese dictionary. The first was the official Qing prohibition against teaching foreigners the language. Robert Morrison's early work to master the oral and written language had been done in secrecy within the foreign compound in Canton when he arrived there in 1807 because in the years in which the EIC had the monopoly of trade in China, the Chinese government would not provide residence permits to anyone who was not an employee of the Company. For that reason, Morrison and Milne had worked on the first English-Chinese dictionary in Malacca, outside the control of the Qing dynasty.

The next problem arose from the major variations in the spoken language. Along the Chinese coast, the freelance trading captains and crew used pidgin but there were no translation dictionaries created through this, and they would have been of little value in building a more standard dictionary. The mission men worked in different ports and in each different location learned a spoken language that represented only the local dialect, but it took them some time to fully realize this. The earnest dictionary-builder would

begin to read Chinese characters learning their sounds with the help of a local man, and then would start to build up an alphabetic dictionary of all these words, transcribing the sounds he was hearing into his own version of the sounds using the Roman alphabet. The mission men called this alphabetic version using local pronunciations of written Chinese, “the colloquial”.

Mission translators often developed alphabetized Christian texts of Chinese words to help other missionaries develop oral fluency for preaching, but the vagaries of dialects, and the huge variations in phonetic transcriptions by individuals working independently each generating their own systems of phonetic transcription led to huge problems. A man in Canton would be working hard to turn text into a written alphabetic Chinese based on the sounds of Cantonese (Punti) that he heard there. Only with experience would he develop the understanding that any new “Chinese” document in alphabetic text based on this for use by another missionary, would not necessarily make sense when read by an alphabet-trained Chinese reader in other cities working in a different dialect. Even within one dialect group different mission men would invent their own phonetic transcriptions, attempting to solve tricky pronunciation issues by adding accents and other unique markings to the alphabet that were often unintelligible even to others working in the same dialect. Across many decades the Chinese mission journals were full of complaints about the need for a standard system of phonetic transcription, even as new, eager mission scholars kept generating new versions.

Creating English-Chinese vocabularies led to other fanciful works. Robert Thom, a businessman appointed as Chinese Secretary for the Hong Kong government, prepared a curious book for publication in 1843, intended to be used by northern, mandarin-speaking Chinese who wished to learn English. The book, *A Chinese and English Vocabulary, Part First*, consisted of 113 pages printed from 58 carved wood blocks by Chinese printers in an unusual format. The first section started with an English word or phrase followed by the Chinese characters appropriate for translating the meaning of the words. A second section in Chinese followed, with characters chosen for their phonetic values based on the mandarin dialect that could be used by the northern-speaker to sound out an approximation of the English sounds for the purposes of speaking. It is not clear if Thom understood that even within this one dialect, a specific Chinese character might have several different sounds all representing different meanings, and that the choice of the sound for oral production is often determined through deciding on the meaning from the context provided by surrounding words. Given this complexity, Thom’s text could yield truly bizarre results.

These problems in creating dictionaries to help mission men develop oral and written skills in Chinese had a significant impact on mission work, and gradually the missions realized that mastery of oral and written Chinese was a much greater task than language learning in other mission lands. In Africa for example, where many groups had no written language, LMS men could learn the spoken language then create alphabetic written versions.

#### Dyer's experiments in printing Chinese text

In addition to the major problems in helping their men learn to read and write Chinese, the mission societies were struggling to publish works in Chinese for their missions. Traditional woodcut blocks had been used by Robert Morrison but there were major drawbacks to this primitive technology and the men in the field soon discovered these. While James was studying Chinese texts in London, in Malacca the LMS man Sam Dyer (1801-1843) was struggling to improve the quality of Chinese texts he was printing for the mission. In December 1838 he wrote London about some of the translation and printing work that needed to be done, strongly recommending creation of a new translation of the Bible because the first version by Morrison and Milne was so poor. Dyer thought a whole committee of workers would be needed to do a better version, hoping that British and American missions could work together on it and that the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) would pay the printing costs.

### Chapter 9 Britain and China; the decaying Qing dynasty and the opium trade

As James studied Chinese and completed his final studies in London, the Qing dynasty was coming undone and this affected its relations with the foreigners trading along its coasts. The roots of the problem lay in struggles inside the Qing dynasty. It faced a huge population explosion and major economic problems, and tried to resist any intrusions from foreigners, whether they were traders or diplomats. The reigning Manchu dynasty regarded China as the central (middle) kingdom, the centre of the countries of the world. The Imperial Court required all foreigners first of all to acknowledge that they and their countries were supplicants who owed tribute and obeisance to the Emperor, before any diplomatic conversation could begin.

Arising from centuries of isolation and associated cultural stagnation after the fall of the Ming dynasty, the Qing Court knew little of the outside world, and considered that there was nothing out there (including products) that could be of any interest to the Central Kingdom. These attitudes had become visible to foreigners during the previous 40 years, starting with the first formal British diplomatic mission to the Empire, Lord Macartney's embassy of 1792. Across that period the British tried to establish diplomatic relations between Britain and China, and to make treaties that would open free trade with the Empire, with a series of diplomatic ventures that finally failed. Open conflicts first led to temporary solutions, then finally to more modern relations by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was across this memorable period that James Legge developed his absorbing interest in the classics of Chinese history and culture.

#### Trying to establish diplomatic relations: Macartney 1792-93

Britain first sought formal diplomatic relations with China when it sent Lord Macartney's embassy to Beijing in 1792. His entire visit had been doomed from the outset for two reasons. First, Grand Chancellor Heshen was supervising it very closely under authority delegated by the aged and increasingly dissolute Qianlong emperor (Giles, 1912), and Heshen had strong personal economic reasons to ensure that no change took place in the trading rules at Canton. He was a vastly corrupt Manchu eunuch who had become the real ruler of the dynasty. At the time of his eventual criminal trial after 20 years in the job it was discovered that his wealth equalled the gross income of the Qing dynasty for 10 years, with much of this buried inside the walls of his mansion. During the British embassy Heshen manipulated the old Emperor's understanding of the foreigners in a negative light in order to preserve his own lucrative position. Macartney's instructions from the British government had noted that if the Emperor wished to forbid the opium trade Macartney was to agree to that request and

the Bengal opium trade would have to take care of its own interests, which were not the same interests as the Government of Great Britain.

The embassy was doomed for another reason, arising from Britain's patchy understanding of the Chinese language and its subtleties when status and hierarchy were involved. The Emperor graciously permitted Lord Macartney to be excused from performing the kowtow (ketou, or head-knocking) required of all other official visitors, which required three kneelings and nine complete head-to-floor prostrations acknowledging the Emperor as lord of all. The problem arose because the young Chinese Jesuit translators of the English text from Latin to Chinese to the Emperor used a petitioner's form of address in their presentations of the British documents to the Emperor, thus confirming the inferior status of the British Empire. The Britons' low status was soon publicly affirmed in a banquet where they were seated in positions inferior to those given to Mongol nobles, Islamic ambassadors from Central Asia, and those from Burma (Hevia, 1995). Macartney was an intelligent and respectful man who considered that diplomacy and trade were connected, while the Qing court, consistent with Confucian values, considered trade an inferior occupation, thus the Britons' focus on a trade treaty only confirmed their inferior status.

Macartney's embassy was eventually sent home in complete defeat. Heshen surely believed that he had saved his highly profitable arrangements by ensuring that all barbarian foreigners would be kept far away from the Imperial Court. Macartney probably never fully understood the forces against his rationalist, Enlightenment approach arguing for freer trade and formal diplomatic connections between China and the rest of the world. But the trade problems would not go away because they affected all foreigners confronted with the rules that China decreed.

### The trade problem with China

Macartney's embassy had been sent to remedy an imbalance in the trade between Britain and China. In the age of Macartney's embassy, Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* was the most admired book. He had argued that the Roman Empire's trade deficit with Asia was part of the reason for the fall of that empire. Now the British were faced with the same problem. They were eager to import tea, silk, porcelain, and rhubarb from China, and eager to sell British and European products including machinery, woollens, cottons, and other manufactured products to balance the trade. The problem was that the Chinese were forbidden to buy. The Chinese were eager to sell (for which they would only accept silver bullion), but the Qianlong Emperor had

published an edict forbidding Chinese to buy any goods from foreign traders. In 1792 he explicitly outlawed opium purchases, but his prohibitions included all products.

The Emperor made it especially clear to Macartney that he was not interested in any foreign goods. In his first Edict of September 1793 he wrote that the Empire “possessed all things. I set no value on objects strange or ingenious, and have no use for your country’s manufactures”. In a second edict he again stressed that “Our Celestial Empire possesses all things in prolific abundance and lacks no products within its borders...” and there was “therefore no need to import the manufactures of outside barbarians”.

This easy assumption of Chinese superiority and refusal to consider balanced trade set the stage for grave problems over the next 100 years, yielding a prolonged “cold” war and several hot wars as China increasingly came into contact with the highly dynamic outside world of the industrial revolution and expanding world trade. China’s edicts created a serious trade deficit problem for all foreign traders buying Chinese goods along the coast. They had to bring in boats empty but for silver to use in buying, but were unable to balance their purchases with any sales, creating a huge one-way movement of silver out of the traders’ hands.

In Britain King George III was now mad, the 15<sup>th</sup> son of the Qianlong Emperor (1736-1795) became the new Jiaqing (Qia-Qing), Qing Emperor in 1796, and before long more attempts were made to establish formal diplomatic and equitable trading relations with China.

#### Lord Amherst’s embassy in 1816

In 1816 another British embassy went to the Chinese Imperial court in an attempt to discuss expanded trade at Canton and to obtain agreement for official diplomatic relations with the Court. Lord Amherst’s mission suffered the same complete failure as the Macartney mission had 20 years earlier and for similar reasons, but with even more humiliating speed. Amherst’s mission was expelled from the Celestial Kingdom within a day of his arrival.

Delicate negotiations in Tianjin en route had established that Amherst would not be required to do the kowtow to the Emperor. His party arrived at the Summer Palace exhausted from their travels and were told they must proceed immediately to an audience with the Emperor. Neither the embassy’s gifts for the Emperor nor their formal uniforms had yet arrived, so Amherst explained that an immediate audience was impossible. The Chinese translator was so afraid to convey this message that he told the Qing officials that Amherst was ill, so the Emperor sent his doctor who soon reported

Amherst was not ill. The Emperor was furious that the embassy had lied to him and his councillors were afraid to tell him of the translator's role in creating the lie (Townsend, 1928), so the Emperor and his cabinet ordered Amherst's party immediately to return to the coast and leave China, which they did.

The emperor wrote to the "King of England" after Amherst's departure, declaring "The supreme potentate, who has received from heaven and revolving nature the government of the world, issues an imperial mandate to the King of England, with which let him be thoroughly acquainted." The Emperor criticized Amherst's behaviour, calling him a "petty officer from a remote country", and ended by advising the King that "If you can but pour out the heart in dutiful obedience, it is not necessary to come at stated times to court... This Imperial mandate is given that you may for ever obey it" (Lovett, 1899) p. 419.

Lord Amherst's trip ended even more ignominiously after its demoralizing non-visit to the Court, as during his return journey Amherst and his party suffered a shipwreck 300 miles off on the coast of Java. After saving themselves in lifeboats, they were then threatened by pirates before eventually reaching safety. Amherst told this story to Sir Stafford Raffles in 1817 in London. Raffles was on a home visit to Britain during his work in Java leading to the eventual creation of Singapore out of a remote and deserted bay on a small island off the Malay peninsula. Raffles bought the island from the local Rajah in February 1819 to use as a free trade port, contrasting with the monopolistic ports operated in the nearby Dutch island colonies; the British were determined free-traders.

In political terms the British and other European nations were trying to get the Chinese imperial government to realize that there were other powerful and important nations in the world, and that not all nations would accept the Emperor as their sovereign. These struggles played out in subtle court etiquette matters such as the kowtow, and enlarged over time to full-scale war before the Qing dynasty finally accepted that there were other nations who had to be recognized on equal terms. It is ironic that the Manchu invaders who created the Qing dynasty were so determined to keep all other foreigners out, that in their arrogant then desperate resistance they ended up losing China to an internal revolution arising from their own corruption and mismanagement.

### Qing attacks in Canton

Even in the sole trading port of Canton, trade was not a secure arrangement in the years just preceding Legge's journey. In 1831 the Chinese in Canton began a series of

small-scale open hostilities in which Qing officials allowed attacks on the British warehouses while the merchants were back in their home base at Macau. The buildings were all destroyed, a translator was imprisoned, and all Chinese employees of the warehouses were threatened with death. In 1834 the British government ended the East India Company's monopoly on the Chinese trade, and independent traders of many nations began competing for access to Chinese goods. Many British free traders had long been working the Chinese coast using foreign citizenship papers to evade the rules governing Britons, and there were also traders from many other countries. All were faced with the common problem that they had to bring huge quantities of silver to buy the Chinese tea they wanted, but could never recoup their expenditures through a reciprocal sale of goods. Without permission to sell goods their boats would have to be empty on one leg of the voyage and the cash flow was only in one direction, a classic imbalance of trade that elicited predictable illegal solutions.

In Canton a group of Chinese merchants (hongs) held a monopoly on all trade, and officials set high tariffs and taxes. For a while the foreign traders tried selling Indian cotton to balance the trade, but it had nowhere near the value of the tea that was being purchased, so the traders were still faced with losing money on every trip and were eager for a solution to this problem. In the eighteenth century the EIC had discovered that there was a ready Chinese market for opium and that Chinese merchants and officials alike were eager to engage in the completely illicit trade. As early as 1780 independent traders started to remedy the trading problem by bringing opium to China after buying it in India from the EIC, which stayed out of the direct trade. Opium grew easily in India both in Bengal in the northeast and near Bombay on the northwest; by the 1840s nearly the entire opium trade from Bombay to China was done by Parsi traders.

#### Robert Morrison and Lord Napier both die

The British government's cancellation of the monopoly of the EIC for trading in China greatly excited and disturbed the traditional system set up by EIC traders, Chinese merchants, and Portuguese of Macau. The senior hong merchant Howqua ("Chief Merchant") was so concerned that he wrote a private letter to the EIC chief expressing his great perplexity about the change. Hongs were a small and elite group of Chinese trading companies in Canton that shared a monopoly on all foreign trade, and the parallel British and Chinese monopolies had developed an effective trading system with each other. The great fear was that without the discipline imposed by the two tidy monopolies of the EIC and the hongs, all kinds of new rogue traders would cause



trouble. It also meant that there was no longer one British official responsible for orderly trade activities in Canton.

To prevent such problems the British Government created a new post, Superintendent of Trade, and named Lord Napier (1786-1834) to this post. In Canton he was to preside over criminal and admiralty offences among the Britons, but was not allowed to trade and not allowed to seek use of British forces for protection unless under extreme necessity. Napier's title was very acceptable to the Chinese viceroy who had written in 1831 asking for this kind of replacement with the demise of the EIC. Britain assigned two assistant trade superintendents to Napier, thus in Chinese eyes this new group of officials were entirely related to trade and thus of no political importance.

The LMS pioneer Robert Morrison had worked as a translator and printer for the EIC, and translated for Napier when he arrived in 1834 to establish new arrangements for freer trade at Canton. Morrison and his wife had both been seriously ill for months in late 1833 and he yearned to return to England with her and his five younger children, but he had no job with which to support them there. The LMS didn't answer his pleas for help with the passage money, and in a desperate frame of mind he put his family on board and sent them home in December 1833. He hoped his wife would survive the trip and could find asylum in the home of a friend in England when she and the children arrived in April 1834, but they never saw each other again. By the time he wrote his last letter to them in January it went on a new independent trader's ship. A new company, Jardine, was carrying tea, and the EIC monopoly was finished.

Morrison's role in the Canton trade of the EIC was now ended and his position was becoming perilous. He had recently established a new religious magazine, *The Evangelist*, which was under attack from the Roman Catholics in Macau. The Portuguese governor closed down all Robert Morrison's printing in Macau under pressure from the priests there, so he decided to move his press to Canton where there was no hostile religious authority. The EIC Select Committee gave reluctant agreement to this plan, and to show their disapproval they obnoxiously asserted that they would not make use of Robert's talented son John's services as a translator. This conveniently glossed over the fact that they had already been using John without paying him for more than two years. Across 1833 Robert was very ill; he stayed in Macau for his health and let young John take over all the tasks of moving his press to Canton and setting it up there as the Albion Press. John was going to use the newly minted metal Chinese fonts invented by Sam Dyer in the Straits missions.

Macau was in religious turmoil as well as economic. The Catholics were in disarray among themselves in a dispute with the Pope pitting Portuguese priests against

priests from Italy, Spain, and France. Their squabbles were such a nuisance to the local Governor that he ordered them all ejected from Macau and he decreed he would accept no more priests from the Pope.

### Lord Napier's task in Canton

James Legge was 18 years old and was getting ready for his last year of university when Lord Napier was sent to Canton in 1834 to supervise the new freelance British traders. The 9<sup>th</sup> Lord Napier was a retired naval officer and Member of Parliament from Scotland who had retired to his estates where he was considered a model landlord. He had supported the government in the Reform Bill conflicts of 1830, and was open to the reward of a position for taking a stance opposed by many of the elite. The British did not yet realize that the Qing authorities did not recognize degrees of rank or nobility among "barbarians" because they did not recognize any other country as a sovereign independent state. This meant that as Lord Napier he had no particular status in the eyes of the Qing authorities.

The "Central Kingdom" had no ministry of foreign affairs because all outside states were considered to be simple tributaries to the empire. This meant there were no officials assigned to the management of foreign relations, other than the governor of Canton province. His role was to impose rules on the foreign traders but not to engage in any kind of political diplomacy. He had no authority to meet with any foreigner who might claim some kind of official power, and the role of a superintendent of trade for the Britons was murky and yet to be established.

### The hong system and the dynasty

The Qing government had established the hong system during the hegemony of the EIC. The isolation of the Imperial Court in Beijing essentially meant that the court did not have much idea of the nature of foreign barbarians or their nations. There was a basic assumption that all foreign states were vassal states to China, and complete incomprehension that there might be nations equal in size, power, or civilization. Arising from that assumption there was no interest at all in developing formal relations between foreigners and the court. All that foreigners had to do was provide tribute, which would be accepted as the natural arrangement allowing them to buy Chinese products.

Trade in Canton was restricted by many Chinese rules that dated back 1500 years to the beginnings of Arab trading, including limits on the few specific months in the winter each year when it could be approached for trade. Outside these months the traders retreated from their anchorages at Whampoa back down the Pearl River to their

homes, businesses, and lavish clubs on the small peninsula of Macau. Macau had been ceded to Portuguese management in 1566 as long as it paid an annual rent/tribute, and it became the main base of all foreign trading operations with China because of its closeness to Canton.

### Macau

Macau was located on a peninsula linked to the Chinese mainland by a narrow isthmus that was guarded by a Chinese wall. Chinese citizens were not allowed to live inside Macau, but entered through a gate in the wall in the mornings to work and left again at nightfall, leaving the city to its foreigners. The daytime population in 1822 was 40,000 Chinese and 5,000 foreigners. The EIC and other large trading companies had built magnificent buildings as part of their trading establishments. The EIC's headquarters resembled a lavish London men's club, with Persian carpets, crystal chandeliers, and burnished mahogany walls and furniture.

Despite the presence of such elaborate mercantile establishments, the Portuguese had not been particularly active in terms of creating public amenities or engineering in the way that British officials usually were. As a result, by 1825, despite occupation for nearly 300 years, there were no roads engineered well enough to handle carriage traffic, and movement was either by foot or rickshaw. Along with the aggressive and worldly traders in Macau, there was a huge Roman Catholic Church establishment. By 1825 there was a bishop and nearly 100 priests for the relatively small European Catholic population. Despite this large religious establishment and its very long history of occupation, the Roman church had done little in terms of developing educational institutions in Macau, and there were only two schools, consisting of one each for 100 boys and girls.

### Napier in Macau

Lord Napier arrived in Macau in July 1834, when the British-Atlantic world was on the edge of a huge social change. The British Parliament had finally outlawed the ownership of slaves and freed them all in the Slavery Abolition Act, vigorously supported by the missionary societies but not by the EIC, which was essentially indifferent to moral issues and only interested in trade. China still had slavery within its own borders at this time, but of a type more benign than the African trade.

Napier's mandate from the Foreign Office was to run a consular office to maintain existing trading systems on a peaceful basis, and not to initiate a diplomatic mission (Melancon, 2000), but he was keen to expand the terms of trading through direct negotiations with Governor Lu, the Daoguang Emperor's representative in

Canton. Napier decided his style of approach had to be sufficiently “imperial” to make a strong point to the Chinese that they were dealing on an equal status with a sovereign country, not with a tributary state. While it has often been argued that the British were interested in opening China to more free trade, historian Melancon has shown from private papers of British officials that there was a greater interest in simply maintaining a peaceful state in the existing trading relationship after the end of the EIC monopoly. There was not yet a major British interest in pushing for expanded trade or for significant diplomatic or political change, so Napier was pushing beyond his instructions.

In Canton Governor Lu was under orders to refuse all contact with the barbarians, but consistent with his own plan Napier sailed up to Canton as an equal and without seeking permission. Robert Morrison wrote Napier’s letter to Governor Lu in Chinese using formal salutations that did not use the *bin/pin* character reflecting a humble petition from a subordinate to a superior. Instead Morrison used salutation terms that represented Napier as an important official requiring respect. Napier sought to present his letter of introduction for transmission to the Governor but was allowed only into the Chinese customs house separating the foreign warehouses from the city of Canton, then was turned back at the city gates because he had dared to address dynastic officials without using the subservient form of address.

Governor Lu was outraged and criticized Napier’s failure to follow Qing rules of protocol, which required that all “petty affairs” such as commerce were to involve only merchants, and never imperial officials such as Lu. He rejected entirely the idea that an official of a foreign nation could be anything but a supplicant from a subservient land. At that point China had no concept of equal nations, claimed supremacy over all barbarians (Eitel, 1895), and understood little geography beyond its own tributary regions.

The Governor also wrote a stern note to the hongers in Canton, declaring that their customs officials would go on trial for their criminal act in allowing Napier into the customs house. The Governor explained that only if a “respectful” request were made by the hongers to the great Emperor, and if his mandate were received, could any discussions be commenced. Otherwise, he stormed, “the great ministers of the celestial empire are not permitted to have intercourse by letters with outside barbarians”. He was explicit that if a barbarian “throws in private letters, I will not at all receive or look at them”. He also reaffirmed the rules that did not allow the foreigners to “ramble about” Canton during their trading visits, but instead were required eat, sleep, and trade only inside the special walled and gated trading compound of Shamian island where their factories

(warehouses) were. In his edict to the hong merchants dismissing Napier's approach, Governor Lu used Chinese characters for Napier's name that were a pun with the meaning "labouriously vile", even though these were not the characters to represent the sounds of "Napier" that Robert Morrison had used in his addresses to the Governor (Blake, 1999). Governor Lu ordered the colonel of the Canton gate to tell Napier that "there has never been intercourse by letters with outside barbarians", and had Napier sent away.

Despite this initial small victory, Governor Lu realized he had a public relations battle on his hands because so many Chinese merchants were benefiting from the foreign trade. To counteract this he caused documents to be published in Canton that portrayed the British in a highly unfavourable light. The governor then wrote an indignant report to the Emperor outlining the outrage. He described how Napier's letter had "absurdly" written characters that identified Napier's country as the "Great English Country" (*da ying guo*). He protested that whether or not the barbarian had official rank, yet "he cannot write letters on equality with the frontier officers of the celestial empire" (i.e., himself). Governor Lu noted that any attempt to create a superintendent of the British trade at Canton could only be considered if a petition were written to the Emperor, probably unaware that three years earlier the Qing Viceroy had asked exactly for such a British official. Lu considered the entire episode "sudden" and was clearly infuriated by the brashness of Napier's approach.

Lord Napier was equally insulted that his negotiations had met with such an extreme and dismissive response. He responded by publishing and circulating a document in Chinese in Canton, arguing that the "perversity" of the authorities was going to "ruin thousands of industrious Chinese" who only wished to trade. This incensed Governor Lu even more, and he and fought back with more circulars, describing Napier as "a lawless foreign slave", and "dog barbarian", for the "audacious presumption" of calling himself a superintendent of trade despite being only an "outside savage".

By August 1834 Napier's language was also heating up. He wrote to his superior, Lord Palmerston of the Foreign Office in London, that the governor was "a presumptuous savage" who would not even allow negotiations through the help of the hong. Napier concluded that the governor had "committed an outrage on the British crown, which should be equally chastised", or all trade would be destroyed. He suggested display of a British navy frigate to restore a balance of honour to the episode.

Governor Lu continued his attack by stopping all trade on September 2, while Napier was awaiting further instructions. Most sea travel was still by sail, and the mail

from China to London took up to five months each way, so these official communications had a certain leisurely aspect that allowed further thought before action, compared to modern confrontations.

Despite the stately pace of interactions and instructions, the strain of events was extreme, and Lord Napier retreated in exhaustion to Macau by late September, where he suddenly died in October 1834, probably of malaria. The Duke of Wellington in London did not learn of this for some time, and in February 1835, responding to Napier's plea for the navy, wrote Napier telling him that the Lord Palmerston and the Foreign Office refused to consider any military force. He wrote that it was "not by force and violence that his majesty intended to establish a commercial intercourse between his subjects and China, but by conciliatory measures". Eventually trade was resumed under the existing regulations, and the Chinese took this as proof of the superiority of their empire and the proper subservience of the barbarian traders.

#### Trade restrictions enhance the opium trade

This did not solve the expensive trade deficit problem for the traders wishing to sell European products, but it enhanced the huge illegal opium trade that had developed to balance the cash-flow problem of the official trade. The EIC sold opium in India to independent traders who shipped and wholesaled it to the Chinese. The EIC did not allow passage of opium (or missionaries) in its own ships because it wanted to stay on good terms with the Canton officials so that existing EIC trade in cotton, tea, silk, and rhubarb would not be interrupted. Independent traders however, were free to buy opium in India and carry it to the Chinese coast.

Traders could sail in with a ship full of opium, anchor discreetly at Whampoa (later at Lintin island), sell the opium to eager Chinese merchants protected by Qing officials who were collecting taxes and bribes from the trade, and use the silver they earned to buy the Chinese products that had become of so much interest to Europeans. Chinese merchants and officials were eager to buy the opium because it was such an excellent source of profits and graft. Opium was the product that by default, allowed for active balanced trade despite the Emperor's edict. This system operated even during the monopoly of the EIC, with the independent traders bringing the silver they received for opium back to the EIC in Canton in return for letters of credit they used to buy the opium in India, while the EIC used the silver to buy Chinese goods (Waley-Cohen, 1997).

#### Opium problems in China

With the increase in the opium trade, opium smoking had become a significant social problem in China. It was not considered to be a uniformly harmful activity, as *literati* and even members of the Imperial household smoked. Nevertheless, the scale of its use in south China, growing economic problems in the empire, and the extent of cultural impairments arising from opium had begun to concern the Qianlong Emperor (1736-1795 reign), who had written edicts against opium use in 1792 and 1796. Despite this the trade continued to grow because most of the officials in Canton earned magnificent incomes from bribery for allowing the trade, and that wealth went all the way north into the Imperial household in Beijing. For this reason Lord Macartney's embassy to seek expanded legal trade in other goods was vigorously fought against within the Imperial bureaucracy. Corrupt Imperial officials including the top eunuch Heshen knew that it did not make sense to interfere with an illegal system that provided such a rich opportunity for bribe income.

The appetite for opium and its ready availability from India made two-way trade possible, with full cargoes in both directions rather than the once-sided trade mandated by the Qing. This illegal trade had exploded into a massive operation by 1800 supported by a highly organized corrupt system of Chinese traders and officials that included even the Viceroy of the region. The illegal British and Chinese traders were making fortunes, yet Imperial China still thought that it could keep trade with the outside world controlled forever through forbidding all purchases from foreigners. But the loss of the EIC monopoly, Napier's efforts to open diplomatic relations in Canton, then the growth of the opium trade led to major changes and conflicts just as James Legge was preparing for his new life in a mission to China.

### Part 3 A new life in Malacca as war with China develops

In Britain James and Mary began an extended trip of goodbyes from their families in preparation for leaving for Malacca. They went north and spent some honeymoon time in a “sweet vale”, then were joined by Mary’s parents for a final trip to Aberdeenshire and Huntly. Returning south James visited his brother George in Leicester while Mary returned to her London home and prepared for a late July departure for their journey across two oceans. One by one their family members “commended us to the care of God, and implored his blessing on our passage” (J. Legge, 1896).

It was unspoken but assumed by all that James and Mary would never return, so the family had their portraits painted. James renounced his share of his potential inheritance in favour of his brothers, and he cut off a lock of his strawberry-blonde hair to leave behind as a keepsake, a lock still possessed by his descendants. The unmentioned danger was the high probability that neither would even survive long, and that this parting would be the last connection between the families and the two young people.

While 1839 had been a momentous year for Legge, his introductory studies of Chinese were occurring against a backdrop of dramatic events in China. Relations between Britain and China turned into open conflict starting in March 1839 just as James and Mary were setting out for their long sea trip. They had no way of knowing these events, because news from China took many months to reach Britain.

#### Chapter 10 Commissioner Lin attacks opium

As Legge was being ordained, the Qing Daoguang Emperor (1782-1850, reign 1821-1850), had become determined to stop the opium trade. He had used it himself but was distraught that his three sons had become addicted. When his initial actions in executing some opium traders in 1838 failed to affect the trade, the Emperor decided to send a High Commissioner with extraordinary powers to take further actions in Canton. Because of the huge corruption of his own officials in Canton, the Emperor appointed a new and highly respected independent scholar-official, Commissioner Lin Zexu (1785-1850).

Lin had shown great competence and integrity in an earlier imperial assignment, so he was ordered to go to Canton, stop the trade, and improve order. He was then about 45 years old, a short, stout man with piercing eyes and a pleasant expression. He had a rich strong voice, and was highly amused at the sound of English text being read, and at the peculiar nature of English clothing. Lin’s indignation at the evils of the opium



trade was genuine, and he was determined to stop it as he had earlier when Governor-General of Hupei and Hunan. He travelled in a litter with 20 bearers and reached Canton on 10 March 1839.

As soon as he arrived Lin ordered an end to the opium trade, confiscated 70,000 opium pipes, arrested 1,700 Chinese opium traders, and executed many by strangulation. The opium-trading season was a winter trade that ended in March, so the trade was winding down at this point. At the same time Lin set up a treatment centre outside Canton for opium addicts. After tackling some of the opium problems in Canton, he then moved to stop the trade and sent a message to the foreign clipper ships anchored at Whampoa. Lin demanded that they relinquish all the opium in their ships and in their warehouses on Lintin Island to the south in the Pearl River delta, the usual trans-shipment point for the opium trade. Foreign opium traders normally would offload the opium onto junks there, then sail empty up to the Whampoa anchorage near Canton where they would take on their Chinese purchases of tea and silk. Lin also ordered the traders to provide written guarantees that they would stop trading in opium, and he wanted these demands met within three days.

The traders did not believe any of this was serious as the Chinese officials had always been open partners in the corrupt trade and they expected Lin would be likewise. Lin responded on March 19; he confined all foreigners to their warehouses in Canton, and suspended all trade. He told the traders they were under blockade until they gave up the opium, sending his army to man the blockade. Initially the British traders treated the events as a bit of a giggle, trying to cook for themselves, playing games, and getting by on food smuggled to them by their Chinese employees.

Capt. Charles Elliot, the Superintendent of British trade at Canton, was in Macau, and he was not as sanguine. Hearing of the blockade, he rushed up to Canton on 24 March, alarmed to see no British flag flying over the British factory. Elliot landed and joined the traders in the factories. He refused to go before Lin to answer for the trade, became caught up in the opium merchants' high feelings even though he detested the opium trade (Inglis, 1975), and in the emotions of the moment he took up their cause. Elliot protested to the Chinese officials, arguing that Chinese laws did not bind British citizens and asserting that the British government stood behind trade with China.

Despite these complaints, Lin held firm. He blockaded all the streets leading to the foreign traders' factories on the river's edge at Canton, and set up a naval blockade in the river to deprive the merchants of access to food or Chinese employees. Trade was now impossible and the traders were now cut off from the outside world, prisoners in

their factories. Worse, Elliot, the only British man with government standing, was now a prisoner of Lin as well.

Lin wanted the British to surrender 20,000 chests worth £2 million in exchange for freedom from the embargo, but when less than that was relinquished no-one was freed and Lin used his increasing political power now to try and squeeze the British out of Macau. He demanded that the Portuguese Governor of Macau turn over 4,000 chests or all Chinese employees there would be taken away and supplies cut off. The problem with this order was that the Portuguese did not have any opium to surrender.

On March 27 Capt. Elliot decided the traders had to comply with Lin's order, and ordered the opium merchants to surrender their opium, with the result that a puny amount of 4,000 chests was relinquished. Lin was not amused and maintained the blockade. The merchants had a good stock of food and liquor, and their hong counterparts even smuggled in some servants to help them out, but Elliot panicked. After five weeks in this forced detention, Capt. Elliot offered to ransom the British traders by surrendering a huge supply of opium to Lin.

Elliot did this on behalf of the British government, promising the traders that the government would reimburse them for their losses on all the opium they surrendered. He actually had no authority for this promise, and he compounded his brashness by calculating the traders' holdings at 20,000 chests, which was greater than they actually held. In response to Elliot's promises of reimbursement, the British merchants started turning in their opium, eventually surrendering even more than 20,000 chests of opium worth more than £2,000,000, anticipating reimbursement of £120 per chest. Elliot wrote London urging that the government should send an ultimatum to Beijing demanding full compensation and free British trade with a number of ports. The free trade that Britain wanted was not for the opium trade, but for a balanced trade in which Chinese merchants could buy British trade goods to offset the British purchases. It was this larger issue of free trade that many of the Canton officials wanted to resist because it would diminish their opium profits and expose their empire to products and influences from the outside world.

Elliot ordered all British vessels to arm and then to leave the Canton anchorage at Whampoa. The traders obeyed him, accepting his authority even though he had not yet received orders from London. At the same time they offloaded some of their opium cargo to American traders in Canton to be used in trades for tea.

By May 9, 1839 all the opium that Lin had demanded had been surrendered, chests containing 2.5 million pounds. To the dismay of LMS man Dr. Lockhart who had arrived in Hong Kong in January, and everyone else, Commissioner Lin did not immediately

release the foreign trade prisoners in Canton after they gave up their opium stocks in the spring of 1839. The prisoners still included the traders and their staff, along with Capt. Elliot and his interpreter John Morrison, the 25-year-old son of Robert Morrison. Eventually Lin did lift the blockade of the factories, re-opened trade, traders moved to their ships, and in late May Capt. Elliot ordered all British subjects to leave Canton so that they could not again be held hostage. He disapproved of the opium trade but was outraged at the blockade imprisoning the foreign traders. The British traders moved all their furniture back to Macau uncertain about Chinese intentions, while the American traders stayed in Canton; American opium traders included Warren Delano, the grandfather of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

#### Lin destroys the opium in a massive public display

Lin decided to destroy all the opium in a huge and elaborate public ceremonial purge that started on June 3. Three giant trenches were built, each 75 feet by 150 feet and seven feet deep, and these were filled with first water, then the opium, then salt and lime, generating a chemical reaction. For two weeks, five hundred labourers stirred the sludge, which gave off nauseating gases. At low tide the sludge was forced into nearby creeks for eventual dispersal into the sea. When one labourer was caught trying to steal some of the opium he was promptly beheaded as an example to the others. Rev. Elijah Bridgman of the American mission in Canton and his friend C. W. King of the American firm Olyphant and Co., the one major firm in China that refused the opium trade, went down to watch.

While these dramatic public events took place the mission men were able to resume their work, but the British traders feared more problems and started moving out onto boats into the harbour in mid-July, then moving all their furniture to their establishments in Macau, their fall-back location for their businesses and residences. The American opium traders stayed in Canton and continued trading.

There was a temporary lull in the opium confrontations but the traders were busy regrouping the way they ran their business. Then in mid-July some drunken British and American sailors killed a Chinese man in a rampage in a village in Kowloon on the coast just north of Hong Kong Island. Lin demanded the guilty man be surrendered to the Chinese authorities, while Capt. Elliot couldn't identify who was guilty, and replied that the sailors were under British jurisdiction. At the same time he immediately paid reparation of £300 to the family of the dead man, plus additional sums to the village and its officials, then held a trial of six men. It acquitted one man for lack of evidence

and found five others guilty of riotous behaviour; they were to be sent back to England for their imprisonment, as there was no British territory at hand.

Lin was furious at Elliot's response, ordered that Chinese merchants no longer supply fresh food to the British ships at anchor in Macau, and that the creeks where British ships might seek fresh water, be poisoned. By August Lin forced the Portuguese governor of Macau to expel all British subjects, which now included the LMS physician, William Lockhart (1811-1896), who had left London for his medical mission to China in July 1838. The British moved themselves out to British ships in the Macau harbour, expecting these arrangements to be temporary, so Lin then ordered the Portuguese to expel all the British ships at anchor. Within days a British gunship the *Hyacinth*, moved in to moor offshore to discourage Chinese soldiers from thinking they could molest the departing British vessels. This made the Portuguese governor angry because his permission had not been sought for all this British anchorage. James and Mary were on the high seas and still knew nothing of these events and how they were affecting the LMS mission in Macau.

#### Opening shots in September 1839, the first Anglo-Chinese war

The war of words and blockades turned into open conflict of a minor sort in September. At the end of August Lin heard that the British ships at Hong Kong had been joined by the armed frigate with 28 guns, and in early September two British ships and a launch tried to land at Kowloon to get water and food. Lin believed that Chinese soldiers, sailors and armaments were superior to those of all the barbarians, and had ordered junks to prevent such landings, so three armed Chinese junks tried to stop the British. Elliot led the British to defend with their cannon, the junks were badly damaged, and the Chinese blockade was broken.

This was the first time that shots were fired in what became the first Anglo-Chinese war, later called the Opium War although British interests were in general free trade, not specifically opium. Unfortunately, the captains of the junks lied when they reported back to Lin about their defeat. Fearing disgrace, they claimed that they had been victorious and had sunk one ship. Lin accepted their story, wrote the emperor bragging of this victory, and issued a strong proclamation to the British. He told them that since they had "presumptively fired upon" the Chinese, they would suffer punishment. He wrote the Emperor he would drive the British from Hong Kong, explained that British gunboats were too big for Chinese rivers, and that British soldiers did not know how to fight with fists or swords. Later as the conflict expanded the local Qing officials hired, among others, martial arts masters who claimed they could stay underwater for 10

hours without air; they were to lie in riverbeds and drill holes in the hulls of British boats (Lovell, 2007).

Reports of Lin's opium confiscation and blockade eventually reached the government in Britain, outraging British merchants in China, India, London, and Manchester. They demanded government intervention to protect the interests of their trade, and Lord Palmerston acceded to severe popular pressure. He ordered a naval force to be sent to seek Chinese reimbursement for the costs of the surrendered opium, for the hong's debts incurred with the freezing of trade, and for the costs of the fleet itself. He authorized this in a letter in February 1840, but avoided any Parliamentary debate on it until April. British opinion was riled up by these events and not all in support of the traders. The Opposition Tory Gladstone led the debate against the disgrace of any war in aid of the evil opium trade, joined by liberal reformers Peel and Disraeli, but he failed to win a vote of censure against the government.

#### Lin gathers a Chinese fleet

Conflicts increased at Canton and by late September 1839 Lin had collected a war fleet of 80 ships including war-junks and fire-ships. He ordered the opium trade stopped, and ordered all British ships to come into Canton, complete their trade then leave Canton within three days. Capt. Elliot responded by asking for an extension of time so that merchants from India and London would have warning and change their trading plans. Elliot was determined not to provide a fresh group of hostages to Lin and decided to blockade the trade to Canton once the traders left. His frigates even shot a warning shot when a British ship owned by Quakers who disapproved of the opium trade tried to get the Canton. Elliot would not allow any trade as long as the Chinese insisted on certain specific regulations.

Then on November 2 the British sighted a large Chinese fleet coming out of Canton, including 15 war-junks and 14 fireboats. Elliot sent an ultimatum to the Qing Admiral on 3 November 1839, after a second British warship joined the ships in Hong Kong harbour. Elliot's sealed letter, written by John Morrison in Chinese, was a demand for withdrawal of the fleet, and a request for resumption of trade and access to supplies.

The Admiral returned the letter unopened, probably because John Morrison's Chinese addressed him in language appropriate for persons of the same rank, still an unacceptable usage in the eyes of Chinese officials. In a replay of the stand-off on the same issue experienced by Lord Napier five years earlier, the Chinese officials insisted that their officials must be addressed using a Chinese word representing the idea of a petition from an inferior person to a superior person, in the way that the foreign

merchants had usually addressed the mandarins in Canton. The Qing Admiral did not accept the idea that a Chief Superintendent of Trade represented an official at a rank appropriate to his own status, thus direct communications between the two were inappropriate.

With no response, and with the Chinese fleet anchored outside active trading route of “the Bogue”<sup>5</sup>, two British frigates attacked for 45 minutes. The effects were devastating. The five largest warship junks were sunk and many others damaged. Elliot did not try to destroy the entire fleet because he was not excited by bloodshed or interested in reporting “body-counts”. Instead, he hoped that the mandarins would learn from the event that open hostilities were not the way to resolve trade problems with the British.

Unfortunately, to avoid disgrace the officers reporting to Lin again lied when they reported this event, and in turn he in turn passed this inaccurate information to the Emperor, claiming that six “smashing blows” had been struck at the British. The Emperor was pleased at this apparent naval victory, unaware of the genuine problems his navy was having with the more powerful British ships and armaments. For his part, Commissioner Lin responded by closing down all Canton trade in December and confiscating all trade goods.

Capt. Elliot had written to Lord Palmerston in November expressing his huge distaste for the opium trade but also his conviction that Lin’s confiscation of British property required some official response. In the meantime he used his small naval force to protect the British merchant fleet now anchored off Hong Kong.

#### Mission work during the turmoil, a new medical mission society

Dr. Lockhart settled in Macau in February 1838 and soon visited Canton where American mission doctor Peter Parker (1804-1888) and his mentor Scots Dr. Thomas Colledge (1796-1879) had established a hospital for the Chinese. Lockhart was impressed with what they had created, noting that medical services provided the most direct communication between missionaries and the Chinese. Lockhart was especially pleased that Chinese of both low and high rank sought services, because one of the problems the Protestant missions tended to have was that they worked among only the most destitute individuals. This contrasted with the situation the Jesuits established during the Ming dynasty in Beijing, targeting all their efforts at the élites. The Protestant

---

<sup>5</sup> The Tigris Boccus, or “Tiger’s Mouth”, Humen in Chinese, is a narrow strait in the Pearl River delta where it enters the South China Sea.

missions' populist approach had a significant cost because it made it very difficult to establish credibility with status-oriented Chinese officials.

Mission doctors from other countries had been arriving in Macau and Canton in anticipation of increased foreign access to Chinese ports, and in May 1838 they formed the Medical Missionary Society in China (MMSC) in Canton under the leadership of their founding president Colledge. They had been providing medical and surgical services to the foreign residents there for a few years, but formed a separate medical mission society because they wanted independent funding for medical missions to the Chinese, rather than struggling for scraps from their regular mission societies. The plan was for Dr. Colledge to go to Britain to meet with the different mission societies to explain their plans for hospitals and medical training in China.

In Macau Dr. Lockhart set up a clinic to provide medical care starting in January 1839, but it was soon affected by the battles between Lin and Elliot. Lockhart was able to care for more than 25 sailors at a time, mostly sick from fever and dysentery. In May 1839 Lockhart applied to join the MMSC when he learned it needed two surgeons for Macau and two for Canton. He offered to run the Macau Hospital that was "owned" by the MMSC, and the MMSC accepted him. He proposed to live in the hospital and to operate it on the plan established in the Canton hospital.

The Macau hospital was a substantial two-story building in the heart of a big compound that included many outbuildings including a laundry and storage space for 50,000 Chinese books from Singapore. The arrangement was a bit complex. The MMSC owned the buildings, supplies, and equipment, and offered these to Lockhart as well as living quarters in the main building, in return for his medical services. At the same time, Lockhart was to continue to receive his mission salary from the LMS, and to follow orders from them concerning his "mission" activities. He urged the LMS to send Dr. Hobson from London to help fill the need for a mission surgeon in Canton, and in fact Hobson was on his way in the ship with the Legges.

Opinion was mixed among the mission men about the unfolding political conflicts triggered by Lin's probity. Dr. Lockhart believed that the Chinese government should have to pay reparations, not for the relinquished opium, but for the imprisonment of the merchants and the death threats against them. Against this backdrop, by mid-1839 Lockhart was excited to learn that Dr. Benjamin Hobson, James Legge, and Milne were soon arriving in China. Events had settled down sufficiently that Lockhart expected to re-open the hospital within a few weeks and prepare rooms for the new LMS mission families.

But as the hostilities increased, Lin's blockade of Macau cut off all support for Lockhart's hospital from the mission doctors of the Canton MMS. In Macau Lockhart was known to the Chinese as an Englishman and master of his house, so he and his apprentice Walter Medhurst (son of LMS man Walter Medhurst in Jakarta) were forced to flee to one of the British refugee ships in the Macau harbour. By mid-August the British ships all retreated farther, to Hong Kong, a stony and mostly uninhabited island with the sole advantage of a good harbour. Dr. Lockhart and young Medhurst went there but it had nothing to offer, so in September Lockhart decided they should retreat to Medhurst's LMS station in Jakarta in Java until the political fight over opium was settled. He would use the time to study Chinese under Medhurst, who was now well established there and had become an accomplished scholar of Chinese.



### Chapter 11 Voyage to an exotic world

When James and Mary left Portsmouth on July 28, 1839 to sail for Malacca on the *Eliza Stewart*, he was 23 and she was 22. The mission magazine announced they would go to Canton then to Malacca, not knowing of the events dismantling the British presence in Canton and Macau. They were joined for the voyage by Dr. Benjamin Hobson and William Milne, LMS classmates of James also heading to China, along with nine other passengers. James wanted to work in China, either in Canton or Macau, but the LMS sent him instead to Malacca to wait out the growing conflicts between China and Britain.

Although China was not open to missionaries, Malacca had a large population of Chinese immigrants and had an LMS station with an established mission man John Evans. Malacca was a colonial spot on the Malay coast that had been Dutch and British at various times. Not only was it was the closest place to stage a mission to the Chinese people once China was “opened”, but a new missionary could spend the waiting time mastering Chinese in this trading community, beyond the reach of the Qing death penalty rules.

#### The sailing trip

In the days of sailing ships a journey often failed to get far even after it was underway. The Legge’s ship the *Eliza Stewart* was stuck for five days in the English Channel in a violent gale, then had more tempests when it reached the Bay of Biscay, the next major body of water as they headed south into the Atlantic. James and Mary were both horribly seasick in an ocean so wild they were often flung across their cabin, and sleep was impossible. Mary wrote that compared to her earlier troubles on a boat to Scotland, “since I endured the fearful tossings and tumblings of the Bay of Biscay...all former suffering has been utterly surpassed”. James was only seasick once after this long voyage, somehow gaining permanent sea-legs that helped him across a lifetime of long sea voyages. He eventually boasted that by the time of his final long trip from the United Kingdom to Hong Kong and then back via the Pacific in 1870-73, he never lost a meal.

Although this was the age of sail, the oceans are vast and they did not even see another ship for the first month. It turned out to be too far leeward to make a connection however, and Mary couldn’t send off any of her letters until the next boat they encountered after more than two months at sea. Their ship included live chickens (“all old and tough”), and a cow for milk that was not very rich but “more sky blue”.

Legge spent his mornings studying Chinese and they had several meals each day after breakfast, with lunch at one, dinner at three, and tea at 7. The three LMS men talked in the evening, but Mary got fed up with the boring repetition of the days and the people. She lured James out of his discussions and Chinese study to admire the sunsets and the moonlight as they entered tropical waters. Although she celebrated his transformation into white tropical calico suit and a straw hat by mid-August, she eventually thought it made him look too much like a West Indian planter for her taste. As a married couple they had a stern cabin complete with bath, a great luxury as the heat increased; they hauled up their own seawater for this so as not to inconvenience the sailors. Between them James and Mary rigged up a big board stuffed along the edge of the bed so they wouldn't be hurled out in the middle of the night by the wild seas. The men held regular religious meetings for the crew, with daily prayers, a Sunday service, and a monthly meeting discussing missions.

While the events in Canton became more volatile, James and Mary were sailing around the coast of Africa facing different risks. Their ship made a safe passage south of the Cape of Good Hope, which was often fatal to those in sailing ships. Four years later the *Regular*, a 550-ton sailing ship from London, encountered a violent gale there that lasted for so many days the exhausted sailors could no longer man the pumps. Ninety tons of cargo were jettisoned, but the volume of water in the hold destroyed the steering, and all aboard were forced to abandon ship in three small boats 500 miles off shore. The company included some "lady passengers". After a night in the storm, all were rescued through flying one of the ladies' shawls to attract the attention of a distant ship. It was the first vessel they had seen in 42 days on the seas.

Beyond the Cape, the waters north up the east coast of Africa were also full of potential excitements with anti-slaving drama. There were regular reports in the Hong Kong newspapers of British captains hunting down and boarding American slave ships in the Mozambique Channel in order to rescue their sick and wretched cargoes. Other sailing ships were devastated by cholera and typhus fever. In one case this killed off the Captain and officers, and the remaining crew was unable to read charts or use instruments, so sailed aimlessly for more than seven months before they were rescued. A few years later in a ghastly trip from Glasgow in 1849, as the *Mooltan* sailed toward New Zealand the ship was devastated by cholera that began four weeks out, killing off crew and passengers in a hellish trip that lasted nearly four months (McGibbon, 1997).

James and Mary suffered another terrible storm after their ship passed the Cape of Good Hope and began heading east in the Indian Ocean across thousands of miles south of India toward Java. The seas so violent the sails were ripped away by heavy seas

that flooded across the deck. One sailor was swept away, and in the manner of sailing ships in a storm, was left to vanish from sight. Another day the crew was trying to keep pumps going in the gale while huge seas swept over, when the pump suddenly stopped, a scream of terror was heard, and all ran to help. The sailors were all standing beside a stricken man who was lying unconscious, hit by a commode flying through the air. His injuries were terrible, including a fractured skull. Despite young doctor Benjamin Hobson's efforts through the night the sailor died, and the funeral service the next day consigned him "to the angry waves, amidst the solemn silence of all the crew, broken only by the sobbings of many of them". This tragic event led to great turbulence within the crew, who began to recall that the man had planned to take a different vessel. They were pressingly interested in the theological implications of this, demanding to have James tell them if the man would have died if he had been on a different ship. Young Legge tried to get them to stop such "purposeless speculation" and to let their fates lie in the Lord. Everyone felt better when the seas calmed and they began to smell flowery perfumes from nearby tropical islands.

#### James and Mary in Java with Walter Medhurst

James and Mary and the little mission group finally arrived at tiny Anjer in the Strait of Sunda on the southwest coast of Java on November 12, 1839, after more than three months at sea without landfall and having communicated with only one ship.

Anjer was later the site of major events. In 1880 it became a notorious stopping-point during a famous and scandalous journey of Britain's most famous clipper ship the *Cutty Sark*. It had just completed its last tea run in 1877 and was ambling through South-East Asia seeking cargo for its return journey under horrendous officers. Things were so bad that a new captain had to be put on board at Anjer after a mutiny broke out in the Java Sea. The disgraced Captain Wallace jumped overboard to be eaten by sharks rather than face the destruction of his career. The *Cutty Sark* can still be seen, now as a museum ship in Greenwich UK, repaired after a terrible fire in 2007. Three years after the *Cutty Sark's* visit Anjer was totally destroyed by a 33-foot tsunami generated by the volcanic explosion of Krakatoa in 1883. That explosion was so vast that it turned the skies of Norway blood-red and Munch painted them as the background in his famous painting "the Scream".

James and Mary disembarked at Anjer expecting to stay with LMS mission man Medhurst in the main town of Jakarta while waiting for a ship to become available to take them northwest through head-hunters' islands to Singapore and Malacca. James immediately faced a problem, dismayed to discover the LMS Directors in London had

failed to give the ship's Captain any documents to allow the couple to go on the overland trip to Jakarta on the north coast. Java was a Dutch colony, and without the passports James and Mary were forced to stay in the small port and wait for the papers to be sought in Jakarta and sent out to them on the coast, a two-three day trip each way (now a similar number of hours by highway).

In the meantime, they were invited to stay in the home of the Dutch Resident as his guest, and warming to his welcome, they began to cheer up and began their first encounter with tropical novelties. The first was the exotic pets the Resident kept in his dining room, including monkeys and birds. Local customs were equally exotic to the egalitarian Scots. The local Muslim Rajah of Orang and his tenants paid an official visit to the Resident in order to establish the rents for the next year. James and Mary found it very strange to see that the Rajah's tenants were not allowed to stand in his presence, and could only approach him on their knees. These traditions persist today, and even as recently as 2004 a Fijian ruler, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, the first Prime Minister, became angry if visitors did not approach him on their knees as required by tradition, even though he preached the virtues of democracy and equality (Times, 2004). After the business was complete, the Rajah joined the Resident, other Dutch gentlemen, and James and Mary around a laden table. To their surprise the Rajah would eat nothing because it was Ramadan and as a Muslim he was required to fast during the day.

After some days an official document arrived permitting their travel to Jakarta and the Legges headed east on a track overland to Serang carried in "mountain-chairs" accompanied by policemen to protect them from bandits. At Serang they reached a road where they had to hire a coach drawn by ponies for the last leg, with additional scruffy but lively ponies in reserve. Even the road was a challenge because the ground was so soft and spongy that the coach and ponies often sank into the muck. When this happened, their accompanying policemen went out into the nearby fields and using the threat of whips, conscripted farmers to come and help drag the coach out. This trip exposed another surprising local custom. Whenever they passed a party of Javanese or Chinese locals riding or in coaches, tradition required the natives to pull off the road and let the Europeans through; many modern politicians and oligarchs have now adopted this practise with their SUV convoys, but it was a surprising novelty to James and Mary.

They finally arrived in Jakarta on November 22, welcomed to Medhurst's home, immediately writing home about their 100-day journey. They had solved the problem of their passports but the NNE monsoon was just starting and this threatened their plans because it could trap them in Anjer for months. To further complicate things they now had money problems. Under LMS rules they were responsible for all their own travel

expenses including personal insurance on all their possessions, as the LMS did not activate a missionary's salary until he arrived at his station. Legge had been advanced £50 from his £300 annual salary by the LMS to cover his travel costs, but was concerned about the extra £13,6 in luggage costs he had had to pay to get their belongings overland to Jakarta. In addition, he was now faced with an additional sailing bill of £34 to get to Singapore from Jakarta, twice the usual fare because they were travelling against the monsoon and expected to take twice the time. Further, their ship for the final third leg from Singapore to Malacca was to cost an additional £15.

These money problems were temporarily displaced by the warm welcome they received from Walter Medhurst, his wife, and their three daughters. James had heard Medhurst, 20 years his senior, speak in England in 1837, after a long mission career that had started in Malacca in 1816. This was Legge's first encounter with the LMS network that would surround him over the next 65 years. The Medhurst's older son Walter had been in Macau studying medicine with Dr. Lockhart, but both had just arrived back in Jakarta full of news of the small war that had started when Lin began to control the opium traders. Lockhart had originally gone to China via Jakarta in 1838, studying Chinese with Medhurst before heading north to China to set up a medical mission, travelling with Medhurst's son. So this was a gathering of LMS men all interested in China, and they were to become friends across challenging events in missions, politics, and war over the next decades.

### Medhurst in Jakarta

Walter Henry Medhurst (1796-1857) was now in mid-life the most accomplished student of the Chinese language among all Britons. He loved what he was doing. He had gone to Malacca as a 21-year old printer for the LMS in 1817, had quarrelled with the older missionary Milne, fled without LMS permission and spent a year trying to start another mission at Penang in competition with an existing LMS station there. He finally settled in Jakarta in 1829. In 1833 he had taken a famous voyage up the Chinese coast with Charles Gutzlaff to examine the prospects for protestant mission work, but Medhurst was talented enough, energetic enough, and dominant enough that he liked to run his own operation.

Medhurst was now at the height of his powers. He was 44, a fluent speaker of Malay and of two dialects of Chinese (Cantonese and Hokkien, the language of migrants from the coastal province of Fujian), and author of an 1831 *Dictionary of Hokkien-Chinese*. He had been popular with Malays and Dutch alike when he had been stationed in Malacca, and had adapted himself very well to the local social conditions there and at

Jakarta. He was the most competent of all missionaries in translation into Chinese, and effective in every kind of mission enterprise. In creating the LMS station he had set up a printing press for texts in Malay and Chinese, had set up schools, a church, and a home for his family of four children. Overall Medhurst provided a strong example of how an effective missionary-scholar could blend his new and homeland cultures without sacrificing anything.

In Jakarta James Legge and Medhurst soon discovered they shared common interests in Chinese culture and language, and in the Chinese translation of Bible texts. James found him “enterprising and yet tenacious of purpose”. Medhurst took Legge on a tour of the Chinese district, including a visit to a temple where James was enthralled to watch a ceremony to a Daoist god worshiped by sailors, the Queen of Heaven (*Tien Hau*). This was the first time he had seen the worship of what he considered as idols, and it reminded him of biblical accounts in Jeremiah. The sailors in the temple then embarked on a lively argument with Medhurst over whether or not the worship would be effective in protecting them at sea. After leaving, Medhurst explained to James that the Chinese were very smart but also very convinced of their own views, and James worried that he might never be able to “quicken their consciences”.

Medhurst was also suffering from financial problems. He had just returned in November 1838 to Jakarta from home leave, along with Dr. Lockhart and the rather troublesome Chinese man Shaou Tih who had gone to the UK after working with old Milne in Malacca on a colloquial phrase book in 1826. Medhurst soon had to write the LMS for funds to cover the costs of his son Walter’s emergency return voyage from Macau to Jakarta arising from the conflicts with China in which all Britons had been evacuated from Macau onto boats anchored offshore in August 1839. The London Directors had no conception of the war that had begun and were very testy about Medhurst’s assertive claim for money. He would have to explain why this travel was necessary as a mission expense.

### Milne and Dr. Hobson

The original plan had Legge’s LMS friends Milne and Dr. Hobson going on to Macau on the *Eliza Stewart* from their first landfall in Anjer on Java on November 12, 1839, but for awhile after arriving in Anjer Hobson couldn’t make up his mind whether to go via a visit to Medhurst in Jakarta, or to leave Java directly from Anjer. Finally both continued with their ship, beating against a NNE monsoon that dragged their journey out for five weeks. They were completely unaware of the sea-battles near Canton until late in that journey.

En route Hobson's captain learned that the British were evacuating Macau, so the ship sailed instead to Hong Kong. They expected to find all the British traders sheltering but were surprised to find there was not a ship in sight when they arrived in December. Someone told the Captain that the trading fleet had moved to Lintin, a large island halfway up the huge Pearl River estuary toward Canton, traditionally used as a warehousing base for opium ships. The fleet was not there either, instead they finally found the British vessels at Dongguan, a good anchorage farther north on a large tributary of the Pearl River to the east of Canton. There an officer brought them a message from the frigate *Hyacinth*, from Capt. Elliot and John Morrison. Milne and Hobson were overjoyed to meet young John, and were surprised to learn that Dr. Lockhart had left Macau for Jakarta in August, "where he expected to intercept us", essentially crossing paths with them somewhere in their voyage across the South China Sea. Morrison arranged for Milne and Hobson to stay in Macau with American missionary Bridgman who was temporarily living in Lockhart's hospital. Until the conflict ended they all continued to live on board the *Eliza Stewart*.

#### First meeting with Boone, a troublesome person

In Jakarta James had been perturbed to learn from Medhurst that the mandarin (northern Chinese) dialect he, Milne, and Hobson had been learning across his four-month journey using Morrison's Dictionary would be of little practical use in Malacca, where many Chinese immigrants spoke the Hokkien dialect of their home Chinese province of Fujian, while others spoke Cantonese. Meanwhile, he was eager to learn more Chinese text, and Medhurst invited James to join a class he was running with other young missionaries who had come to Jakarta to learn Chinese.

One of the students was William Boone (1811-1864), a lawyer-missionary from the American Episcopal Church. From the first day in the classroom together Legge's language skills created a stir and seemed to lay the basis for tension especially with Boone. Medhurst gave James a copy of the class text, the *Lun Yu* (the "digested conversations" of Confucius), and all the students were set a passage to translate. To the astonishment of the others James figured out the meaning of several sentences in a short time, while Boone and the others floundered without success. From later events it seems that Boone became viciously jealous of Legge's skills in Chinese during this brief interlude, and his emotional and competitive reaction set in motion a rivalry that would persist as an intense intellectual battle extending even after Legge's death in 1897.

#### Problems with Morrison's New Testament; Medhurst vs. Evans and Dyer

Medhurst explained that both the versions of the Chinese *New Testament* that James had been studying (Morrison's, and a more primitive earlier one by Marshman, a Baptist PM in India) were quite deficient in the quality of the Chinese. James later learned the detailed story of Morrison's original version and deduced other parts of it.

In fact Morrison had done very little of the translation for the Chinese New Testament he had published, which included large sections that he had simply had copied from an ancient Jesuit text in Chinese that he had found in the British Museum in 1807 when he began learning Chinese. Morrison had openly explained some of this borrowing when "his" version was first published, but the explanation had become lost over time. Morrison had neglected to further explain that the new text was mostly transcribed by Yong Satak, a young Chinese scholar he had met in London while Morrison was trying to learn Chinese in preparation for his mission work. In later years when James handled this book, he recognized that a few introductory pages of this manuscript were written in a "foreigner's hand" that must have been Morrison's, but the remainder was done in a different and fluent Chinese hand, essentially copying the old Roman Catholic version.

The upshot was that "Morrison's" Chinese Bible James had been using to study Chinese, was in fact a very poor translation mostly not done by Morrison. Robert's son John was aware of all these complexities, was aware of the pressing need for a better translation of the Bible into Chinese, and was disheartened by the animosity of some LMS men in the Malacca mission before James, to a revision of the version published by his father decades earlier. The problems with Morrison's Bible were also known to another Malacca mission man Dyer, and in 1839 he also pressed the LMS to support work for a revised version of Morrison's Chinese Bible, using committee efforts that would include American missionaries.

The worst part of discovering that Morrison's NT was a poor version, was that this had been the basis of most of the Chinese studies that Legge, Benjamin Hobson, and Milne had done during their long voyage. To add to the confusion of things, Legge found Morrison's Chinese text much easier to understand than Medhurst's new "improved" translation. He gradually found out why. Morrison's "Jesuit" version had been close to a word-by-word rendering into Chinese characters that led to very peculiar Chinese text. After explaining some of the problems with the two old translations, Medhurst gave James a new translation of the NT that better represented good Chinese text. Medhurst had done this in collaboration with Charles Gutzlaff. Gutzlaff (1803- 1851) was a fantastically energetic but often misguided freelance mission man who ended up having a major conflict with Legge in Hong Kong within a decade. Robert Morrison had even



written privately to the LMS in 1832 describing Gutzlaff as “enthusiastic and eccentric, wilful and wayward. He would not work well, I fear, with others. As second, he would be insubordinate, & as first, domineering” (Morrison, 1832).

Medhurst’s new translation was the better of two complete translations he had done. He wanted to have this printed at the Malacca LMS press in 1836 by the LMS men there, Evans and Dyer, but (unknown to Legge) Medhurst had been fighting a battle with them concerning the quality of his new translation (P. Hanan, 2003). Medhurst and Gutzlaff had expected that the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) would underwrite the printing of their new version, but unknown to them Evans and Dyer had written a secret major critique of this new version and sent it to the BFBS. The Society decided to withdraw publication support on the basis of this critique without further querying any Chinese expert, and Evans and Dyer ended up reprinting a different old version using woodblocks. In the end, Medhurst printed his new translation at his own LMS press in Jakarta. Differing skill levels in Chinese were to provide many future problems for all these men, as they struggled to master a complex language completely outside their Greek and Latin training.

The root problem affecting this new Chinese New Testament was that Medhurst’s Chinese was vastly more informed than that of Evans and Dyer, and they were ignorant of so much that they didn’t even understand many of the basic issues. Medhurst wrote the LMS in London to explain much of this, exposing for each critique, the faulty knowledge on which it was based. In the meantime the BFBS decided not to donate funds for the printing of Medhurst’s new version, still believing that Morrison’s old translation was superior. They mostly just retailed the critique of Evans and Dyer, and wrote that Medhurst’s new version was inferior because of “its tendency to substitute human paraphrases for the simple statements of the word of God”.

Through not having any knowledge of Chinese the BFBS had completely failed to understand that it was the literal word-for-word method in Morrison’s translation that contributed to huge problems obscuring the meaning. A devout trader in Canton, G.T. Lay wrote a letter to London in support of Medhurst’s analysis, saying the new translation was not needed just to make the Bible “palatable”, but to make it intelligible. He wrote that Morrison’s version was “thickly sewn with gross anglicisms”, was often incomprehensible, and that even Robert Morrison had known it needed complete revision. In light of these problems, Lay was puzzled by the enmity of the Malacca missionaries. The BFBS became highly partisan and even coercive in this battle, offering Medhurst the costs of his printed run if he would withdraw it from circulation.

Medhurst's new version attempted to translate the ideas and meanings more freely into more idiomatic Chinese. While the new text was less elegant it was more meaningful, and this was exactly the same principle of translation that James had learned from his second Aberdeen Latin master. James had recognized then that this was the heart of translation, and gradually recognized in Jakarta that Medhurst's new version was truly superior. Legge used it until a major new translation was completed in 1850 by a delegated group of Protestant missionaries working mostly in Shanghai, a committee just as Sam Dyer had recommended 12 years earlier in Malacca.

#### In Jakarta, disquieting news of LMS Malacca problems

As James waited for a sailing ship to become available for the final leg of his journey, he began to learn much unsettling information about the Malacca station from Medhurst. Evans had sent glowing reports home to the LMS in London, and as far as James knew, he was heading to be a master in a College where he could teach senior Chinese students all the subjects of a good Scottish curriculum and use his free time to master Chinese in preparation for his work in China.

#### Evans' problems

Medhurst was very familiar with the Malacca LMS station and its agent John Evans (1801-1840), who had gone there in 1833 and explained the history of its problems to James. Evans had been a teacher of classics in England, eventually owning a small Classics school, and had applied to become a missionary when he was 30. The LMS sent him to head the ACC in Malacca even though he was not university-educated and did not know any Chinese. His true interest was never in teaching however, but "spiritual training", and his main interest was in sending home reports of large numbers of baptisms (R. L. O'Sullivan, 1980).

Legge did not know that Evans had been associated with several troublesome missionaries at Malacca, going back as far as 1833, the year he arrived, and Legge did not know that the Malacca station had been notorious for its problems dating even back to the days of Milne from 1815 onward. Evans had changed operations of the ACC without consulting Robert Morrison while he was still the founding President of the College, and became embroiled in arguments with other men in the mission. In 1834 Evans wrote to Morrison in Canton complaining about mission man Jacob Tomlin (1793-1880). Tomlin had gone to Malacca 6 years before Evans, had wandered around Siam and Singapore with Gutzlaff, an entrepreneurial roving preacher, then set up "Chinese" schools in Malacca for the LMS. After only one year with Evans, Tomlin wanted to break free, proposing an independent "school for all nations". Evans reported

Tomlin didn't have the perseverance to handle such an ambitious plan, and within months was writing scathingly and with "extreme animosity" about Tomlin to Morrison. Next Evans became associated in 1837 with American missionary Sam Wolfe, who was considered to be a man "in health and in temper so unfit for such an undertaking" that a devout trader Mr. Lay in Canton could not understand the appointment. Wolfe solved the problem of his imperfections by dying of tuberculosis in June 1837.

Later James found that Evans was associated with other problems in the Malacca station. When Robert Morrison had founded the ACC in 1818 at the Malacca LMS station, it was the only Protestant college east of the Ganges, created to provide excellent bilingual senior schooling for Chinese boys along with Christian education. The hope was that many would become missionaries to China. Evans' reports to the LMS described the ACC as a thriving senior school that was fed by students from LMS-supported junior schools in a network throughout the small community. But Medhurst hinted to James that Evans' claims exaggerated the true situation. In fact Morrison had begun complaining about Evans in 1833, and by 1836 Evans had convinced the LMS to support only elementary schools in Malacca, contrary to Morrison's founding creation of the ACC to provide for the "complete" education of the natives. This was also contrary to what James had been told in London.

By 1836 Robert's 22-year-old son John Morrison had understood that Malacca was a dying town and that the real action had moved to Singapore. John knew that the ACC had become only an elementary school and he wanted the ACC to move to Singapore and to operate two proper colleges (one each for Malays and Chinese) under a common Board of Trustees, plus smaller Boards for each institution's internal operation. He envisioned them all independent of any mission society. He recommended that the Trustees should include about half from beyond the local area in order to garner support from the community of expatriates in China. Legge knew none of this.

#### William Lockhart and James Legge

Lockhart was very helpful to James Legge as he began to learn about the complex struggles between China and Britain. Lockhart hoped to spend his temporary exile in Jakarta mastering more Chinese with the help of Medhurst and his arrival there with Medhurst's son had created great excitement, because these small outposts of Britons all realized a great drama was unfolding along the Chinese coast. Both grand empires were demanding that the other respect different views about diplomatic recognition and free trade. Walter Medhurst's parents were thrilled at his safe return, and the town was excited to hear the stirring news about the hostilities that had broken out. Walter was

soon called into action as an interpreter for the British government's Plenipotentiary during this conflict, for Dr. Medhurst had ensured that his children were fluent in Chinese.

Legge remembered that he had met Lockhart in London in 1838, and was very interested in Lockhart's experiences in China. He had arrived in Macau in January 1839 and soon given charge of the EIC hospital there. In February he had been in Canton where he had witnessed an execution that had outraged the British. The Qing authorities had been awaiting the arrival of Commissioner Lin, known to be upright and determined to destroy the opium trade. Apparently the local Qing officials believed that they would demonstrate their own diligence in fighting the trade through a very public execution of an accused smuggler. They brought a captive man to the public square at five o'clock when few foreigners were present, hoisted him onto a hasty cross, then strangled him. Although they announced that he was executed because he was an opium smuggler, the truth soon came out that he was no such thing. In fact this man's "friends" had agreed with corrupt officials to name him as a smuggler in return for cash, and everyone quickly knew the deception. Capt. Elliott was outraged, but Lockhart reported the Qing officials simply laughed at this, and he was sickened by the entire event.

### Leaving Jakarta

James and Mary found it exciting to be close to such huge events, but were also eager to get to their own destination. The delays had been costly even with Medhurst's hospitality. James and Mary were having trouble finding a ship to take to Singapore because they were close to the beginning of the monsoon season and ships were reluctant to leave because the unfavourable winds could force them to spend months on a voyage that should otherwise take two weeks. If they waited until the end of the monsoon season they would have to stay in Jakarta until March 1840, many months of costly and excessive delay. James was getting worried, and although he managed to find a British schooner willing to take them, more weeks passed as it gradually loaded and the imminence of the contrary winds became a huge threat.

Finally in mid-December James and Mary received word that the ship was ready to sail to Singapore, and they boarded. They were the only passengers and their quarters were small, but the ship was clean and the captain civil. Their route would take them north along the east coast of Sumatra, through the strait of Bangka in a northwest direction. The route was dangerous because it was infested with large, active pirate fleets. The pirates sometimes just looted a ship then left it, but at other times they murdered everyone and confiscated the entire vessel and all its cargo. This area remains

troubled by major pirate activities into our own time, with giant freighters still being hijacked by pirates who extort ransom money for the crew and take over the cargo. This leg of the trip for James and Mary almost killed everyone, but for a different reason.

En route they encountered a serious problem with a lack of wind that was quite unexpected on the edge of the monsoon. As they reached the strait of Bangka the wind died, then became contrary, and the ship was forced to drop anchor for awhile. At times they crept along close to the coast, then days drifted into weeks. The captain took James on some small shore expeditions to distract him, providing an occasion for a small surprise. James started to walk across a patch of logs on the beach when the “rotting log” he was traversing started to move. He discovered it was actually a crocodile as were all the other “logs”, so he scampered off as quickly as he could and came to no harm. This novel event became a favourite family tale.

Another expedition up a lazy river led them into fierce mosquito territory and James discovered that his body did not react with any irritation to mosquito bites that caused everyone else great misery. It was another five decades before British doctor Capt. Ronald Ross demonstrated the connection between mosquitoes and malarial fever in 1897, when he showed malarial cysts in the stomach walls of mosquitoes. In the meantime, Legge was proud of his resistance to the insects and believed that it made him peculiarly suited to life in the East. Unfortunately his relative indifference to mosquito bites probably contributed to his eventual huge struggles with malaria in Hong Kong, where it was so widespread it was simply called “Hong Kong fever”.

Instead of being confronted with storms, the little ship became becalmed for an extended period, and the potentially deadly aspect of their situation became apparent as their water began to run out. Finally the small supply of beer was exhausted, and the water casks could finally only provide dregs so thick and greasy they could not be stomached. All on board were increasingly weakened as dehydration set in. Their condition had finally become grave when at last a rainy squall appeared. They captured the rain in a sail and replenished the barrels. James was touched when the sailors insisted that Mary should be the first to drink a glass of the beautiful fresh water, gallantly insisting “ladies first”. Mary was now pregnant with their first child although they did not report this to the LMS. This storm brought the winds they needed to resume their voyage, and they landed at Singapore at the end of the year.

#### Singapore news from Alex & John Stronach, arrival in Malacca

As the British traders in Hong Kong waited for a response from London to their demands for government help, James and Mary arrived in Singapore brothers John and

Alexander Stronach met them. The Stronachs were Scots LMS men who had been in the Singapore mission for two years.

These two energetic Scots and their families arrived in Singapore in March 1838 to take up tasks in the newly revived LMS station. There they found that all the mission house furniture had been sold after former, short-lived mission man Sam Wolfe died of tuberculosis, and they were hard-pressed to get the station operational even with the help of their £150 salary advance of six months. The roof leaked badly, the house was uninhabitable, and it was not big enough for their two families. John rented a house for £60 per annum, assuming that the LMS would cover this with a special housing allowance.

The Stronachs' voyage had taken seven months, including a brief visit to the Malacca mission where Evans and Dyer and their families lived. The Scots were surprised to learn that the mandarin/northern Chinese dialect they had spent seven months learning during their voyage was useless and irrelevant for talking with the Chinese in Singapore because they spoke Hokkien, just as the Chinese in Malacca, mostly migrants from Fujian.

#### Liang Fa and his son

The Stronachs had to hire a Hokkien teacher, and hired Liang Fa (1789-1855). Liang, originally from Canton, had earlier left the Malacca LMS for Canton, but once there had to be rescued from jail where he had been put for giving his family Christian texts. After being given 30 bamboo blows and paying a fine, Liang fled to Singapore to work for the American mission as superintendent of Chinese printing. All were happy to have him rejoin the LMS to teach the Stronachs and to preach on Sundays.

As they struggled to learn their new language, the Stronachs discovered that Morrison's huge old flawed Dictionary still helped them in terms of the meanings of characters and the written language. But after hearing Sam Dyer preach in Hokkien, his specialty, they were shocked to compare it to Liang's Hokkien preaching, which they now realized was full of "barbarisms and general incorrectness". Liang was Cantonese and his mastery of Hokkien was as flawed as that of any new missionary. He had only rudimentary education in Chinese for a few years in childhood and never wrote well in Chinese.

The Stronachs soon encountered legal and financial problems. They learned that Claudius Thomsen (1782-1835) had preceded them in the Singapore mission, and his death three years earlier revealed great confusion in the mission finances. Even as late as May 1839 the ownership of some of the mission properties was still unclear through

complex financial deals he had created. Although the Stronachs had a document “granting” Thomsen the mission house and chapel, they could not find out if he had owned it or whether he had given it to someone. A spice plantation he had created was still not sold and was lying in ruins. The mission did have the deeds for it however, and the Stronachs urged the LMS to put it for sale. By then the Singapore Institution Raffles had helped found had completely failed and its remnants were merged with the local “free school” under one board as a simple local school. It was as far distant from the vision of Robert Morrison and Sir Stamford Raffles for a major Strait college of advanced education as it was possible to be.

The Stronachs struggled to straighten out the land problems still unresolved since Thomsen’s departure. From Malacca Evans and Dyer gave the Stronachs a letter claiming that the land on which the American mission printing office was built was LMS property, while the American Rev. I. Tracey had a letter claiming that Thomsen still owned it. In May 1839 a letter from the American mission headquarters in Boston offered to sell the land to the LMS for \$2,500 to \$3,000 but the LMS declined, believing it still was the true owner. The Stronachs were starting to resent the hegemony of the American mission men in this British-created port. Apart from these legal problems, the Stronachs were thriving at the remnant of the Singapore Institution, becoming superintendents of the Chinese classes there. The LMS was not amused however, and in Sept 1839 demanded to know what the SI had to do with the work of the mission.

By August 1839 Liang left for Canton to watch over his son Liang Tsintih (Liang Tih, Liang Tuk), who was hired as a translator by Commissioner Lin as the opium crisis in Canton developed. Tsintih had studied English and Hebrew from age 9, attended Chinese school for 10 years supported by mission men, had come to Singapore from Canton in 1837 with the support of the Morrison Education Society founded by John Morrison, and now was being called back to work for Lin. Mission men and their Chinese students were bound up in the unfolding political conflicts.

### James Legge and money

James now had problems managing his salary because of the travel delays. With the Stronachs, James and Mary read the LMS “Letter of Instructions”, a document provided to every new missionary, spelling out his duties and specifying his annual salary of £300 (the married allowance). James had always been rather indifferent to money, often chided for this by his businessman-brother John. Now he was becoming uneasy about his financial situation because his travelling expenses had been so much greater than anticipated because of all the delays.

The LMS used a broker in London to buy the basic passage out for a missionary and his family, but costly delays and changes due to weather or calamity had to be handled initially out of the missionary's own resources and claimed later as travel costs. James discovered that the whole voyage could have been much cheaper if the LMS had dealt directly with the ship's captain rather than through a middleman. He was more sanguine about being able to manage his financial situation once he settled in Malacca because he knew that he would be provided with a free house and the wages for a Chinese teacher, and was content with the salary. He soon discovered, however, there were several problems about the way the LMS handled money for the missions.

#### LMS and money: bills, salaries, and property purchases

James soon discovered that common-sense dictated that he should break the LMS rules about drawing his salary. The rules required that his salary should be drawn up as a "bill" only after arrival at the mission station. In effect these bills were cash advances equivalent to a cheque written against the account of the LMS, the cash being paid out to the mission man by local British merchants. The merchant paid the cash value of the bill to the man for his salary and mission expenses, which bill represented a promise by the LMS in London to repay the merchant's firm, sometimes through a chain of intermediaries. Mission men typically collected their half-year salary in advance, and these bills were the standard method through which all LMS workers received their pay, child allowances, construction capital, and staff salaries.

There were some hazards built into this system, as the bills reflected the respect that a community had for a mission man. Anyone who was misbehaving in some way to bring his reputation into difficulty in his community would find that no merchant was willing to honour his bill, cutting him off from all funds. This system was also hazardous in small towns where there might not be a merchant willing or able to advance the cash for six months of salary and await the bill being eventually honoured in London and the cash advance repaid to him. The system depended on the LMS eventually approving the expenditure in London, so the mission men usually wrote a letter to London as soon as they had "cashed" a bill, justifying the specific charges.

Legge learned from the Stronachs that virtually all British traders had left Malacca in favour of Singapore, and that if he waited until his arrival in Malacca to get cash, there were no longer any merchants in Malacca to honour his LMS bill. Instead, it would have to be sent back to Singapore and the cash sent back to Malacca. All this would cause serious delays in providing him with cash because the Strait was often too calm for fast sailing. Rather than waiting to go through such a rigamarole after he



arrived in Malacca, Legge took the initiative of drawing a bill for the first six months of his salary while he was in Singapore. This was strictly against LMS rules and on the first day of 1840 Legge had to write an apologetic letter to London trying to explain his urgent need for the cash in light of the difficulties of distance and time.

Mission finances could become quite complex. At times energetic mission men bought property and expended money to build using LMS bills or money borrowed as mortgages from local colonials, intending to repay the loan from various ventures such as boarding school, printing, or plantation operations that should generate cash. The question of ownership of these properties frequently arose, especially if a man decamped or died prematurely before having paid off the loans.

In writing to account for his financial transactions, James now began reporting to the LMS in a programme of correspondence that he provided across the next 33 years. His first letter was rather formal, addressing the “foreign secretary” of the society Rev. William Ellis (1794-1872) as “My dear sir”. It quickly became more personal, addressing Ellis’s successor Rev. Tidman as “my dear brother” across decades in which the LMS and Tidman at times failed to treat him fairly.

#### Lin and Elliot in Canton

While James and Mary waited for a ship out of Singapore in January 1840, Commissioner Lin and Capt. Elliot were continuing their struggle over the Canton trade. Lin began a major construction project to fortify the Canton harbour and to prevent British landings, sinking large barges filled with stones at the entrance. He bought an American sailing ship and outfitted it with European cannon supplied by the Portuguese, unaware that Britain was preparing a giant expeditionary fleet to assert its interests in a trade and diplomatic treaty with China. In mid-January the Emperor decreed that no foreign trader should handle any trade for Britons at risk of death, then Capt. Elliot threatened a blockade of Canton if Lin did not release some British sailors who had been captured in hostilities at Chuenbi in November 1839. British ships again left the Canton anchorage at Whampoa and moved outside the Bogue.

#### James learns more of Malacca problems from the Stronachs

In Singapore, the Stronach brothers told Legge about problems in the Malacca mission that went beyond Medhurst’s discreet hints, but did not tell him all they knew. The Stronachs were openly critical of John Evans, the sole surviving LMS man in Malacca. They had provided hospitality to Evans’ former associate Sam Dyer in May 1839 while he awaited a ship to London after his wife’s grave illness forced him to return

home, and they learned of many problems from Dyer, problems he had not revealed to the LMS in London.

#### Dyer and Malacca's problems

Dyer had written to the LMS in December 1838 providing no hint of any serious problems at the mission. Dyer loved his work in Malacca and was distraught that the lifetime he had intended to dedicate to his mission work was broken because of his health problems. He had written that he and his wife “had given ourselves to the Lord’s work and expected to be here forever, ... to live and to die in the cause”. He apologized to the LMS for the costs of their voyage home (£300 passage plus £50 expenses), and promised to try and repay some of it from a small legacy of his wife’s. He promised not to draw any salary during the voyage.

The Stronachs described Dyer as a man of excellent character, but Legge was troubled because Dyer had written some of the glowing reports sent to the LMS in London. Legge was puzzled that a fine man could write deceptive reports. One acquaintance later wrote of Dyer’s great humility and “tractability”, confirming Penang LMS man Thomas Beighton’s impression. The eventual truth appears to be that Dyer was an honest and dedicated man who had not the confidence to stand up to bullying pressures from Evans.

While Dyer waited for a ship to take him and his sick wife back to England, he had given the Stronachs a rich tale of problems during his four-year stint with Evans at Malacca, but the Stronachs wouldn’t provide any details to James. They knew that an anonymous letter by “Scrutator”<sup>6</sup> had been published in the Singapore *Free Press* newspaper on December 19, 1839 criticizing the ACC in Malacca. The writer charged the ACC with inefficiency, useless and excessive expenditures, and argued that the LMS should investigate and give its support instead to the Singapore Institution. Alexander Stronach had visited Evans at Malacca, but was surprised after reading this critique to realize that Evans had not shown him either the College or any of Evans’ purportedly star senior students. Old Beighton in the LMS station in Penang, in his tactful way, referred to Evans’ reports when he wrote the LMS that there was a risk that a missionary might “...write in too glowing colours and give the people at home an erroneous

---

<sup>6</sup> Scrutator was Henry James Lambert, author of two books about the region in that period. In 1850 he wrote Borneo revelations: a series of letters on the Sarebas and Sakarra Dayaks and the Rajah Brooke. Singapore: Straits Times Press. Another book was undated, entitled One thing and another: Essays on Java, the Malays, the press, men and women etc., Perth: Pitman.

impression”, adding that (in addition to Evans), Mr. Gutzlaff had done this. The Stronachs just warned Legge, “wait till you get to Malacca, and become acquainted with Mr. Evans, and you’ll soon know all about it”.

### Chapter 12 Malacca station history with Morrison and Milne

The Malacca that James and Mary were assigned to had been an important trading port for European ships starting in the 16<sup>th</sup> century because of its crucial location along the huge trade corridor of the Strait of Malacca and its favourable winds. The famous Ming Admiral Zheng He had stopped there in 1407. Gold, tea, silk, opium tobacco, and perfumes had changed hands in the busy port for nearly 400 years. The founding Malay prince Parameswara converted to Islam in the 1400s in order to gain special trading concessions with other Muslim ports and traders, then Malacca was conquered by a flotilla of Roman Catholic Portuguese in 1511, before the more modern Protestant Dutch and British.

Malacca, Penang and Singapore were three British ports collectively known as the “Straits Settlements” although they did not form a defined colony. They were perched along the Strait of Malacca, with Singapore now becoming the most important. Malacca had been taken from the Dutch by Britain in 1811 then was returned to the Dutch in 1818 under the Treaty of Vienna as the results of the end of the Napoleonic wars were beginning to be sorted out. In 1824 it was again turned over to Britain under the Anglo-Dutch Treaty, while other British holdings such as Sumatra were re-assigned to the Dutch.

By 1826 Malacca became part of the Straits Settlements governed from India. In 1829 slaves owned by Chinese and Dutch in the region began to flee to the protection of the British Resident in Malacca and to freedom as British laws evolved toward emancipation. Humphreys, a newly arrived LMS man in 1821 had watched a sale there in which a Christian Armenian merchant paid \$200 each for slaves being sold in an estate auction, in order to then free them.

By the time Legge arrived in January 1840 Malacca was in decline as a trading port because Singapore had become the new trading centre. Sir Stamford Raffles had founded Singapore in 1819 and it had become the most thriving port in the Strait because of its location and Raffles’ determination that it be a free trade port. This contrasted with the other nearby European territories possessed by Dutch, Portuguese, and Spanish colonialists, their ports used as possessions for monopolistic one-way mercantilist trade.

#### Malacca and the LMS when Legge arrived

In 1840 Malacca was a diverse community of local Malays, immigrant Chinese merchants from Fukien, Indian traders, and European traders and officials. It offered one advantage to the LMS: Chinese language-learning and the development of English-

Chinese texts could be done there without risk from the draconian Qing laws decreeing death to any Chinese who taught a “foreign barbarian” the Chinese language. Towns such as Malacca with its migrant Chinese population provided missionaries the possibility of learning Chinese from native-speakers. From the LMS viewpoint the Malacca station, Penang, and Singapore made up the “Ultra-Ganges” mission under LMS supervision from India. What James and Mary did not know was that despite its long history as an LMS station, the mission had always been associated with significant problems.

#### Robert Morrison, the Anglo-Chinese College, and Raffles 1818-1839

Malacca had been a favoured setting of the first Protestant missionary to China, Robert Morrison (1782-1834). He arrived in Canton in 1807 and helped found the LMS mission in Malacca. Morrison’s life was focused on the mastery of Chinese, the creation of Christian works in Chinese characters, and the publication of alphabetic text versions of Chinese that new missionaries could use to learn the oral language. Morrison was uniquely positioned to provide missionaries with help in translations because of his mastery of Chinese, and he had a special role in James Legge’s history in Chinese learning, as well as with the ACC in Malacca.

Morrison was the son of a Scottish farmer and boot-maker in Northumberland. He quit school at 14 and for a few years fell into bad company until he had a spiritual conversion and joined the Presbyterian Church at 16. By 19 he was clearly an excellent scholar, taking tutoring in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and considering a missionary career. He later became a friend of George Stephenson, the creator of the first railway line.

After Morrison was accepted in 1804 by the LMS as a worker for China he had a chance encounter on a London street with a (rare) Chinese man and became introduced to Yong Satak, a Cantonese man who agreed to teach him Chinese reading and writing. Yong and others had come to London with the return of Macartney’s embassy. In 1806 Morrison accidentally discovered a 1737 Jesuit translation of the New Testament into Chinese in the British Library, and he and Yong began to spend every day in the Reading Room studying this work. The Royal Society loaned him an old Jesuit Mandarin-Latin dictionary to help, then immediately after his ordination in the Presbyterian Church, in 1807 he was sent to Macau as an LMS missionary. His first mandate was to translate the New Testament into Chinese.

Morrison’s struggles reveal the huge problems that Protestant missionaries faced when attempting to establish stations in China. At that time the East India Company

(EIC) refused to transport missionaries even though its ships were the main transport available to Macau, the British settlement for its traders to the trading port of Canton. The EIC considered missionaries to be meddlesome puritans, so Morrison had to reach Macau through a convoluted American route involving a four-month journey from New York across the United States to a Pacific port. On his arrival at Macau he was stripped and interrogated as to his intentions by the Chinese, in the normal treatment then given all foreigners. Morrison pretended to be a clerk because missionaries were not allowed into China.

The British traders spending their summer hiatus at Macau were not pleased at the arrival of a missionary and urged him to leave China. Sir George Staunton, himself the greatest British master of Chinese of the day, explained the impossibility of Morrison's missionary task, emphasizing the special antipathy of Roman Catholic Macau to Protestant missionaries. Morrison then brashly decided to finesse the problem by heading up to Canton on his own, as he had a letter of introduction to the American consul there, Mr. Carrington. Eventually two American merchants who had a factory (warehouse) at Canton took pity on Morrison and offered him a room to live in while he worked on learning the language. He pretended to be American because they had a better reputation in Canton than the British traders.

Sir George seemed to have some sympathy for Morrison's plan or person because he helped Morrison find a Chinese tutor who spoke Latin and Chinese. Unfortunately, Bel Yun turned out to be virtually illiterate in terms of the written literary Chinese that Morrison wanted to learn. He then hired another more educated Chinese man, teacher Li, who unfortunately only spoke Cantonese. Trying to put all these different pieces together Morrison worked steadily, trying to master oral Cantonese and Mandarin, as well as the written classical language.

Morrison was an introverted scholar who trusted others in an almost otherworldly way, sometimes to his own disadvantage. At times unscrupulous locals took advantage of him, promising him secret Chinese lessons but instead defrauding him. On one occasion he invited some street children home to have conversation and tea. They decided to have some fun at his expense, attacked him, cut up his coat, and ransacked his room. Despite such adventures he had a quiet sense of humour at his own expense and realized that his stumbling speech was a butt of jokes among the street children he tried to learn from. He wrote: "A-Sam, a lad, showed some levity and disposition to laugh... The novelty of seeing a fangui (foreign devil) - sitting down to address them in their own language, perhaps in broken Chinese, on new and strange topics to them, appears at first very odd, and boys are disposed to levity...".

### Problems learning Chinese: Qing forbade teaching foreigners Chinese

Morrison's difficulties in learning Chinese and creating the first Chinese-English Dictionary arose directly from politics. European and Chinese traders along the Chinese coast used pidgin ("business") as their common oral language, but the written language was considered a Chinese state secret except for trade documents.

At that time in the Qing dynasty it was extremely perilous for any foreigner in Canton to attempt to learn written Chinese. In an edict of 1805 the Qing Emperor forbade any Chinese citizen to teach Chinese or Manchu to any foreigner, on pain of death. Foreigners were forbidden to buy Chinese books or learn Chinese (M. K. Wong, 2000) p. 9. This paranoid insularity was specific to the Qing dynasty, as Jesuits had held high positions within the Imperial household in earlier times. During the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) they mastered spoken and written Chinese to a highly accomplished level, and created some Chinese-Latin dictionaries that were available within the Roman Catholic Church. During the early Qing dynasty the Jesuit mastery of Chinese was controlled through the requirement that any foreigner who learned written Chinese could never return to his homeland, and it was customary for the Jesuits to live and die in China.

### EIC and Robert Morrison

The East India Company needed translators for documents related to its trading, but it had always had often opposed missionary activity in its domains. The British had embraced world trade with great energy, and traders considered missionaries to be troublesome moralists who at times tried to interfere, such as in the slave trade. By 1819 its attitude toward missionaries had shifted slightly after an act of Parliament required the company to allow missionaries in its territories. Nevertheless the EIC and other traders basically regarded missionaries as troublesome intruders into the freewheeling world of trading ports. When Morrison arrived the most well-educated translators of written Chinese were Roman Catholic Chinese in Macau. It was a Portuguese "territory" of murky status, ruled by a Portuguese governor under the supervision of Canton officials.

### Robert Morrison's style

Morrison's life in his first stint in Canton challenges our stereotypes of the rigid foreign puritan forcing his customs on vulnerable members of exotic cultures, because he quickly "went native". He adopted Chinese clothing and footwear, and let his hair grow into a long ponytail similar to the queue demanded by the Qing Manchu dynasty. He let his fingernails grow long in the manner of the *literati*, the Chinese scholar-

officials. Trying to blend into his surroundings, he quickly developed fluent spoken Cantonese despite setbacks and his perpetual fear of expulsion.

Over time his solitary and risky life in Canton life began to be debilitating, and within a year he returned to seek better health in the more European life of Macau. In August he returned to Canton but had to flee in September after Lord Minto sent a British fleet to occupy Macau in one of the periodic disputes over trade. This had angered the other Europeans and forced all Britons in Canton to seek refuge on British boats.

Just as Morrison was giving up on China and planning to move to Penang, an island off the coast of the Malay states, he met and married Mary Morton in Macau in 1809, the daughter of a recently arrived doctor. As she and all foreign women were forbidden to live in Canton, Morrison left his wife in Macau and returned alone to Canton to continue his Chinese studies. The Macau translators' language skills linked Chinese with Latin, Portuguese, and pidgin, but English was of little interest to them.

By 1809 Morrison had earned the grudging respect of the European traders as his skills in Chinese were obvious, so the EIC hired him as a translator in Macau. This employment was partly consistent with Morrison's mission to the Chinese, in that the LMS wanted each mission to become as self-supporting as possible. The EIC knew it needed its own translators and hired a Macau Catholic to instruct Robert Morrison in written Chinese.

Morrison was now set. As an employee of the EIC he was able to spend the trading season in Canton and this allowed him to learn Chinese in a legal way because the Chinese government did allow traders to have translators. In addition he was provided with an exceptional salary (£ 500 p.a., doubled in 1812). This allowed him to establish a fine house and live on a scale of luxury far more grand than any of his successors with the LMS. Robert held this post until his premature death there in 1834.

At the same time, he was still interested in advancing Christianity in China, and spent his free time working on publications that would help new missionaries. He finished a book on Chinese Grammar in 1812 and sent it to Calcutta for publication at the expense of the Indian Government where it was printed 3 years later. By late 1813 he had completed for publication a Chinese translation of the New Testament, incorporating much from the old Jesuit text his London teacher Yong had copied from the British Museum original.



### Milne arrives in Macau 1813

The big event of 1813 for Morrison was that in July another LMS man joined him; William Milne (1785-1822) was the father of James' later school-friend young William. Morrison and Milne had a cordial meeting with the Portuguese authorities in Macau and no overt complaints were raised, but both the swashbuckling British traders of the EIC and the Roman Catholic authorities were upset at the arrival of a Protestant minister. Soon the Portuguese told Milne that he could not live in Macau, so in July he went to Canton on speculation. This was an equally unavailable setting, and Morrison understood that the fierce opposition in China to language-learning by non-trader foreigners was going to be a major problem for missionary work.

Morrison figured that the best tactic would be to establish a mission station in a nearby community with a hearty Chinese population, and by 1814 Morrison developed a grand plan to change the nature of missions to China. He thought the best results would be achieved if Chinese students outside China were taught to read English and to understand the scriptures. They could then go and preach to their home and ancestral communities with the help of Christian texts published in Chinese. He believed this was much better than trying to send foreign missionaries into China because they needed to spend years struggling to learn Chinese before they could be effective. In the long-term he told the LMS a "great seminary or College" should be created for training native missionaries, in addition to a charitable home for retired missionaries and proper schools for the education of missionary children. Malacca, now under British rule, seemed perfect for this purpose, the LMS agreed, and Morrison sent Milne to Malacca with a mandate to create a school there for Chinese students, children of the large pool of migrant Chinese merchants there.

### Milne opens LMS station in Malacca

Milne moved his family from Canton to Malacca in the spring of 1816 to set up the station. They brought with them a Chinese teacher, and Chinese printers and printing materials, because Morrison saw the establishment of a printing press as a key element in his long-term plan. Milne opened a small school for boys in August and in November baptized his first convert, Liang Fa. Liang was a hard-working devout and frugal man who retained close links with the LMS across many decades. One of his essays on Christian ideas even influenced the man who eventually led the Taiping rebellion.

### Morrison and the Amherst Embassy, 1816

Robert Morrison continued to work as a translator for the EIC all the time he was working on Christian translations, and went as a government translator with the doomed embassy of Lord Amherst to Beijing in 1816.

### Morrison family life

Morrison's family life foreshadowed that of countless expatriates who were to follow much later, in that children and wives died and were replaced. His first son died the day he was born, in 1811. By 1815 his wife Mary returned to England suffering an incurable disease, taking with her their two surviving children. She returned to Morrison in 1820 then died a year later after two days of cholera just as she neared childbirth. Morrison then married Elizabeth Armstrong while on furlough in London in 1825, where he published attacks on the British policy of the illegal opium trade. They returned to Canton where they had four more children before she became ill and returned with the children to England in 1833, never to see Robert again.

### Morrison and Milne's translations and publications Malacca

Across the years 1809-1813 Morrison worked on mastering Cantonese and Mandarin, gradually creating his own Chinese-English dictionary and grammar as he started creating Chinese books for the mission. In 1810 he completed a translation of the *Acts of the Apostles* into Chinese and had 1000 copies published for £100, using woodblocks as no-one had yet created moveable metal type for the production of Chinese text. In 1812 he published the Chinese book of *Luke*, and the British and Foreign Bible Society gave him a grant of £300 when they saw what a fine job he had done. The frontispiece of this book still exists, showing a handsome Chinese font in beautifully clear and bold characters. He published the first Protestant translation of the entire New Testament into Chinese in 1813 although this was a flawed and clumsy version that tried to use word-for-word translations without any real attention to the effects of this on the meaning of sentences, much of it simply copied from the early Jesuit version. Years later James Legge became involved in a major controversy when he concluded that a better translation was necessary.

Morrison worked hard to lay the grounds for all new mission workers to learn Chinese, and in 1815 he published his Chinese Grammar (the first volume of a massive three-part Chinese-English Dictionary), and some Chinese stories in English. Legge had used some of these texts when he studied with Professor Kidd in London 23 years later. In 1816 Morrison published a phrase-book for English-language users, *Dialogues and*

*detached sentences in the Chinese language*, and in 1817 he published *A view of China, for philological purposes*.

In 1815 the London Court of Directors of the EIC tried to fire Robert Morrison because of his continuing publication of Christian materials in Chinese. In a stiff letter the London Directors ordered his disconnection from the EIC with a severance offer of £4,000 (a huge amount for the day), but the local EIC members in Macau disregarded this order because they knew how indispensable his language skills were to their trade. They passed the dismissal letter on to Morrison, commenting blandly that the Court of Directors obviously had mistaken information. This did not interrupt his intense translation work, and he and Milne published the entire Bible in colloquial Cantonese in 1819.

#### 1818 The Anglo-Chinese College, Morrison, Milne, Medhurst

The LMS, trying to set up effective missions for China, sent out another young man to join them in 1817. Walter Henry Medhurst (1796 – 1857) was 21 and a printer. He provided enough help to the EIC in Malacca that by 1818 Milne had persuaded it to donate land there for a college, and in 1818 Morrison and Milne began building the Anglo-Chinese College (ACC). Morrison's educational philosophy for it was "that all the various tribes of man have equal rights, and every system... has a right to be heard; when this shall be the case, mighty truth shall prevail" (B. Harrison, 1976). Morrison was the founder, but he appointed Milne the first President. There was a blurring of categories in this arrangement in relation to the LMS that led to many problems over the years. The ACC was to have its own board of directors, and Morrison and the ACC raised money for its operations as an independent entity, but the actual Presidents and teachers were usually LMS men receiving a mission salary. Later some of them also took a salary from the ACC, which was strictly against the rules of the LMS and would have horrified Morrison and Milne.

#### Raffles and the Singapore Institution, 1823

At first, the ACC was a success as an educational institution for Chinese students and as a language-training college for new missionaries, and in 1823 Morrison was invited to Singapore by its governor Sir Stamford Raffles (1781-1826) to discuss moving the ACC to Singapore, but ended up being named Vice-President of a new a secular but similar "Singapore Institution" created by Raffles. Raffles was a complex man of outstanding and diverse talents. He opposed the opium trade, abolished slavery in the lands under his domain, and was creating an orderly colony in Singapore with a rule of law that helped free trade.

Raffles assigned a plot of land for the proposed college and discussed the kind of education it should provide. He wanted it to have departments for teaching science as well as the literature and philosophies of Chinese, Thai, and Malay cultures. Morrison noted in a “private” letter that if Chinese learned geography they would recognize the absurdity of many things they were taught in Buddhist books. When this plan eventually collapsed with the premature death of Raffles and ensuing incompetent local leadership, Morrison’s final educational role was to write a vigorous letter. He protested at rumoured plans to turn the property over for use as a town hall. Morrison was always very clear that his interest was the education of local children, not the general development of colonial institutions.

Together Morrison and Milne created a body of significant publications using the Malacca press to help missionaries learn written and oral Chinese, as well as texts in Chinese to use in their school and ministry. In 1823 Morrison published their translation of the whole Bible into Chinese. Milne had died in 1821 with his four children sent back to England, by the time his English-Chinese colloquial phrase book was published in 1826, with the Chinese text done by Malaccan student Shaou Tih. In 1828 Morrison’s *Vocabulary of the Canton Dialect* was the first attempt to create a dictionary for one of the dialects of Chinese; it was trade-oriented and published by the EIC. In Malacca in 1831 the Malacca LMS Press published an English-Chinese translation of a classic Latin book about the Chinese language, Jesuit Father Prémare’s *Notitia Linguae Sinicae*.

In comparing the work of Milne and Morrison years later Legge described Morrison as having a “stronger” and business mind, while Milne’s was “finer” and more literary (J. Legge, 1896) p. 124, but they were equally obsessed with their common goals of creating Christian literature in Chinese for use in missions, and in creating texts to educate Europeans in the Chinese language.

### Chapter 13 A place of discord: Conflicts in the Malacca LMS before Legge

As the men stationed in the Straits' towns of the LMS Ultra-Ganges missions began to work together they started having problems, then conflicts that varied but persisted across the 25 years leading to Legge's arrival. James had only hints of this fractious history when he arrived, but was soon plunged into longstanding and new conflicts. Across its first two decades the LMS station and ACC at Malacca had seen many missionaries come and go, suffering from a steady run of staffing problems arising both from conflicts and illnesses.

#### Straits mission illnesses

Some of the problems arose from the repeated and sudden deaths or departures of the Straits' missionaries suffering tropical illnesses that included malaria, hepatitis, cholera, and dysentery. Husbands, wives, and children were regularly felled by dysentery and from liver failure from repeated bouts of hepatitis and malaria. Milne had died there at age 37 in 1821, Humphrey's wife died in 1823, 2 years after their arrival, John Ince's the wife and infant son of John Ince (1775-1825) died of dysentery in Penang in 1822 and he soon died of cholera, Legge's London teacher Samuel Kidd had left Malacca after 8 years because of increasing epileptic fits treated unsuccessfully with strong purgatives and leeches, dying in London age 39, and David Collie (an early translator of a Confucian text) died suddenly in 1828 after only 6 years there, his wife having died en route to Malacca in Madras in 1822. Sam Dyer, another young man developing great skills as a printer for the LMS, left just in advance of Legge's arrival because of illness he and his wife suffered.

#### Revolts against Milne: Medhurst, Hutchings, Humphreys, Slater, Beighton, Milton

Other problems arose from power struggles between the mission men, and must have begun soon after strong-minded printer 21-year old Walter Medhurst arrived in July 1817 to join Milne who at 32 had only been there 2 years. Milne had become expansive in his plans and wanted to set up a British school in Malacca that would be jointly supported by the BFBS and the LMS. He was now calling himself the "President of the Ultra Ganges Missionary Union".

This did not sit well with the other LMS men in the Straits missions and by 1820 Medhurst and other men printed a circular attacking Milne. The men included Claudius Thomsen (1792- 1835), who had arrived in September 1815, John Slater, Thomas Beighton (1790-1844) in Penang, Samuel Milton (1788-1849) a somewhat grandiose mission man in Singapore, and John Ince who soon died of cholera in Penang. They printed a public Notice that was a thinly veiled revolt against Milne. It asserted that all

missionaries in the Straits “are all on equal footing as to Salary and Patronage, and that no one is empowered to direct or control the other as to the Sphere or Object of his Labour, or as to the regulation of his salary, but that each is fully authorized to draw on the Treasurer for his Support and to settle on whatever part of Ultra -Ganges India, may best suit his views, or be best likely to promote the objects of his Mission”. Although it was printed for public circulation, Milne didn’t find out about it for another 12 months.

Young Medhurst had several problems on his own account. He had strong ideas about what the Malacca mission should be doing, which did not include the ACC. He learned Chinese so much more quickly than his seniors that Milne saw they had become jealous of the talented new young man who was not even an ordained minister but just a printer. Another mission man contributed to more discord. Rev. Hutchings proposed that he and his wife should separate from the LMS and set up an independent “Free School” at Penang, but the others disagreed, recommending instead that the LMS grant \$100 to their wives so that they could set up an LMS classroom for girl’s education.

Gradually the men began fleeing Milne’s unwelcome supervision and headed out to create their own turf at other ports along the strait. By 1822, only a year after his arrival, James Humphreys was acting Superintendent of the ACC but seemed incapable of learning Chinese. Slater was later judged incompetent by the LMS because he also never mastered Chinese, and he was sent to Jakarta. Beighton and Ince left to set up a Malay mission farther north along the coast in Penang in 1819, never having approved of the ACC, and Milton went to Singapore after Morrison reported that he wrote “incoherent and extravagant requests”. In 1826 Milton was fired by the LMS while visiting Calcutta; he returned to Singapore and pretended that he was independently wealthy and did not need LMS support. He dabbled in some preaching and school briefly then quit, but not until generating considerable ill will in Singapore against the LMS. He left after going bankrupt in a large land development scheme, threatening to sue the LMS for money he believed was owed him, while Morrison claimed that Milton owed the society \$1500. Slater moved to Penang and set up his free school.

Thomsen was 39 when he headed to Singapore in late 1821 after 4 years in Malacca where he had set up a Malay mission that was excoriated by a visiting LMS deputation. His life became the centre of an interminable scandal involving first property and by 1834, women. Milne also discovered that some of these difficult men had been known to quarrel during their studies in the LMS training college, and he wrote the LMS that they should not assign men to a station once they discovered that they couldn’t get along.

Underlying all these squabbles was the basic problem that the LMS had not provided any instructions concerning the structure of the mission operations preparing for China. Because the LMS operated in a very decentralized way in terms of church organization the new young mission men had good reasons to expect that they were allowed to set up their work in the field in an independent way. Milne, by virtue of his seniority at Malacca, considered that he knew best how the mission should be run, with him as a general supervisor of the young men as they arrived and started to master Chinese.

Milne began to fade under the pressures of his situation. Two of his children died prematurely, then his wife died in 1819 in a rest-house outside Malacca while he was busy working, and he was overwhelmed with loss and guilt. Medhurst became so furious with Milne's patronizing domination that he was determined to leave Malacca. Milne understood that Medhurst regarded him as being "arbitrary, reserved, stiff, and fond of dominion", although Milne defended himself. He argued that he had tried to divide the labour at the mission to make it more efficient and orderly, but clearly his adoption of a superintending role was not appreciated. In 1820 Medhurst left for Penang under fractious circumstances.

#### Medhurst leaves Malacca in 1820, with plans

Because he was printer with quickly-learned skills in Chinese, Medhurst planned to take a small printing press from the mission, along with types, leads for English fonts, paper, furniture, and other equipment so he could set up printing at his next location, the LMS in Penang. The ship didn't have enough room for all this so Medhurst put the excess equipment in his room in Malacca and asked Thomsen to look after it and send it once Medhurst became established. Milne discovered Thomsen was holding the press and equipment and tried to convince him to return them to the mission, but Thomsen refused and sent everything off. Milne indignantly wrote to the LMS men in Penang about Medhurst's removal of the press, on the grounds that its inventor had presented it to the LMS Malacca. When Medhurst arrived with little luggage the Penang men responded with an indignant rebuttal of Milne's charges to the LMS in London, not realizing that the presses were yet to arrive a few days later. Milne was outraged that Medhurst had not even asked his permission to take the equipment, even though Milne knew that only Medhurst knew how to operate it; a classic turf battle.

Milne was sure that Medhurst knew that it was wrong because Medhurst had done the thing so secretly, even if it was not theft in that the press would continue to be used for LMS work. Thomsen's account later was different; he claimed that the small

press that Medhurst took was to be used in Malay printing in Penang, using Malay fonts that Thomsen had created. In his view this was more important mission work than the miscellaneous English jobs that the Malacca mission was printing. He criticized Milne for not allowing Medhurst to learn Malay printing even though he was a printer. The more fundamental problem was that it was unclear to these men exactly who controlled what LMS property, even at the level of furniture and printing presses, and this problem persisted and intruded into many later quarrels between mission men and the LMS.

Medhurst was full of energy but rather confused plans at this stage. In Penang the LMS man Beighton complained that Medhurst immediately started acting “like a Pope”, applying to the government for land for a new LMS mission without telling Beighton, while Beighton and Ince had been waiting for a perfect moment for such an application. To make things worse Medhurst grandly told them he would give them a piece of his new land. He wrote India for more type and began setting up a press without consulting them, and they complained of being deceived by him. Beighton wrote Milne that Medhurst’s precipitous actions were angering the community and harming the Malay mission that Beighton and Ince had just established, with people saying “too many missionaries”. They tried to talk to him about acting before he thought, but “such is the great opinion he has of himself that he only strikes out with contempt by saying one thing to our face and immediately acting contrary to it”. Medhurst obviously thought these older men lacked initiative, and in November 1821 proposed to go Siam in disguise. When the others all opposed this he decided to go to Jakarta in Java instead where he eventually created the major station with schools, presses, a ministry, and a skill in Chinese that became useful in training many new mission men including James Legge in 1839.

Thomsen was very upset at the conflict in the Malacca mission, and in the spring of 1821 he wanted to move to join Beighton in Penang to escape the quarrels, but Beighton argued against this fearing that Thomsen would upset the peace that Beighton had just achieved. Beighton was especially incensed that Thomsen had lied to the LMS in telling them that everyone was in agreement that Medhurst should leave Malacca for Penang, while at the same time writing Morrison giving a more accurate account of the fights against Milne. By December 1821 Thomsen finally wrote the LMS directors, explaining that the Dutch in Malacca were offended by the founding of the ACC and had exerted pressure on the government not to proceed with the land grant that Morrison had arranged. Thomsen complained that the ACC was dominating the LMS mission, which was becoming just an appendage to the college. Milne was Principal of the ACC, and what the college would not do, “must not be done”. He accused Milne of removing



all the LMS books from the mission house to hoard them in the ACC library, forcing the men in the Penang station to create their own LMS library. He complained that the men hardly knew what belonged to the LMS, to the college, or to the public. Milne even forced the other men to live in town because he controlled access to the rooms in the merged mission and college. He claimed the Dutch refused to talk to the LMS mission men, and Thomsen said the whole mission was “under a cloud”. He was glad to hear that the LMS was sending out a “deputation”, two reliable men to inspect all the missions over a leisurely number of years. He made his own plans to move to Singapore, where he recreated many of the problems he had identified in Milne’s style of management.

In the meantime Milne was exhausted from the conflicts and was ill with tuberculosis and liver disease that was probably from long-standing hepatitis, malaria or other parasites. He became increasingly tired and depressed, and died in Malacca in 1822, just after the third and final volume of Morrison’s Dictionary was published there. Beighton was present during Milne’s final days and was perturbed to report that Milne did not seem to experience “those raptures of joys in the near prospect of heaven” that others had had shown. Milne had taken on an extra job as Chaplain to the Dutch government and had been able to contribute to a government pension fund for widows and orphans that was to yield £72 per year for the care of his surviving four children. Unfortunately this and his estate was not large enough to support all the children, so Robert Morrison adopted Milne’s son Robert, hoping to set an example that other Christians in England would copy. One of Milne’s sons William (Jr.) was sent to Scotland at age 7 and eventually became an LMS man and James’s shipmate on the 1839 journey to Malacca.

Morrison’s wife had died in 1821 within months of returning from a sick leave in London. She had been well-advanced in pregnancy but the foetus died as well, and her death in Macau led to a disgusting episode that was paralleled 60 years later in Oxford when James needed to bury his second wife Hannah. The Macau authorities refused all Protestant burials in the existing cemeteries and the Macau Chinese refused to bury her in the plot of one of her dead children, so the British merchants eventually had to collect enough money to create a Protestant cemetery in order to bury Mrs. Morrison.

#### Huttman scandal over money, incompetence, and attitude 1820

Other departures occurred because of laziness, incompetence, and scandal. A typical case concerned George Huttman. He had been sent to Malacca in 1820 as a missionary and printer, and on arrival had demanded twice the salary for which he had contracted. After feeble efforts to study Chinese when he first arrived, he quickly gave up

and never mastered enough to earn the respect of his Chinese printing staff. After three years it was clear he was incompetent to do the Chinese printing he had been sent out to do. He then asked to become a secular person at double his LMS salary, which the others saw as a breach of contract. He was of little use in any capacity and there was agreement he should be sent back to England if the LMS would pay his way. Worse, “his spirit and conduct” were not “such as to make a connexion with our Mission at all desirable”, because of his self-interest and disaffection. Arising for concerns about Huttmann’s excessive interest in money, Robert Morrison had to remove the accounts and all money-handling from Huttmann during the disputes. Morrison was so upset by Huttmann’s behaviour he wrote the LMS that in future they should prepare a separate legal contract for each missionary in addition to the Paternal and Christian Instruction letter, to spell out the consequences of the worst-possible outcomes of a mission placement.

For his part Huttmann wrote in outraged response that he had single-handedly saved the Milne orphans from the greedy clutches of the Dutch Orphan Chamber. Apparently Milne had never had his will notarized and while he was clearly dying the Dutch were planning to seize the children and all the LMS property because the entire mission land and buildings were in Milne’s personal name rather than in the name of the LMS. Huttmann had discovered all this and brought in a Dutch notary to complete the Will just in time. He also got Milne to sign over a power of attorney for the ACC to Huttmann so that LMS bills in Malacca would continue to be honoured by merchants there.

Some of these complications afflicted the struggles between Huttmann and the older mission men. He accused Morrison of unreasonable conduct, and was furious that he was subjected to “a Jesuitical system of blind obedience to seniors” just as in the RC order in China. In the meantime Huttmann was evicted from quarters in the mission house and was required to repay a large sum of money he had reported as stolen from the mission cash chest. He planned to resign and head back to England if his fiancée was not already en route and if the LMS would pay his fare. He finally left in July 1824 after Robert Morrison authorized using LMS money to pay his passage, following a year of constant struggles over money, work, and housing.

### Milton conflicts 1823

Other conflicts centred on the ACC. Samuel Milton moved from his LMS school in Singapore to Malacca in 1823 just after Milne died, planning to become the new ACC President. Instead, Morrison chose James Humphreys (1794-1876) who had arrived in

1821, and this enraged Milton. By November 1823 Morrison was describing Milton as “extravagant, wild, and unstable as water... incoherent, audacious and uncivil. He is disesteemed and distrusted at Singapore”. Even though Morrison was warning about Milton’s plans to publish an article attacking the LMS, perhaps it was a relief when he learned that Milton was thinking of joining the established Church of England. While the LMS included men of the established church, its own structure was not sympathetic to a hierarchical organization of congregations, and its founding statements made this clear. Any moves toward the Anglican Church represented a declaration of alienation from the LMS. Morrison was disheartened to learn that even during their LMS training in London, Milton and Slater had been considered extravagant and eccentric.

Although the LMS men in Malacca had agreed in 1823 to move the main ACC operation to Singapore as a Christian college to supplement the newly-founded secular Singapore Institution, plans fell apart in 1824 after Raffles died suddenly. His successors refused to fulfil his promises of land and grants. The LMS complement in the Strait was changing too; a new man had arrived in Malacca, Samuel Kidd (1804-1843) but John Ince at Penang had died. There were other problems. Humphreys had taken on a moonlighting government job on the side as Chaplain to the English community and was increasingly alcoholic and failing to do his work. Thus by 1824 LMS man David Collie was the only competent Chinese scholar at Malacca able to teach Kidd. Collie was concentrating on mandarin, and there was no-one left at the LMS station who had any skills in the Hokkien language spoken by the local Chinese.

Robert Morrison was becoming depressed at the prospects of the ACC, the Malacca mission, and the whole plan for China. He realized how isolated and lonely the young mission families became, and wrote the LMS in 1823 that it was not reasonable to send out young men of no experience and require them to do everything for their whole lives. Mission wives could not be expected to set up and run girls’ schools because the young wives soon became mothers with other demands on their time, and many became ill and died. He envisioned the ACC as a new kind of mission in its own right, an Anglo-Chinese Mission, that would include a “nursery” to educate new missionaries in Chinese, and a retirement home for aged mission men and their wives, noting that the LMS did not expect mission men to ever return to England except under peculiar circumstances.

He argued that instead of recruiting pious men willing to go anywhere and requiring each man to be a master of all tasks, the Directors should select specific individuals for specific tasks, matching talents to the job. This had especial relevance for the mission to China because it required mastery of a complex written language with a long history and large literature, and thus was very different from the mission work in

the non-literate African cultures that the LMS was undertaking. Morrison was still earning a very good living from his position as translator to the EIC, with £500 p.a. even when he went away on leave to England for two years, but his heart was with the mission to China.

LMS inspection 1826: George Bennet and Rev. Daniel Tyerman

By now the LMS had decided to do a review of all its missions, and in 1821 it sent out a two-man “deputation” on a leisurely trip around the globe to inspect all the LMS stations and write factual and evaluative reports to London. The team consisted of Rev. Daniel Tyerman and Mr. George Bennet. By the time they arrived in Malacca in 1826 they had already visited Medhurst, now in Jakarta for 3 years after leaving Malacca and Penang. In Malacca they met Humphreys and Collie; Kidd was off in Penang taking care of the station there because Beighton was ill.

The ACC and a “union chapel” in Malacca had been built grandly of stone, but the town was in decline with empty and collapsing homes and warehouses as all the trade moved to Singapore. The team found that although the ACC had 26 part-time students (who were in turn teaching in small elementary schools), these were all boys of Malay-Chinese parents, and the mission men had not been able to enrol even one Chinese student. In addition these students in the elementary schools were all being taught in the traditional Chinese way, memorizing classic texts in mandarin and loudly reciting them by rote. Because mandarin was not spoken in Malacca, it was more like memorizing a secret code than learning anything meaningful and the boys were able to read aloud without any understanding of the meaning of the sounds they made.

The team also concluded that the college was not putting enough resources into its religious work with the Chinese students, and Kidd was later forced to explain to the LMS the problems of trying to create a theological frame of mind in people from a culture based on more philosophical ideas. In 1841 the LMS men in Singapore wrote on the same topic: it was much easier to do mission work with Muslims because “they already believe in God and Jesus Christ, but the Chinese Sacred Books do not mention such an idea”. Robert Morrison had long been aware of this problem as well, and wrote in 1832 summing up the work of the protestant missions to China, recording with regret that 25 years of effort had yielded only 10 baptisms. Humphreys and Collie gave the deputation a letter for the LMS asking for an increase in salary for married men in the “China” missions from £250 p.a. to £300 as it was in other stations. As Kidd was the only man at Malacca living entirely on his LMS salary, Humphreys and Collie decided

Kidd could start drawing bills at the increased salary even though it would be nearly two years before they would receive a decision from London.

Tyerman and Bennet told Collie they would recommend that the LMS place only one man at each mission station, and he realized that they were “strongly prejudiced” against Morrison and Milne, probably from their earlier meeting with activist Medhurst in Jakarta. Collie regarded both Kidd and Humphreys as diligent and effective, and argued to the LMS that Tyerman and Bennet were mistaken in their judgements. Kidd too was upset that the deputation took a harsh view of Robert Morrison’s work in laying the basis for a Chinese mission. He was also upset that although the deputation never met Kidd, they and the LMS ordered him to move to Penang immediately and to move his family into Beighton’s house. Kidd was annoyed to realize that the team regarded him as a less than full missionary even though his skills in Chinese were already being capitalized on by the LMS in its recruiting advertisements in England. More troubles followed.

After three weeks the team left, reporting accurately to London that the ACC was in a “depressed” condition. There were no purely Chinese students, yet the entire founding purpose of the school was the education of Chinese students so that they could eventually take Christianity to China. Instead the students were typically Malay-speaking sons of Chinese fathers and Malay mothers. It was known that the racially-proud and particular Chinese in China scorned all such mixtures, would despise such mixed-race young men. This would defeat the entire purpose of the ACC as a means of creating Chinese missionaries for China. Morrison had already acknowledged in reports he published in the *Chinese Repository* that when he examined the progress of the “Chinese” boys who had been trained in the LMS elementary schools to read Chinese text, he discovered a horrible truth. They could read the characters by rote but could not explain their meaning in colloquial Chinese, because as children of Malay-Chinese parents they knew only Malay. These demographic quirks did not bode well for training them to become “Chinese” missionaries to China. It was also a problem because it showed that the LMS feeder schools that were supposed to be preparing senior Chinese students to attend the ACC were doing a poor job.

Widower Collie married a widow soon after the LMS deputation left in early 1826, and became principal of the ACC in early 1827 although he was mortally ill with liver disease that killed him en route home in 1828 on medical furlough. The Malacca station staggered on with more new young mission families, more deaths, and more conflicts.

Miss Newell arrives and creates trouble, 1827

The next major problem in the Straits missions involved a swashbuckling young woman. Miss Newell arrived in late 1827 with a Letter of Instruction from the LMS to set up a school, but the mission had not been told of this and was not able to provide her with housing she liked. She claimed a special friendship with one of the LMS Directors in London as her credentials for her appointment and as the reason the men must give special attention to her needs. Annoyed at not being able to live with the top mission man Collie in the College, she quickly left on a two month holiday to Singapore with Mrs. Garling, the wife of a British official who later became Resident.

When Miss Newell returned she immediately demanded a salary of £200 p.a., the rate for a single missionary. The stunned men agreed to this if she did the work outlined in her Letter of Instruction, but were very unsettled by her demanding ways. She quickly augmented this income by setting up two levels of fee-charging schools for Dutch children rather than working in mission schools, collecting all the school fees as personal income. Kidd reported that Miss Newell was not interested in learning either Chinese or Malay and only taught in English. Newell made a feeble effort to establish a Chinese school as her contribution to the LMS mission but it soon failed. She lived with the Garlings where she had the benefit of servants, conveyances, and other luxuries without the nuisance of rent. She wrote angry letters to the LMS directors complaining of her treatment by the three mission men. She was more productive as a scholar who completed a Dictionary of Cochin-Chinese (Annam), an article on Chinese history, and an English-Chinese Dictionary, which Gutzlaff arranged to be published by the LMS. Her spoken Chinese was not as skilled, as young John Morrison knew her and criticized her tin ear for Chinese, complaining that she was incapable of distinguishing the diacresis that some words needed, for example saying “keen”, instead of kēen.

Miss Newell’s lavish ways ended without further conflicts in 1828 when she married swashbuckling freelance missionary Charles Gutzlaff in an arranged marriage, then died in childbirth with twins, in Bangkok in 1831.

### Humphreys is alcoholic

During these events Humphreys became a problem because of his alcoholism. Humphreys’ wife died in 1827 leaving him with three children, and he was frequently “sick” in Kidd’s delicate reports to the LMS. By early 1829 however, his alcoholism had become so public that the mission men had to write to London for advice. Humphrey was full of remorse and promises, but finally went back to England in 1828 with his two surviving children when it was clear he could not recover. He arrived in London and resigned from the LMS, but wrote a valuable report to the society. He recommended

that Malacca should be used to train mission men in the local Chinese languages of Hokkien and Cantonese but not in the literary mandarin. He argued that the ACC and LMS station be staffed independently, as both needed full-time staff. He noted that the Press belonged to the mission, so the college should be charged for any printing jobs. Whatever his troubles with alcohol, he was intelligent and had a good grasp of management and a practical appreciation of how to train mission men for China.

### Kidd's problems 1828

Samuel Kidd refused to move to Penang despite the order from the LMS deputation, and was left holding down the Malacca station for long periods after Humphreys left in January 1828 and Collie died of liver failure in February en route for his return to England. Morrison wrote Kidd and told him the ACC building should house only the Superintendent of the college and the boarding students, and that Kidd and his family would have to move out even although Collie had invited him to live with his family there while he studied Chinese.

Kidd had been the only man at the mission living entirely on his LMS salary, as Humphreys and Collie were both moonlighting on other jobs, but Kidd moved out in 1826 and rented a house for his family. His wife and his increasing numbers of children were frequently sick. His daughter caught smallpox in 1828, and his wife was frequently ill across the next two years. His problems were magnified by a new mission man John Smith, who arrived in 1826. Kidd found him to be "slothful and indulgent", with no energy or interest in mission work, incapable of learning Chinese after three years tutoring by Robert Morrison, and in 1829 Smith suddenly left Malacca having been told he had an incurable illness, leaving Kidd alone but relieved to be free of a man who had not put any effort into the job.

In late October more problems arose when Kidd allowed the LMS press to be used to print a small newspaper written by John Moor, principal of a local school. Moor made the mistake of writing an article about local slavery by the Malay aristocrats, and this angered the British government eager to have peaceful relations with them. British officials put pressure on Kidd and the LMS for printing the article, Moor resigned as editor of the newspaper and it collapsed.

Kidd's wife and children were repeatedly ill, and by the time in late 1829 Kidd realized he had to send them to England to save their lives in the cooler climate, his great scrupulousness over LMS money had created a problem. As a teacher at the ACC he had been eligible for additional salary of £120 p.a. from the ACC Trust but he offset this by drawing less from his LMS salary of £300 in order to save the LMS money,

taking only £250 of their salary. Even so, the total was so paltry in comparison to the needs of his large family that he had problems paying for the passage home for his sick family members. Kidd's wife and three children left for England at the end of the year, Robert Morrison complaining about Kidd's expenses and little productive work.

#### John Morrison helps in Malacca

Not all who studied at the ACC were as disinterested in their work as the students examined by the deputation, and not all who joined the mission were problematical. In 1828, a few years after Tyerman and Bennet's visit, Robert Morrison's son John (1815-1843) arrived at the Malacca mission for a two-year education at the ACC. He was 13, arriving there after leaving four years of schooling in England to return to the China coast.

Before the arrival of James Legge in 1840, John Morrison was probably the most talented European to spend time at the Malacca mission. He was continuing a family tradition in translation; his uncle William was creating a Bengali-English Dictionary and translating a book on church liturgy into Bengali. John was soon helping at the Malacca LMS press translating a book of religious history into Chinese and teaching Chinese boys in the school. He was also studying Malay and Hokkien Chinese, mastering Euclid, studying Hebrew, reading Xenophon and the New Testament in Greek, reading the biographies of Nepos in Latin, and the New Testament in Chinese.

Perhaps his own intense scholarly interests set too high a standard, for young John complained to his distant father that the Chinese schoolboys were uninterested in their studies. He despaired of the project to educate them, and finally wrote that they were so poorly accomplished that in 1828 it was impossible for the school to hold its intended public examinations. John proposed to Kidd that they should encourage the boys to learn by giving prizes to the best, but this reeked too much of materialism for the pure-minded Kidd.

By the summer of 1829 John was presiding over a massive wood-block printing project at the Malacca LMS Press, working with Kidd to publish a direct new copy of an old Latin-Chinese grammatical text and phrase-book, the *Notitia Linguae Sinicae* originally published by Jesuit Father de Prémare in the mid- 1700s in Canton. This was not as bizarre as it would be today because many Protestant missionaries had been educated in Latin, and such a basic text would be useful for mission men across a variety of European mother-tongues. John Morrison's letters to his father in Canton recorded all the sicknesses of the various adults and children, and reported on his occupational and immensely intense intellectual work. John left Malacca when he was 15, going to his



father Robert in Macau then to Canton in 1830 to work on his father's new Chinese press. Prémare's reprinted book was finally published in Malacca in 1831.

After John left Malacca in 1830, poor Samuel Kidd was again the only Chinese scholar left at the mission. He was only 26 but was tired and often sick. The LMS and ACC had been set up so that they were independent and separately staffed, but now that Kidd was alone, he wrote to Robert Morrison and proposed combining the operations of the printing press, the ACC, and the LMS mission tasks of creating a Chinese congregation under the supervision of one person. Morrison was opposed to this, recognizing that the workload was impossible and that Kidd was actually overwhelmed. Help from London was soon on its way, but in the event represented new problems in the person of Josiah Hughes, still a problem when James Legge arrived.

#### 1830 Kidd needs help: Tomlin, Hughes

In 1826 Jacob Tomlin (1793-1880) and his wife had arrived to help Kidd but had soon left for Singapore then 6 years of wandering on explorations in Thailand, giving no help to Kidd. Instead he worked alone until November 1830 when Josiah Hughes (1804-1840) joined the station. Hughes was a Welsh Calvinist who had initially been turned down by the LMS but accepted after his home church raised a fuss. Kidd started having major epileptic seizures in early 1831. These were treated unsuccessfully with 40 leeches, massive bleedings, and strong purgatives, measures so drastic that it took him 10 days to recover from the treatments. While he was struggling with these problems he learned that his wife was beginning to recover in England, but he was still not sure when she would be well enough to return. He was upset that she had been subjected to attentions from "ungodly and profane fellows" during her voyage returning to England and that the main mission journal had failed to report her return even though it reported the return of two other Malaccan families on the same ship. As his own health became more fragile he began to worry about the lack of any LMS pensions for widows and orphans. He stayed in the mission until 1832 and his return to London where he taught Legge, but his final years in Malacca were complicated by problems with other mission men.

#### Thomsen scandals 1830-1842: incompetence and financial skulduggery

For four years beginning in 1830 Kidd and Tomlin were engaged in a huge battle with the LMS concerning Claudius Thomsen (1782 – 1835), then in Singapore for the LMS. He was a Danish grocer from Holstein accepted as a LMS man in 1811. When he arrived at Malacca in 1815 to work as a printer with Malays it soon became apparent that he did not have any talent for languages. He returned to England in 1816 when his wife

became sick, and while he was away pending her death, Medhurst arrived in July 1817 and quickly began showing Milne his talents in learning Chinese.

Thomsen returned in late 1817 after his wife's death, and gradually found his niche doing Malay printing and in working in elementary Malay schools where he composed simple little oral pieces. Milne considered this work as primitive and as not showing the LMS Chinese mission or the ACC in any favourable light, and began pressing the LMS to transfer Thomsen. Milne had developed a close relationship with a young Muslim Malay scholar Munshi Abdullah, learning Malay from him and gradually realizing that Thomsen's work in Malay was nonsense. Milne was impatient with Thomsen's very limited talents, and perhaps offended by his origins, forced him to live off the LMS premises. Thomsen decided to leave Malacca and began searching for another setting. Beighton in Penang in 1822 refused to accept him, so under increasing pressure to leave, Thomsen ended up in Singapore, the only other local port with British law. His career since then had been chequered.

At first things went well in Singapore. Raffles gave him land and government printing jobs for his Malay press. Thomsen married a new wife, but quarrelled with Samuel Milton, the first LMS man in Singapore, who had hoped to become President of the ACC in Malacca after Milne died, but was not. Milton also quarrelled with Morrison, the founder of the China missions, over English-language printing and four new presses that Milton had ordered from Calcutta in a rather grandiose mode. Milton expected to have at least one assigned to the LMS station, but Morrison and Raffles insisted they were all for the new Singapore Institution, which they were then promoting. Robert Morrison was scornful of Milton's management skills, sarcastic that even if Milton had a press, he did not have enough money to pay the printer. Morrison added that Milton owed \$1,500 to the LMS for earlier activities in Malacca, which he denied.

In 1824 Thomsen took over two of the presses after the Singapore Institution fell apart, while Milton went bankrupt in a big land development scheme. In late 1826 Thomsen wrote the directors details of his very unfavourable opinion of Milton, complaining that Milton did not possess common prudence, "nor veracity nor honesty. He has been the cause of much unpleasantness and trouble to us and... great dishonour to the Gospel... abuses everyone... everything that is vile and threatens to go home and prosecute them for the money which he says they (LMS) owe him". The LMS fired Milton while he was visiting Calcutta and gave his job to Thomsen. After Milton was fired he found a job as Chaplain at the Church of England in Singapore but left for England in 1825.

Thomsen's own money management was not much better. He borrowed money from the English community's Chaplain Robert Burn ostensibly in the name of the LMS, and built a large printing operation with multiple buildings that included a two-storey building that housed one workroom 14 by 52 feet, 8 rooms for workers and stores, and a wooden building for the Press, on a big piece of land owned by Burn. When the LMS deputation arrived in 1825 and examined Thomsen's activity they realized that most of Thomsen's time was spent doing commercial printing. They concluded that he lacked talent for mission work and instead spent his time making money, and recommended the Singapore station be closed. Milton added to their unfavourable views of Thomsen with his own angry evaluations.

In 1826 the LMS began demanding an accounting from Thomsen, but he answered their letters so obliquely that by spring 1827 they wrote effectively firing him. Nothing much happened, so in December 1829 they demanded he send them a large amount of money that they calculated he owed the Society for properties he had purchased for his own account but drawing bills on LMS money. In the leisurely correspondence of the time, a whole series of charges, complaints, counter-complaints and rallying supporters began that extended for many years.

By early 1830, the LMS instructed the Malacca men to sell the Singapore property, and notified its commercial agent that it would not honour any salary bills that Thomsen put forward. He was quickly embarrassed to discover this in trying to draw some cash. The LMS even authorized the agent to arrest Thomsen (evidently for misappropriation of funds), before suspending this plan. Thomsen's friends Tomlin and Burn wrote in July 1830 defending Thomsen, complaining that the LMS property was wrested from Thomsen even though he had worked for years in improving it. The property included a big 35-acre spice plantation (the Battu Belazer Estate) out of town, and Thomsen and his wife had established a home on a small island adjacent to Singapore. His friends argued that he had been sick, then depressed at the LMS letters, thus excusing his failure to answer the complaints against him. They argued both that he had worked hard on the LMS properties, and that many expenses had been charged to the LMS mission that didn't belong to them; of course it was Thomsen who was sending in the accounts laying out those expenses against the LMS account. In September 1830 the LMS finally received an accounting from Thomsen and were temporarily mollified, but it took many more years to establish exactly what had happened.

Thomsen had borrowed money in the name of the LMS from Rev. Burn to buy the spice plantation, but he actually used his own name in the documentation as mortgagee, meanwhile asking the LMS directors to wait for their repayment, as the

plantation would eventually earn money for him. Thomsen claimed the LMS had never answered this letter. By the time the problems of Thomsen's behaviour and his property deals emerged, the property market in Singapore had declined and the plantation was no longer worth its £800 mortgage. The directors pressed Thomsen to transfer the property from his name to the LMS but he refused to comply.

In Malacca Kidd and Tomlin fought for Thomsen by criticizing the LMS deputation of Bennet and Tyerman, in a letter in November 1830. They criticized Bennet as a vain and frivolous man who disgusted them by his conduct. Further, Kidd explained that Tyerman and Bennet didn't seem to be able to distinguish between the literary scholarship in Chinese that Morrison and Milne had shown in all their publications, and the more colloquial work of Humphreys, whom Kidd and Tomlin knew to be far less competent. They tried to defend Thomsen by attributing his problems to his rather reserved temperament, but they had to confess that he had taken on much secular employment with his printing press and the spice plantation. By the end of their letter however, Kidd and Tomlin became increasingly incensed, accusing the LMS directors of wanting "excitement" rather than facts from the missions. They scorned the "accusing eyes" of the directors for missionaries' work, and chastised them for their "mercenary and flippant communications". The two were furious that the directors were ordering them to sell the Singapore chapel to recoup LMS money, when the LMS had paid only one-quarter of its costs.

A local doctor wrote in support of Thomsen, noting he had been sick a long time, and that many benevolent projects that had been promised help from Raffles similarly floundered when he suddenly died and the port fell into difficult times. By December 1830 Kidd and Tomlin printed up a collection of the various documents in this long wrangle, and sent them as a printed Circular to each individual LMS director in England, stoutly arguing that a more moderate approach needed to be taken in dealing with Thomsen.

In 1831 Thomsen was writing with wounded pride, that the LMS lost face in Singapore when it disallowed his salary bills and gave a local merchant power of attorney over the LMS properties; what he did not mention was that these properties were not owned by the LMS but by himself. He had raised money for the Chapel from the LMS, the government and local benefactors, but the building was owned in his own name. He even had a plan in which the Chapel should generate funds to repay the mortgage – through selling seats, surely an extremely inappropriate scheme for a church in the congregational system of the LMS. It takes close reading of his whingeing letters to understand how much he misrepresented to the LMS during his attempts to portray

injured pride. He tried to justify various entrepreneurial expenses, including hiring a young woman teacher. He hired Miss Martin to supervise five schools, and he paid her enough for the costs of a palanquin and horse.

For a while the LMS softened in its letters to Thomsen, and he began a few years of great publishing activity, printing Christian texts in quite poor Malay, along with all his commercial jobs. The problem with this printing was discovered by later mission translators who realized that his mission texts in Malay were extremely primitive versions that he had translated word for word, literal to the point of being unintelligible. Thomsen's Muslim interpreter later explained that Thomsen gave him strict orders that Thomsen had the final say on all the translations.

In London, the directors were furious at Kidd and Tomlin for the Circular that they had sent in support of Thomsen. By September 1831 the LMS issued a printed circular of their own on three large sheets, claiming that Kidd and Tomlin's account was misleading. They outlined in a legalistic way the dates of various letters, with the leading implication that Thomsen typically refused to answer their letters seeking clarification of problems at the Singapore station. In studying the dates of these it seems that the directors were expecting Thomsen to be receiving and responding to their letters faster than the speed the sailing ships could actually provide.

The total debt owed by Thomsen to the LMS was about £850, which he had drawn as bills on the society without ever having had approval for the planned expenditures. Because Sir Stamford Raffles had endorsed the largest bill, the LMS decided not to dishonour them, yet it expected Thomsen to repay the money. The Directors explained that they only became concerned when they learned from Tyerman and Bennet that Thomsen had sunk into a state of "indifference and inactivity", and then found that he would not respond to their repeated request for explanations. They learned he had no children yet had a house built at LMS expense large enough for three families, and had commercial income of £600-700 p.a. additional to his LMS salary of £300. This led them to conclude he was in a position to repay his debts to the Society, and to conclude there was no need for it to pay his return voyage.

Then new complaints against Thomsen arose. In December 1833 the Penang men Beighton and Dyer wrote that there were apparently criminal charges pending against Thomsen for having children with native women, and complaints about him being "loose and free with females", but they did not apparently believe these charges. In January 1834 new mission men Evans and Hughes in Malacca alleged that Thomsen had two half-native children born to him and living in his home. Thomsen denied this,

but Evans, Hughes, and Medhurst were all convinced of Thomsen's guilt and quickly decided he had had to be sent to England to answer to the LMS.

For the rest of the year the Malacca mission men Evans and Josiah Hughes, plus Medhurst, quarrelled with Dyer and Beighton in Penang over what to do with Thomsen. The Penang men were more concerned to give Thomsen a full hearing in Singapore before making any decision. While awaiting such a hearing they recommended that Thomsen be allowed to leave Singapore where his reputation was spoiled, and to live in his home on a nearby island awaiting instructions from London. Beighton pointed out in a letter to Evans and Hughes in January 1834 that the LMS rules for missionaries in India should be consulted in the case. Under the section *Misconduct of missionaries, II, III*, concerning immorality, the local district mission committee had the power to suspend a man after examining the evidence, and must then send its recommendation to London if 2/3 of the local committee agreed. Beighton pointed out that the LMS had dissolved their Ultra-Ganges district committee, so the Straits men had even less authority to send Thomson away. The Rules provided that a mission man under such a situation was to be kept on salary across the year in which letters to and from London could be completed. Beighton urged "it is impossible to be too tender and gentle until we find out".

As the months passed it appeared that the stories were false and arose from casual gossip started by a Miss Martin. She eventually disclaimed any responsibility for the stories that had claimed that Thomsen was paying improper attention to women, and she refused to play any role in any Singapore investigation or hearing when Medhurst tried to press her. She eventually wrote of her bitter regret at her actions, writing Mrs. Thomsen a letter pleading for her forgiveness. All the parties to the turmoil agreed he was "an old gentleman" and that his great age was sufficient guarantee of the absurdity of such charges; he was 52. Beighton and Dyer learned of a number of Singapore residents who thought very highly of Thomsen and independently cast great doubt on the charges that Evans and Medhurst were pursuing with such fervour. Beighton was scandalized however, when he learned that the LMS chapel in Singapore was privately owned by Thomsen, and not by the society.

In 1832 Robert Morrison wrote "poor old Thomsen is breaking up", but he was still working with Dyer on experiments in different printing techniques, and they were publishing articles in the *Chinese Repository* about these experiments, publishing his word list of 3,000 characters in 1834. Thomsen's last attempt at a commercial transaction before he left Singapore consisted of sending young John Morrison in Canton an ingenious device to use in creating metal types for Chinese text that would be

of a standard height for printing. John was running his own press in Canton by then and he recognized the cleverness of the invention. Thomsen sent John the gadget and a bill charging \$16 for it, although John had not even known of it, much less ordered it. John's skills in oral and written Chinese were now fully recognized by the Canton traders and he was hired in 1830 as a translator for the British traders there at a salary of \$1200 or £300 annually.

By then Thomsen's second wife was gravely ill and they left for England in May 1834. Two weeks after Thomsen's October arrival in London his wife died, and the LMS allowed him to resign from the society rather than embarrassing him by terminating his appointment. By mid-July 1835 his second wife was dead of "advanced disease". The last word they had in the Strait was rumours that he was "preparing for a third wife", keeping the gossip pot boiling. Beighton realized in retrospect this courtship was probably going on even when Thomsen was still in Singapore.

There now was great confusion over the true ownership of all the printing press buildings in Singapore. The LMS believed it owned these premises but local officials seemed to have a different understanding, so a special inquiry commission had to be sent out. John Evans went from Malacca in 1835 to get the LMS property titles in Singapore straightened out, and he was shocked to discover that Thomsen had done all the deals in his own name, and the LMS owned no properties. Thomsen had been renting out the mission house to an American mission for \$20 p.m., and rented out the LMS Chapel to the government for use in Church of England services for \$20 p.m., with one year's worth of that an unpaid debt. Worse, the Church of England chaplain Mr. Darrah was known as an extremely narrow and intolerant high church man who would not allow the local American missionaries to use the LMS chapel for evening services even when Darrah's congregation wasn't using it. From Penang, old Beighton sharpened the point by writing the LMS that even if an LMS director came to Singapore he would not be allowed to use the LMS chapel pulpit. Evans concluded that the properties the LMS had understood it owned were in fact all Thomsen's private property, bought with the help of mortgage money Thomsen had borrowed in his personal capacity from Robert Burn, the Anglican Chaplain in Singapore. This news shocked the LMS, which had assumed it owned the Singapore properties that Tyerman and Bennet had seen. Thomsen's financial benefactor Burn died in 1833 and Thomsen had to pay off his mortgage to Burn's estate. He generated money to pay this debt by selling the Press to the newly-arrived American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, for \$1,500.

Evans could not find any ownership papers for the spice plantation even though LMS money had paid for it, borrowing mortgage money of £800. Evans ordered the

plantation manager to sell the property and to pay himself and the property's debts out of the proceeds. Evans argued that the residual was owed to the LMS because the mortgage debt had been in its name. Similarly concerning the LMS press, the LMS learned that it owned nothing of the press equipment, buildings or land. Thomsen had owned all his press equipment privately and sold it to the American mission. In addition, the land on which the press buildings and two good houses were situated was all Thomsen's private possession. In sum, there was no mission in Singapore for anyone to run. The mission owned no land, no mission house, no chapel, no congregation, no schools, and no press.

Even forgiving old Beighton concluded sorrowfully that Thomsen had failed to be fully candid with his brothers in the LMS, and instead showed a "scheming disposition" and a "mysterious or suspicious character" that had injured the reputation of the LMS. As late as 1837 Evans was still discovering debts Thomsen owed on behalf of his various "LMS" schemes, including another \$300 to Rev. Burn's estate. The anticipated proceeds from the sale of the spice plantation turned into ashes when the best offer was \$300 (about £75), when more than that was needed simply for repairs to the place.

For 8 years (1834-1842) the LMS negotiated with the American missionaries for the rights to the properties Thomsen used, because Evans and Dyer still believed that the land and building that Thomsen had privately sold to the US mission was actually owned by the LMS. The Americans contested this, but eventually they sold the press, then simply gave the land and buildings back to the LMS in 1842 when they left Singapore for China. By then Singapore was no longer a station of interest for the preparation of missions to China. But Thomsen's exit from the Straits missions did not solve their problems, and the Malacca mission was again in a "very confused state" as a new problem developed.

#### Tomlin financial scandal in Malacca 1833

Jacob Tomlin returned to Malacca in 1830 from his travels in Thailand, Bali, and Singapore to help Kidd, and took over the Malacca mission after Kidd's departure in 1832. Almost immediately he triggered problems in the ACC and acted in a muffled financial scandal. In 1833, as Acting Principal of the ACC, Tomlin "abolished" (perhaps confiscated) the money that the LMS intended to be paid to students as a stipend. This compounded the problems created by his early decision to abolish teaching mandarin, the language of officials in China, in favour of teaching only Hokkien, the local port dialect of the migrants from Fukien province. This eliminated the problem of the surrealistic and useless rote mandarin teaching that had been going on, but had the



miserable effect of negating the boys' years of experience matching Chinese characters to mandarin. Abandoning mandarin would limit them in any future mission work in China, where they would not be understood anywhere but in Hokkien-speaking areas. It also ruined the students in terms of other Chinese career prospects because most parents sent their children to the ACC because they believed the bilingual mandarin-English education would benefit their sons' careers in business. Clearly Tomlin's utilitarian ideas were not consistent with Morrison's vision of helping Chinese boys to become highly educated.

As a result of his ill-judged initiatives, Tomlin was fired by the LMS in 1833, and in the wake of his being fired, financial irregularities were discovered. Tomlin had somehow been earning significant income during his 6 years of itinerant mission explorations with Gutzlaff to Thailand 1826-1832, and later claimed he had waived his right to the LMS annual salary during those travels, but his financial dealings were apparently complex and he was in fact drawing LMS bills during this period. He learned of his termination from the LMS in September 1833 through an anonymous letter in LMS handwriting from London, advising that his connection to the society was severed on grounds of dissatisfaction with his conduct over the last 2 1/2 years. It advised him that he owed the LMS £625 and that the society would pay the costs of his return voyage. He and his wife both wrote spirited critiques of this anonymous "piece of blank paper", reported their good health and their intentions to stay on. His wife provocatively added that the £625 account should be cancelled, as "we spent it all on LMS work"; this suggests that he had definitely been accepting LMS money during his journeys in Thailand without ever providing reports on his work.

#### Kidd's defeat by illness 1832

At Malacca, Kidd's persistent illness and epileptic fits finally forced him to leave for London in early 1832; he was too poor to pay for his own passage and had to supply a doctor's certificate in order for the costs to be borne by the LMS. Once returned, he was ordered to appear before a Select Committee of the LMS to be held accountable for his circular in support of Thomsen. He responded with a dignified essay in July on the right to free speech, explaining that he would not defend his character, but only his opinions on public matters. He argued that disagreeing with individual directors was consistent with the independent thinking LMS principles, which he had always used in guiding his actions. He noted that the circular was not for public view but was an administrative document to directors who were responsible to the public. As they had repeatedly failed to respond to letters he had written while the Thomsen problems

emerged, then made decisions against Thomsen without consulting those who knew his work, Kidd argued the circular was justified.

By then the Directors had already reversed their decisions about the Singapore mission, and in December 1832 they decided that the Singapore property should be kept after all, that they would continue the Singapore mission, and would send an additional man to the station. They pardoned Kidd and Tomlin's circular, gracefully recognizing they had written it without full knowledge of the facts.

### John Evans arrives in Malacca 1833

After Kidd's departure the LMS sent John Evans to Malacca in 1833 to run the ACC, and Tomlin and Hughes were not at all pleased at Evans' arrival. The Directors in London told Evans he would live in the college, but Tomlin and Hughes were living there and were actively hostile to that plan. "They treated me as an enemy and spy", he reported, and they demanded to know on whose authority he claimed rights to live in the college. He read out his Letter of Instruction, which they immediately challenged on the ground that the LMS had no authority over the ACC, which was an independent college. Further they asserted that Tomlin ran the college thus the LMS had no authority to fire him, and he refused to resign. Hughes and Tomlin tried to find some rental rooms for Evans in town but were unable to, so with reluctance let him move into the very rooms that he had expected to use. Hughes then moved out to make room for Tomlin's family, but Tomlin refused to leave the ACC for another four months despite having been fired by the LMS, and refused to quite the college job for another 3 months until Robert Morrison insisted from his distant command centre in Macau.

### Tomlin and Hughes fight Evans

Finally both Tomlin and Hughes moved to a house Tomlin found 4 miles from town, in a village called Klaywan where James Legge later encountered Hughes and Evans under deadly circumstances. Hughes played a duplicitous role during these housing struggles, secretly telling Evans that Tomlin was planning on moving to Australia in a few months, thus ensuring that Evans would have reason to continue working with Hughes after his pal Tomlin left town.

After Tomlin was fired by the LMS he disputed his termination across the following year, but finally accepted it in 1834 and set up a private school in a spirit of some malice, but with subtle help from the British Resident Mr. Garling. Tomlin named it "The Benevolent Institution" and planned to operate it in direct competition with Evans at the ACC. By June 1834 Evans wrote of his "extreme animosity" toward Tomlin. Things became more unpleasant when Hughes began openly to side against Evans and

with Tomlin in this entrepreneurial venture, thus undermining the very LMS educational system he had been sent out to enhance. Tomlin's school faltered within two years without ever having become successful, probably because he was headstrong and had created the school mostly out of spite rather than out of any educational motive. He left Malacca in 1836 to travel in Bengal, returned to England where he was ordained in the Church of England in 1846, drifted across many temporary curate appointments for many years, finally serving as a vicar in northern England 1868-76 until his death in 1880, with continuing financial complications with the LMS<sup>7</sup>.

For a while the Malacca mission began to operate more smoothly. Hughes was studying Malay, and in 1835 Sam Dyer moved from the Penang station to join Evans in the work printing Chinese materials. Because the LMS had not instructed him to move, he paid his own travel expenses for moving his family. The British Resident Mr. Garling turned down an offer from the LMS to become a local Director for the Malacca station, providing a duplicitous demonstration of enlightened imperial thinking. He explained rather grandly that he was expected to defend the toleration and protection of native religions and might find himself in "collision" with the mission men at times if he joined them. He preferred not to "disrupt the harmony" they all had. This politely ignored the fact that he had been openly supporting Tomlin in his attempt to undermine the LMS school and mission.

#### Hughes' scandal in Malacca 1834: manoeuvring for a posh job

John Evans became anxious and lonely as he persisted in the battles against Thomsen in Singapore and in dealing with Tomlin's animosity and open competition. Things became even worse when Josiah Hughes began some sordid manoeuvres encouraged by Resident Garling, to get income in addition to his LMS salary. This was contrary to LMS policy in paying its men for full-time work. In the fall of 1834 Evans

---

<sup>7</sup> When Tomlin lived in retirement in England as a Fellow of St. John's College Oxford, he wrote the LMS Directors in 1864 asking for a pension in his old age.. His first attempt was refused by the Directors on the grounds that he did not meet the criteria required for "superannuated missionaries" to receive annual pensions. He responded with a different perspective, arguing that the income generated by his forgone salary (a salary amounting to £1,800 over the period 1826-1832) be provided to him as annual grants in his time of hardship; this would be an equitable dealing, not charity. The LMS decision is not known.

realized that Hughes was abandoning the dissenting principles of the LMS about worship and church organization, and was turning himself into a strong Episcopalian.

Evans had good reasons for being very suspicious of Hughes' new attachment for the Church of England as arising from something other than religious feeling. Hughes had learned that the local (formerly Dutch) church was going to become consecrated as a Church of England when the British Bishop of Calcutta visited. Hughes was the acting Chaplain to the church (moonlighting to double his LMS income by an additional £300), but he knew that once the church became consecrated, no dissenter would be allowed to be its Chaplain. Hughes wanted the job and figured out the only way to get it was by converting to the Church of England. Hughes secretly wrote applying for ordination in a scheme cooked up with the help of Tomlin and the Church of England chaplain in Singapore. Evans figured this out, taunted Hughes that the real reason for his sudden conversion was "loaves and fishes", and wrote London in August 1834 that the LMS deputation's unfavourable report about Malacca was only "too true".

Hughes further alienated Evans by ignoring all his mission tasks, which included all the mission accounting. Living with Tomlin out in the nearby village, Hughes actively promoted the interests of Tomlin's new school and even lured away the ACC Chinese teacher. Tomlin had expected that all his students would follow him and create an instant body of paying students, but most stuck with the ACC. By now, Tomlin was a "bitter enemy" of Evans and the LMS. Hughes only wandered by the LMS once every other week even though he was a regular full-time missionary and was supposed to be handling all the mission accounts as a bare minimum of effort.

Now Evans discovered specific problems in the accounts. He was outraged to discover that donated money he had passed along to Hughes for the LMS Portuguese/Malay schools, had been given to Tomlin for use in his own private school. Beighton in Penang was worried that even in October 1834 Tomlin was still cashing bills on the LMS account even though he had been severed from it and was actively hostile. Then Hughes began cashing bills on the LMS that were not for mission expenses, but instead were personal loans, unbeknownst to the merchants who were cashing them. When Evans gave Hughes bills from the mission that needed to be paid, Hughes took them out to his country hideout and ignored them; he would neither pay them nor return them so that Evans could. Evans eventually realized that Tomlin would never leave as long as he had Hughes supporting his operations, and therefore it was necessary for the LMS to remove Hughes as well. Beighton, from his safe perch in Penang mourned, "Unhappy Malacca, it has almost always been the scene of strife and confusions, the seeds of which were sown with the College foundation".

The Bishop of Calcutta was canny however, and when he visited in September 1834, he quickly understood the true purpose of Hughes' scheme. He visited Evans and the ACC and refused to take Hughes into ordination training in Calcutta until the LMS directors expressed their views of his plan. He pointed out the LMS had paid for Hughes education and his voyage out, and Hughes would have to get their approval and repay them their costs on his behalf. Hughes would have to sever his connection with the LMS in an honourable way, spend some time unconnected with any mission, and then make a public application to the Bishop. In particular the Bishop wanted to be assured that "...no pecuniary views have induced you to change" denominations. He also warned Hughes that he would not promise to ordain Hughes even then, and there was always the chance he would die before Hughes' application could be considered. Hughes was very offended because he did not want to have to go to Calcutta and study for ordination, and he certainly did not want to exchange one job for the other, he wanted both jobs and both incomes.

The story of Hughes' greed and humiliation spread throughout the Straits. Evans was exultant at the massive failure of Hughes' scheme and his public shaming, but Evans was also fed up with all the troubles. In addition to the Thomsen affair, the Tomlin affair, and the Hughes affair, Evans had had learned of the death of Robert Morrison in Canton in 1834, and realized he had lost his distant but powerful supporter. "The Pillar of the ACC is gone, and the destruction of the factory at Canton has lost us \$1200 p.a.; without it we cannot go on". This referred to an annual grant from the EIC to the college that Morrison had arranged. Further, Morrison's death left a serious gap in the governance of the ACC because he had essentially controlled its operations from its founding in 1818 when he had arranged that the EIC at Penang would grant land in Malacca to the college.

By October Evans was pleading with London to send another man to help him, and the LMS in London was trying to reconstruct the history of the ACC to find out if the LMS had any rights to the land or buildings, concluding that it did not. Mission men thus had no right at all to live in the college unless they were hired by it. By November Evans had 12 printers working on Chinese Christian publications, and everyone was getting very interested in events in China, but more urgent local problems continued to disturb the Malacca mission work with the arrival of a mentally-disturbed woman claiming an LMS connection.

The tragedy of Miss Wallace 1833 - 36

The LMS straits missions were now hit with an unusual problem. Miss Mary Wallace had arrived in Malacca in August 1829, where she was supposed to be a companion to another single woman teacher, Miss Newell, who arrived in 1827, but who in December married missionary Charles Gutzlaff and had left for Thailand. Alone, Miss Wallace tried to run schools with the support of an independent ladies' committee in the UK, under some murky connection with the LMS. Her management was so chaotic that the LMS men there tried to advise her on how to do things, but she resisted every kind of guidance. In February 1833 she suddenly left, then appeared at Penang, claiming that the LMS men did not want her in Malacca. Beighton was puzzled, and she soon left for Singapore where she tried running a small school in the home of an American missionary there, Rev. Ira Tracey, who tried to maintain very proper relationships as they were both single. In January 1835 Tracey received an urgent note saying that she was dying, and rushed to see her with visiting mission doctor Peter Parker. They found her deranged, and read her journals. These further confirmed their impression and showed that her condition had been present for some time. They took her from the Chinese house where she was found, barefoot, with her hair down and in Chinese dress, and placed her in a safe family home. Her condition was so deranged the local officials decided to send her back to the UK; they decided her condition was a "calamity".

During the trip from Singapore to Penang she behaved very strangely on the ship, then left it in Penang, where she presented old Beighton with a letter from Resident Mr. Garling in Malacca advising Beighton to send her back to England at the expense of the LMS. Beighton was perturbed. Garling's letter made it clear Miss Wallace was not wanted in Malacca, yet it provided no details. Freshly arrived in Penang she was healthy, claimed a connection with the LMS without any documentation, and announced her intention to stay there a while before embarking on a trip to England via Madras and Calcutta. This was a very strange route, and to the experienced travellers of the day, including Beighton, there was a huge mystery as to why she had not gone from the busy port at Singapore to take a long-distance ship directly to England. The route she was taking led her bizarrely up the Malay coast to the west and far north into India, vastly off-route and unnecessarily expensive in relation to her goal of England. Within weeks a turbulent flood of events surrounded Miss Wallace.

Beighton discovered that she had written a bill on the LMS in Malacca for £100 via Evans and Hughes, but she had not actually cashed it and had no documented connection with the LMS. Beighton concluded it was not reasonable for him to endorse her bill on behalf of the LMS, and told her to cash it in Madras. He next learned that the

Captain and crew considered Miss Wallace to be insane, observing, "I am sorry to add, the poor Lady appears disordered in her intellect... I feel very sorry for her. She ought never to have come out alone". He wrote the LMS that the Malacca men would have to account to the Directors for the £100 bill, because he could see no basis for her receiving it.

Events became more complicated when the Chief Mate was cleaning out her cabin and found her diary abandoned in her helter-skelter disembarkation. He and the captain were dismayed at its contents, which included an account of a vision she had in which their ship was lost on rocks and she was then murdered. The captain refused to take her back, the crew fearing her presence on board would threaten their safety going around the Cape of Good Hope. At first she countered by "refusing" to go any further in his ship, then demanded to be taken to Madras. She again tried to cash the £100 bill but the merchant sent it to Beighton for confirmation as a legitimate LMS bill. Beighton kept it and disallowed any responsibility for the vague endorsement done by Evans and Hughes.

Sam Dyer and his wife had been with Miss Wallace on her outward journey to Malacca, and they tried to talk "seriously" to her, but Beighton accurately recognized that despite her "insanity" she was very cunning. She had money with her that she spent lavishly and foolishly, saying that she would cash the LMS bill when her "earnings" ran out. She had brought two servants with her from Singapore, and was spending at a terrific rate for the upkeep of her clothing. Initially she had free room and board with the two LMS men, but as she became more disordered and confused she ran to friends of theirs and begged to be taken in, promising full payment for their help. Beighton was terrified that she would spend all her cash then be unable to buy her passage home, leaving his mission stuck with the problem of this increasingly erratic woman.

Then Miss Wallace laid a complaint against the LMS men with the local British official, the Recorder, Sir B. H. Malkins, apparently about the LMS bill. A Recorder was a British judge who had responsibility for criminal justice in a colonial city. The mission men explained that they had no authority to spend LMS money on her account, concluding they would release the £100 bill only if required to by a court. They hoped a court would deal with the question of Wallace's competence to handle her own affairs, but the Recorder was reluctant to take the matter to court. Miss Wallace then produced documents for him that implied the LMS had previously approved three bills of £100 for her, but her account was peculiar enough that he decided she should be sent to Calcutta because there was an "insane hospital" there where she could be placed. Beighton worried about that as too cruel a fate, and about the trip to Calcutta as too costly. He

thought that she should be sent directly to England. From Malacca, Evans now disavowed any responsibility for her, declaring she had made all her financial arrangements in Singapore without his knowledge or participation.

Recorder Malkin was known as a relentlessly objective and strong-minded man, having had the temerity to rule against the EIC in an earlier case, a ruling so cogently-argued that the grand EIC was afraid to appeal. He told the LMS men they had two options: at their own cost take her to court so her sanity could be evaluated using evidence collected from Malacca and Singapore, or let her act freely. He promised the men that if the LMS directors eventually disapproved of their conduct, he would write in their defence. Beighton returned the £100 LMS bill to her after the Recorder's review, and she quickly began another spending spree, apparently on speculation that the LMS bill would be endorsed, because she sent it to Evans in Malacca to have him cash it for her.

The entire small community in Penang knew of her capricious and "notorious" behaviour. Two captains refused to take her even to the more local ports of Malacca or Singapore, and it became increasingly unlikely any captain would allow her on board for a longer voyage to India or England. Evans did not want her back in Malacca and refused to cash the £100 bill he had originally endorsed, sending it back to her intact. Beighton pleaded with the Society's directors to seek out Miss Wallace's friends and explain her circumstances and the risk that she would end up in a government insane asylum if she persisted in her plan of going to Calcutta. In March Beighton made it clear to the Recorder that Miss Wallace had no claims on the LMS, and it could not be held responsible for her. He read her diary and found it "of a most outrageously absurd character", with a confused mix of dreams, visions, and revelations. He realized that although she showed ample cunning in dealing with different individuals, she really was not competent in handling her money.

Miss Wallace moved from the private home to the protection of a Roman Catholic nunnery, signing a formal agreement to abide by its Rules and not to leave. Beighton glumly observed that if the LMS men had tried to get her to sign any similar sort of contract for good behaviour "I suppose we should have been in hot water". Wallace soon created more excitement by escaping from the nunnery by climbing over the wall, "at large again", showing up next at a tavern and eventually moving to a Chinese family home. By May 1835 all her money was gone and she had become so unruly a public figure that a local Notary Public offered to initiate the court hearing that could rule on her sanity, at his own expense.



The jury of 17 was unanimous in judging Miss Wallace insane in July 1835, providing a Certificate of Lunacy and sending her to be kept in the prison. The kindly gaoler family, the Taylors, offered to give her refuge pending her departure rather than seeing her confined in the jail. Unfortunately, Miss Wallace was floridly psychotic by this stage and was found trying to jump on their infant after having injured it, having already kicked and bruised another of their children. Taken back into government custody, Miss Wallace next became a problem for the Governor of the Straits. Mr. Murcheson was eager to get clear of her and in mid-July again tried to get Beighton to assume responsibility on behalf of the LMS. Beighton and Dyer were equally determined to stay clear of her, knowing they had no money and no access to the funds needed to pay a passage to England for her and a care-taking servant.

Beighton was distraught. If Miss Wallace had left for England in February when he had urged her, she would still have had the funds and the capacity to manage the trip, but now her behaviour was so demented she was kept in close confinement. Hughes in Malacca in late summer 1835 was slacking off all his LMS accounting tasks and not responding to any of the frantic queries from the Penang mission men about the £100 LMS bills being proffered by Miss Wallace.

Eventually Beighton discovered that Miss Wallace never had any official appointment from the LMS, but instead had personal acquaintance with some of the LMS directors, to whom she had appealed for direct grants when she had needed more money to run the schools at Malacca. Rumours were circulating that Gutzlaff was the real source of her madness, on the grounds that he had married another Englishwoman, Mary Wanstall, in Malacca at about the time that Miss Wallace left in disarray. Beighton wisely added that even if Gutzlaff's behaviour contributed to Wallace's disorder, there also had to be some predisposition for such a serious derangement.

Beighton in Penang was finally freed of his worries about Miss Wallace in 1836. Once the certificate of lunacy established her incapacity to manage her own affairs the Bengal government in India was legally in position to take charge, and it ordered her to Calcutta, with a plan to send her to England at the earliest chance. In Penang the Recorder examined all the outstanding debts attributed to her, adjudicated some as fair and paid them, and ruled other charges to be excessive. Her friends in the UK sent

money to Calcutta to pay for her return journey, and Miss Wallace was no longer a problem in the straits.<sup>8</sup>

### John Morrison in Canton 1834, talented but struggling

While the Malacca mission men struggled across the 1830s, events in China had been heating up as Britons and Chinese continued their trade struggles. Robert Morrison had been part of the attempt by Lord Napier in 1833-34 to establish free trade at Canton, but now his son John Morrison (1814-1843) was a talented and effective young man who might be brought into mission work even though he was earning his living by doing commercial printing in Canton.

There John was part of a small community of Christians that included the American missionary Elijah Bridgman (1801-1861), who was later to arrange for Legge to receive an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree. Bridgman was the editor of the *Chinese Repository* in Canton, a journal of missionary, literary, and political affairs, and John printed this journal on his Press.

Bridgman was rather high-handed with young John, expecting him to drop all his work every time a new issue of the *Repository* was ready to print. It was common for public men to write anonymous letters to local newspapers and magazines using nicknames as disguise. Despite his official sanctity, Bridgman was not above such an anonymous letter, and in 1834 he wrote a trouble-making anonymous letter to the Singapore newspaper that many readers there assumed John wrote. Young John was wise enough to recognize that this would create mischief in his own affairs, and wrote his father advising that Bridgman was its author. John's letters to his father in Macau often commented delicately on some of the anonymous letters sent to the *Canton Register*, which he was also printing for the business community, if they contained scurrilous or incorrect material. At times he added a footnote in the *Register* itself as he prepared it for printing in consultation with its editor Slade.

Although he was not yet an adult, John also often provided sophisticated and diplomatic advice to his father, and all his letters starting with his early teenage years show that he was precociously wise. When Robert founded *The Evangelist* magazine hoping that it would be self-sustaining as a report on religious matters, he wrote the text

---

<sup>8</sup> This account of Miss Wallace's mental illness is very different from that of historian Brian Harrison (Brian Harrison, 1979). He considers that she left Malacca to join the "American missionary Society" in 1834 to superintend its schools in Canton or Macau, but the missionary letters of the day make that description of her movements quite incorrect.

in Macau and sent it to Canton for John to publish. Only age 19, John soon had to explain to his strong-minded father that the journal could never succeed solely on the basis of religious news, but would need to expand to include literary and other information in order to entice purchases from the general community.

Robert's letters to John during this period must have been full of complaints about John's "carelessness" about his father's health, and about his failure to answer every point in each of the many letters Robert was sending. John responded with gently filial contrition, but also point-by-point responses to all the complaints in Robert's letters. The real problem seems to have been that John was delaying publication of his father's magazine the *Evangelist*, spending his time instead in writing and publishing the first-ever *Commercial Guide* to trade with China. John's printing efforts were complicated after he purchased a set of American fonts of the alphabet and was discouraged to find that he had been cheated because many of the types were unusable.

#### John Morrison and Gutzlaff in Canton

In the summer of 1834 Canton was becoming the site of increasing activity that now included Charles Gutzlaff, eventually at the core of a major problem for James Legge. Gutzlaff was an energetic and foolhardy German missionary, arrived in Canton joining the small group of Christians there, having married his second wife, Englishwoman Miss Mary Wanstall in an arranged marriage done in Malacca months earlier, in May 1833. John found Gutzlaff's endless boasting of her charms to be foolish and demeaning, and Gutzlaff even had the lack of social grace to urge John to write his new bride a letter of congratulations. John refused; he didn't know her and "even if I did I could not congratulate her", John's knowledge of British etiquette firm. She was a tall woman of commanding presence with heavy eyebrows and strong features, wearing a huge white dress with flowing sleeves. Her presentation terrified Yung Wing, one of the young Chinese students in her Macau school, and later a famous reformer in China.

For a while it was rumoured that Gutzlaff was going to be offered the job of Assistant Interpreter in the diplomatic negotiations between Britain and China, which suited John well even though he considered it was not suitable because Gutzlaff had recently made questionable trips up the north coast with an opium merchant. John knew that some merchants in Canton would have been happy to see John get the Interpreter job, just "to quietly get rid of me". Gutzlaff's suitability as a government interpreter was murky to others as well as John, in that a local Sir Andrew wanted to publish an anonymous letter as "Postscript" criticizing those "who abuse the Chinese passport law, by going into places up the coast to sell opium and distribute tracts,

against the laws of the land”. “Postscript’ was referring to Gutzlaff and his trips in 1832 and 1833, and every reader would have known this.

Gutzlaff eventually did not take the Interpreter job but was active in many different ventures. He tried to get John to be a partner in a magazine he was publishing but John would have nothing to do with it realizing that Gutzlaff included “extremely troublesome” material in the magazine, including accounts of his travels that were full of nonsense. In the absence of an official Assistant Interpreter across the summer of 1834 the merchants of Canton regularly hired young John as interpreter and translator, and he was developing great confidence in his skills in Chinese.

During this event-filled summer John was feeling isolated and overworked, sharing quarters with a worldly man he did not like. He found that although he shared a “Christian communion” with American missionaries Bridgman and Wells Williams, “it can hardly be called communion”. He found the Americans too full of “self-esteem, ... vanity, and self-love”. They constantly asserted American superiority in all things, and even in the small community of believers, the Bridgman family never included young John’s name in their public prayers. John was upset by this narrow ethnocentrism and argued that good Christians “should consider each country but as a lodging more or less convenient and comfortable to the traveller” rather than taking a nationalistic stance. Later events suggest that national chauvinism often interfered in the relations among the Protestant missionaries in China, including in the greatest conflict they ever had, the battle between the Americans and James Legge with Medhurst over the best term to use in Chinese to represent the idea of God.

Lord Napier had hired staff to help in the treaty negotiations of 1834, including two men (Davis and Plowden) whom young John regarded as having poor competence in Chinese, poor enough that they would not be able “to avoid trouble in the negotiations”. By mid-July Napier also hired John’s father and EIC translator Robert Morrison as secretary-translator to the diplomatic mission at the magnificent annual salary of £1,300, and appointed him as Vice-Consul for the trip. This was a great help as employment for Robert Morrison now that the EIC was no longer a source of income. A few days after accepting the new commission as Vice-Consul, Robert Morrison went with Lord Napier from Macau to join John in Canton in late July, then died in less than two weeks on 1 August 1834, aged 52. He had spent all night in an open boat to Canton during extreme heat and a terrific storm, arriving exhausted with heat stroke that developed into a fever. His death was sudden and unexpected by John and the diplomatic and business community, and a great shock to Napier.

In Canton John's Chinese skills in oral and written language had been immediately recognized by the traders and the diplomats. His fluency was so established that in letters to his father he often wrote partly in Chinese when he wanted to add precision to his meaning. Canton missionary Bridgman and even Medhurst used young John to correct all the Chinese texts they wrote, before printing. With his father's death John began to realize he would probably become the new Vice-Consul for interpretation. Early in 1835 he wrote telling his mother in England of his measurements so that she could order the uniform plus a sword and hat for him when he would need it for a British trade expedition north, which he expected he would have to accompany. Lord Napier immediately invited John, then 19, to assume his father's job as interpreter for the delicate negotiations.

Robert's financial legacy to John was meagre even though Robert had enjoyed an enviable income across all his years working for the EIC. In fact Robert's income was so vastly in excess of what a missionary might expect, that his opulent home and rich possessions in Macau were later used as an example of missionary hypocrisy by the young Chinese convert Shao Tih, actually annoyed at being criticized for his opium habit. Across his life much of Robert's income had been spent on buying books, furniture, and a house that all had been ravaged by ants and mould during his three-year trip to England 1823-26; a later library was destroyed by fire. John inherited three complete sets of the 4,600-page, 93-volume English-Chinese *Dictionary* that his father had published, but it was so huge and expensive that there was no commercial interest in it. John tried to settle his father's estate, writing his mother in Britain and trying to figure out what to do with the wonderful collection of ancient Chinese books owned by his father. Despite their great scholarly and historical value, there was no way he could sell them at their true value, and he was very short of funds.<sup>9</sup>

#### John Morrison, a young man of promise; Canton

Despite his financial problems at the time of his father's death, it seemed to everyone that John Morrison would have a life of wonderful accomplishment. By 1835 he decided that the best memorial for Robert would be the creation of an education society, the Morrison Education Society (MES), which would serve as a foundation for the creation of schools in China, and eventually a College. Chinese students would be educated broadly, including in European science and the English language.

---

<sup>9</sup> Eventually they were donated to University College London, in 1837, which established a Chair of Chinese under urgings by Sir George Staunton.

John was desperately lonely in Canton. At 20, his father was dead, his mother and siblings were all in Britain, and he was earning his own living. Two years later the LMS recorded in its Minutes that it intended to help Robert Morrison's widow and children "whatever alleviation is in the power to supply". John wanted more mission men for China and lived on faint threads of news suggesting that in a few years one of the young Milne men might come to China as an LMS missionary. In the meantime, although he was only 20, he was running the Albion Press for all kinds of publications, writing a commercial guide outlining Chinese regulations for the Canton traders, and trying to be helpful to the American missionaries.

But in 1835 officials in Canton were seizing Chinese Christians including Liang Fa, the LMS printer from Malacca. As unrest spread in Canton, John Morrison's books were all stolen. Keuh Agong (Qu Yaang), another Christian originally from Malacca, helped John in negotiations to purchase the release of Liang and other Chinese Christians from jails, and by early 1835 sent some of them back to the safety of Malacca where James Legge met them when he arrived a few years later. John was smart enough to realize that the principle of buying-back hostages was deeply wrong and would lead to more trouble. Some of the money being used to buy back jailed Chinese Christians was provided from the Christian Union, a new venture started by the Morrises and Gutzlaff.

#### Gutzlaff and the Christian Union

Charles Gutzlaff (1803-1851) had a long and contentious history in relation to mission work in China. In Macau in 1831 Robert Morrison considered that Gutzlaff brought scorn on the missionary enterprise by visiting the EIC offices wearing versions of Chinese dress so peculiar that the Chinese servants gossiped about him and the ladies and gentleman joked about him. "Beside Gutzlaff, Mr. Bridgman is quite a dandy". But Gutzlaff had great energy and had managed to get himself hired on a Chinese trading vessel headed north at \$100 per month, during which he had twice escaped being murdered. His plan was to provide medical care (for which he had no training), while handing out Christian pamphlets. In the next two years he made seven such trips along the coast north, working as a sailor and as a cook. In 1833 he was in Canton soliciting donations to help start a Chinese magazine, trying to get money from the wealthy taipan (foreign boss) Joseph Jardine but instead managing to antagonize him. In October 1833 he married second wife Englishwoman Miss Mary Wanstall, at Malacca. He wanted her to set up schools for girls in Macau despite both "pagan and Papal objections" by the Chinese and Portuguese there. By June 1834 Gutzlaff had moved on to Canton, meeting

John Morrison, who commented that Gutzlaff talked “very foolishly of his wife’s charms”.

Gutzlaff soon obtained an excellent government job as assistant Chinese Secretary to the British in Canton, although a letter that Sir Andrew tried to get John Morrison to publish in his newspaper complained of Gutzlaff without naming him. Sir Andrew complained about “those who abuse the Chinese passport law, by going into places up the coast to sell opium and distribute tracts, against the laws of the land”. John, then only 19 years old but extremely intelligent, a skilled scholar in Chinese, and a deeply religious man, complained that Gutzlaff “always acts as if no one but himself were engaged in the work except so far as others can serve as tools to effect his purposes!” in an 1834 letter. Gutzlaff tried to convince John to become a joint publisher of Gutzlaff’s magazine but John refused, writing that Gutzlaff’s reports of some of his travels are “full of nonsense”. Within a year, LMS man Beighton in Penang wrote that poor Miss Wanstall had become insane, but this seems to have a misunderstanding; John Morrison had incorrectly told Beighton that Gutzlaff had married Miss Wallace, who definitely did become insane. But Mary Wanstall was not, and she moved with Gutzlaff to Macau and set up a girls’ school there in 1835, dying 10 years later.

Gutzlaff was strongly extraverted and was a fluent and impassioned speaker in several Chinese dialects. On board a Chinese ship during visit to the Siamese coast in 1830 he burst into a “spirited and energetic song of praise, and, with peculiar vehemence of manner, commanded every one to kneel down and praise the God of heaven for his mercies; instantly, as if moved by a sudden and irresistible impulse, one and all were down upon their knees...”. In 1836 a pious American trader went with Gutzlaff to a small village where he “entertained the people who flocked around him with such a headlong current of volubility that all faces seemed full of terror and amazement, though he is well known there as their unwearied benefactor”.

The Christian Union (CU) was a small society of Chinese Christians that Robert and John Morrison had created in 1830 along with the unpredictable but energetic Gutzlaff, and with the Americans Bridgman and David Abeel in Canton. In Canton John had repeatedly written to the LMS seeking more men for the China mission, noting that there were only 12 remaining Protestant missionaries along the entire coast and only six of them had even the most elementary competence in Chinese language. He warned the LMS that learning Chinese took a massive investment of time, so that any plans to create an effective mission there once China became opened to the world, would require people to begin learning the language immediately. John realized that Robert had been

the only missionary in China from the English churches, and he agreed to pick up on the many projects Robert had established, while awaiting help from Britain.

#### Hughes is fired in Malacca, 1835

In the Malacca mission the Hughes scandal was apparently resolved in October 1835 with an LMS ruling from early May that Hughes “connexion with the LMS was dissolved”. The reasons were a combination of his non-LMS employment as a chaplain to the Church of England, his alliance with Tomlin’s school in competition with the ACC, and the persistent reports of his failure to do his LMS tasks including the accounts for the station.

But Hughes fought back. He claimed that he had broken with Tomlin in April 1835 once he realized that their relationship threatened his job with Evans and the LMS. He managed to convince Evans of his sincere repentance, so Evans supported Hughes’ October 9 appeal to the LMS directors on the grounds that Hughes and Evans were now fully reconciled, that all was now “peace and joy” between them. Hughes’ appeal to the LMS was short of convincing however, because he intended to stay in Malacca and connected to the LMS, without salary but supported by the controversial Chaplaincy job until the LMS directors responded to his appeal.

Within three days of sending this letter Hughes was acting badly again and Evans was distraught and feeling deceived, writing angrily that the termination of Hughes would be “no loss whatsoever” to the LMS. Hughes was again avoiding any productive effort for the station, even refusing to return LMS funds to Evans so that he could pay LMS debts. Soon Hughes realized he had no chance of having his reputation restored with the LMS, and was only asking to be allowed to resign from it rather than being fired. By late November he settled the matter by resigning without waiting for the directors’ decision.

#### Malacca 1835 – Evans and Hughes

With all these struggles with hostile or incompetent staff, Evans’ mission in Malacca was not yet thriving in 1835 and Evans was in confused struggles with the LMS. He was running everything, including the LMS press, the elementary schools, the mission and its chapel, and the ACC, even though Hughes was formally part of the mission and should have been working in it. Although Evans was often overwhelmed, he also had the luxury of making all decisions without supervision and without needing to defer to anyone, a situation the sowed the seeds of yet another scandal.

In 1835 when the LMS tried to move Dyer from Penang to join Evans so there would be at least two scholars of Chinese at Malacca, Evans objected to the LMS, and



subtly hinted to Dyer that this move probably was not necessary. Evans had returned the Chinese schools back to mandarin after Tomlin's removal, and argued to the LMS that because Dyer could only speak Hokkien he would be of no help in Malacca.

Unbeknown to Evans, in February 1835 the directors decided to send new missionaries Mr. and Mrs. Davies and Mr. Wolf to Penang to help old Beighton, and ordered Dyer to move and join Evans at Malacca. The new Penang mission staff arrived there in August, and in October Evans received the LMS letter informing him of these moves. In an excess of toadying, Evans then "revoked" his earlier letters against Dyer and prepared to receive him at Malacca.

Dyer and his wife arrived in late October 1835 after she had recovered from two weeks of dangerous illness following birth of a daughter. A quick review of the two men's talents led them to decide that Dyer would operate the Press and Evans would stay in charge of the ACC. Dyer then began almost a decade of wonderfully persistent and clever work developing moveable Chinese metal fonts to use in printing far better, smaller, and cheaper Chinese books for all the missions. Things were not yet fully stabilized at Malacca however, because Hughes was still on the loose and causing trouble, and the ACC was not thriving.

#### ACC failing to thrive in Malacca

Robert Morrison's ACC in Malacca had not succeeded in preparing any Chinese students willing or able to become teachers in the LMS elementary schools, and it was also disappointing to his son John Morrison because it was teaching exclusively in Chinese. John was emphatic in telling the LMS directors that although the ACC was supposed to be an institution of higher learning, "I must tell you, which I do with sincere regret, that such is not the case." He was furious at Evans for the lack-lustre program at the ACC but tried not to blame him directly in an 1836 letter. The only time the ACC had been functioning well as a solid senior school in Chinese and English was in 1827, when both Rev. Collie and Sam Kidd were there. They were both excellent scholars and were mastering the language at a good pace before they were felled by illness. Collie had died suddenly in 1828 at the age of 39, leaving all the learning and teaching to Kidd, whose health problems forced his return to England around the time that James and his LMS friends in London needed to learn Chinese.

John was deeply worried about the ACC in Malacca for other reasons as well. Tomlin had been running the ACC and the Chinese schools in Malacca only from April to September in 1832 during which he made foolish decisions. After the LMS learned of Tomlin's ACC decisions and fired him for his poor judgement, Evans took over the ACC.

Evans was able to increase the number of Chinese students, but he started confusing the accounts he had taken over from Hughes. The ACC trustees did not have enough money to support an assistant master to help the Principal, so the boys' education was suffering, but Evans' management of the ACC was also problematic. In 1833 he had upset Robert Morrison by combining the funds of the ACC and LMS in a way that was completely contrary to Robert's founding intentions decades earlier. John Morrison was also upset at the quality of the education at the ACC under Evans. The ACC had become "merely a school for elementary education", and this had wasted the time and energy of talented mission men who had the capacity to teach senior students at a real college.

At first John urged the LMS to provide support to the ACC for another master, and to require some of the elementary schools to teach English and other elements of a modern curriculum, rather than the rote Chinese recitations that formed their sole activity. This was feasible and Evans had a son John who could do this. John Morrison urged that annual public examinations be held to evaluate the effectiveness of the schooling and to provide prizes including money to the best students. He worried that students who achieved too high a standard in English would surely succumb to the temptations of jobs with merchants, that "the temptation for gain will rise triumphant over the desire for knowledge". John wanted the graduates to become teachers not traders, and the schools to be an agency for improving education in the local areas, not an agency for improving commercial operations.

In April 1836 John Morrison decided the ACC could never thrive in Malacca and was urging the LMS to move it all to Singapore, then in May he learned that the much-lauded Singapore Institution was not going to be run as a college but merely as an elementary school. He had collected donations in Canton for two colleges in the Straits and was determined that if Singapore reneged on the plan for the Singapore Institution, all that money should go to the ACC in Singapore, with Malacca only serving as a feeder school system. If Sir Raffles would agree to John's plan, the Singapore Institution could operate as an independent secular college but could hire mission men as teachers to keep a high moral quality to its operation.

#### Evans sends gilded reports

In contrast to John Morrison's glum evaluation of the ACC, in 1837 Evans was starting to send excessively positive accounts of the Malacca station back to London. Tomlin was leaving town, and Evans was finding Dyer companionable, so it appeared that the Malacca station's history of misery was coming to an end. Evans wrote glowing reports to the directors about his work, claiming to have 60 senior students at the ACC,

and to be running 7 feeder schools for about 230 Chinese boys and girls and for 150 Malay children. He was annoyed that the LMS insisted that he take in six senior Chinese students as boarding students (probably because that would mean his having to share accommodation in the ACC with the students), writing to complain of all the inconveniences of his wife having to supervise their activities.

#### Dyer experiments in printing Chinese with metal type

Even better, Evans and Dyer were now working well together. Dyer loved experimenting with improved ways of printing Chinese character text, and had developed his system of creating moveable metal character fonts to a highly efficient process.

Dyer was a creative man fascinated with the tasks of printing Chinese text in a modern way because he knew the traditional method would not be good enough for mission publications. Dyer was trying to create moveable metal type for Chinese printing because of the many problems with printing Chinese using the unwieldy traditional woodcut method.

The traditional method, xylography, was slow and cumbersome. All the characters for a page were carved in reverse on a wooden block, that page was inked and printed using a hand press repeatedly until the wooden characters wore down so as to be useless, then an entirely new block for the whole page had to be cut. It was not suited to printing long works, because there was a finite limit to how small a Chinese character could be cut in wood, and woodblocks absorbed ink thus blurring small characters. Chinese books tended to be extremely large, bound into many bulky volumes, and the wooden characters wore out relatively quickly in the printing process, limiting the number of copies that could be made. These problems meant that the traditional printing method was costly and limited production runs.

In contrast, European printing started with the manufacture of individual letters carved into steel punches that were then hardened. These were punched into moulds/matrices of softer metal such as copper. Molten lead poured into each matrix created a hard metal type that could be finished to a uniform height for use in hand, then machine printing. These hard metal letters were completely independent, could be re-used for long print runs without losing their clarity, and could be made to a very fine level of detail.

There had been historical attempts in China to create moveable character fonts that could be placed into a frame for printing one page then individually moved into a new page for new text, but they had never been adopted for various reasons. In the 11<sup>th</sup>

century Song Dynasty Bi Sheng in China had developed a system using moveable type but it did not include creating a hard metal punch and was far more fragile than European metal systems. Bi first created individual characters in ceramic, then set a page of text lying in a box on a layer of a mixture of wax, ash, and resin and gently heated this. The characters were all closely levelled and put into straight lines, then the box was cooled with the letters now firmly set into their frame for printing the page. But the system was unwieldy and was not adopted, and none of these ceramic types have survived. Gutenberg's work in the 1445 Bible used metal for greater durability, and Roman Catholic scholars at St. Joseph's College in Macau had done some work with metal fonts, but Dyer's fonts were more modern, more elegant, and his set was more efficient because he based it on a scholarly analysis of Chinese texts to select the most important characters. Years later printer Alexander Wylie pronounced on the elegance of Dyer's fonts.

At the time Dyer began his work there had been modern experiments with metal types for Chinese characters, with three sets of metal Chinese fonts in existence, in Canton, Malacca, and in Serampore India, but these were not formed of hard cast metal but had the characters engraved onto soft metal that wore out quickly. In addition, because no mould had been used to store the form of the character, each character-type had to be entirely re-carved when it wore out. These sets had other problems including big gaps in characters, and very inelegant inaccurate engravings. Dyer's use of hardened steel for the punches and moulds for making the letters allowed him to cast many characters.

The challenge for the mission presses was to create small metal fonts for Chinese characters so that they could be used in much more efficient and large-scale printing of religious texts, and Sam Dyer pioneered this work. Chinese printers did not adopt the methods that Dyer created until the LMS press and other mission presses began to prove the value of European printing methods with beautiful small Chinese text that could be printed in mass runs. In 1850 some Chinese printers began to understand the value of moveable metal types in European printing, and began to experiment with new methods to create movable metal Chinese fonts for printing text. In Canton printer Tang first carved a character in wood (the punch), pressed it into a soft mould of highly refined clay (the matrix), then poured molten tin into the hardened clay mould (to create the type font), often working in a batch of four. After the tin had hardened the types were planed to a uniform height then set into a large wooden frame holding 21 columns of characters, to be printed in a hand press (Author, 1850). But Dyer was the pioneer of the effective method.

Dyer's experiments started with using a combination of woodblocks and metal types, a sophisticated improvement on printing methods of his day. Stereotypy, developed in the 18<sup>th</sup> c., took a clay or soft metal mould off a page-block of existing typeset text, in order to use the mould to make a full sheet of lead type copying that entire page. In an early experiment Dyer used the typical wooden blocks used in Chinese printing but in a new and inventive manner. He had each woodblock cut with 50 repetitive copies of just one important character per block, done at a regular size and interval. When the block was fully cut with multiple versions of the character he had one metal mould-sheet cast from the block; one wood block could be used only twice for this casting. He then cut the moulded metal sheet into small squares for each individual character at a standard height. This was a wood-based variation of another 18<sup>th</sup> c. European method called stereography that used copper moulds or matrices for multiple copies of each letter then assembled these moulds into texts into which hot lead was cast.

Dyer studied the frequency of different characters in typical Chinese text and had woodblocks cut to match these frequencies so that he would have a good pool of all the important characters ready to use in a more conventional metal-type letter-set printing operation. For a frequently-used character he would pour 20 metal sheets each with 50 woodcut copies of the character, yielding 1000 metal types for that character. This method of creating good metal types from wooden blocks without metal punches worked moderately well, but the resulting metal fonts were relatively soft and did not last very long.

In doing this Dyer was very clever and efficient in using the metal (E. Davies, 1846). He early recognized that making a font for all 40,000 Chinese characters would be too expensive; the London estimate was that it would cost 80,000 guineas. In 1837 he decided instead to select the most frequent and important characters, and with no guide he chose fourteen Chinese books and Christian works in Chinese translations by Robert Morrison and Milne to identify these characters. Further, and crucially, in the interests of efficiency, he recorded the frequency of use of each character so that he could have enough copies of any needed character to be able to set five sheets of text at one time. In the end he identified 5,000 essential characters that would work for all Christian texts, plus 1,800 more general characters.

Organizing his print shop to have these Chinese fonts at hand to the typesetter in relation to their frequency, he was able to create a wonderful set of movable metal Chinese character fonts and an efficient print shop. The great advantage of these movable fonts was that the printer could strike a proof off a new page and easily correct

it several times without having to re-cut an entire block page. Dyer's fonts were judged far more accurate and elegant than those made in France by Pauthier and others made in Berlin on the order of the free-lance mission man Charles Gutzlaff. The LMS man with greatest expertise in Chinese text at the time was Medhurst, who said the German Chinese fonts were to Dyer's "as a clown is to a courtier".

Dyer began making metal fonts for Chinese characters to be used in European presses starting in 1827 (L. O'Sullivan, 1984) and over decades of experiments succeeded in making moveable metal types for Chinese text. Soon he was training his Chinese printers to make metal types for a whole set of large Chinese fonts. Dyer eventually sought LMS provide support so that he could make separate set of smaller metal Chinese fonts. By 1835 Dyer switched to European-style font production. This started with carving a reverse character in relief into a short bar of soft steel called a punch that was hardened by heating. The relief carving on the punch was then punched or "struck" into soft metal such as copper or brass, to create a matrix or mould that could be fitted into a frame holding many type-moulds. Hot lead was poured into these to make the letters or "type" of hard metal. Once cooled, the types would be removed from the type-mould and smoothed, and the letter would now be ready to be used to print as a movable element within a framed line of text (Byrd, 1970).

The greatest skill was needed by the punch-cutter, and Dyer's goal was to create punches for 3,000 characters. The use of steel punches allowed a more delicate and beautiful stroke than wood allowed, and the product was more durable and firm than woodcuts. By July of 1837 he was pleased to report that it took an experienced wood-block cutter only one day to create a perfect printing set for one metal character. A set was comprised of a metal punch, a matrix/mould of copper, and the final poured metal type from this mould, for each Chinese character.

As Dyer's work progressed across the next decade, he criticized the fonts that Parisian scholar Guillaume Pauthier had ordered from French type-casters in 1837. The final characters looked Europeanized, flowery, and ill-proportioned. While these characters looked elegant to Europeans, Dyer explained they were very inelegant to the Chinese because their proportions were incorrect, with only 10 out of 300 formed in a way acceptable to a Chinese reader. The rational French engraver Legrand made separate types for components of the characters then combined them as necessary, not realizing that this method destroyed the final look of the character because in combining varying components, Chinese writers would alter their proportions in different characters.

Dyer seems to have been dedicated to the point of obsession in this work improving Chinese printing for missions. Even after he and his wife were forced to return to England in 1839 because of her serious liver disease, he wrote the LMS directors in October from Wiltshire recommending various actions for mission printing in the Straits. He wanted approval and support for a new set of smaller Chinese fonts now that he had a good system and skilled workers. Other technological aids for the mission also interested him, and he wanted a steamboat to run the 400 miles between the LMS stations in Penang and Singapore, explaining that the Straits were typically so calm that a sailing trip from Malacca might take a month for the 200 miles, thus even letters between the stations were very slow. He was keen to construct a model of the steamer and get cost estimates, planning to lease it out when the missions didn't need it. As his wife slowly improved in London, Dyer was champing at the bit to return and work on the new small Chinese font that so dominated his thoughts, and he begged the LMS to send an assistant printer back with him to help. He seemed little concerned by the increasingly open conflicts between Britain and China.

#### Should the ACC move to Singapore?

Evans' and Dyer's brief period of productive work was soon challenged by new developments starting in August 1837. They were worried and angry when they learned that the LMS intended to move the ACC to Singapore. Once again it seems the LMS seemed to expect answers from the mission men for letters that had not had enough time to arrive. The LMS chided the men for not answering letters they had not received, then made decisions entirely contrary to the recommendations that the two men eventually sent.

Evans and Dyer argued against the move, noting that although the LMS was correct that there were more Chinese in Singapore, these were all visiting trading men who left their wives and children behind in Malacca, which had 30 children to every one in Singapore. They explained that Thomsen in Singapore had never been able to engage Chinese families and children in school there; he would start with 20 then end up with six or seven. The American missionaries there had similar problems, and so did the Singapore Institution. In early 1837 their troublesome colleague Hughes left for Calcutta for ordination into the Church of England, but Malacca had not seen the end of him, and his return was to create new conflicts when Legge arrived.

Evans and Dyer wrote an impassioned account of the current operations of the Malacca station, boasting that they had 400 children in their Malacca schools, and were gaining sufficient converts in their preaching to begin supplying these as Christian

teachers to these schools. They claimed that seven senior ACC students were even studying for the ministry. The mission was now thriving “unmolested by any other Society”, and Malacca was now the most “flourishing station in the East”. It was “heart-rending” for all their years of anxiety and suffering to be discarded if the station were dismantled. They threatened that even if the Directors sent all the LMS money to Singapore, no students would move, and they would be devastated at the loss of “Mrs. Evans, to whom they look up, and whom they honour as parents”.

Evans and Dyer were outraged that if they were forced to move with the ACC students to the Singapore Institution they would be placed in a situation that was very problematical. They would be under the authority of its Headmaster, widely known for his irreligious character, and the Chief Superintendent of the SI was a “high church” man in the Church of England, rather than a nonconformist. The Directors of the SI were all merchants, some of whom were irreligious, “decidedly immoral”, and known for their mockery of religion. Students were not required to participate in religious services. While such a secular college had been Robert Morrison’s ideal for the ACC, Evans had totally shifted it, changing it into a Christian school.

Evans and Dyer argued that if they were allowed to stay in Malacca but the ACC were to be moved away, it would totally disrupt their LMS mission. Although Evans tried to boast about the contributions of the ACC, by late 1838 he had to acknowledge that most of its feeder schools were useless because they were just traditional Chinese schools that used rote memorization to teach Chinese characters. He recognized they were entirely incapable of representing the Christian values of the mission, but nevertheless argued that the schools were the only entrée into the parents’ lives, and were the means by which the adults could be enticed into participating in the mission congregation.

Finally Evans and Dyer argued cold hard cash: no move would be possible for at least two years because the Chinese parents had signed six-year contracts with the ACC for the education of their sons, and only four years had elapsed. What Evans did not mention was that he realized that the Singapore Institution would not be providing him with two separate salaries as Principal, and as Professor, in the way that he had been paying himself at the ACC, with these secret salaries all in addition to his LMS salary.

#### Evans’ entrepreneurial deals

Evans had additional pecuniary reasons in 1837-9 for resisting a move to Singapore. He was busy wheeling and dealing in commercial and entrepreneurial activities for his own benefit. He was proud to report that he had made a profit of \$400



from the sale of an English-Malay publication, and was repaying a “loan” in that amount from the LMS that he had used as capital to build a residence wing onto the ACC for his own benefit. He was having more children and needed a new wing of the building for his family. He had succeeded in getting donations of all the money he needed from the local community and had just started building when he received the LMS letter ordering him to move it all to Singapore.

Mrs. Dyer had started a project to raise money in a different way. She had English friends donate and send out “useful and fancy articles” to be sold for the benefit of the mission, a project that eventually created competition and conflict with local merchants. Evans continued with his housing development, and eventually boasted that the entire building was now painted and in good repair, the best it had been in years. By 1838 it had two new wings at a cost of \$1,000. In addition, Evans boasted he had built up a “reserve” of \$1,000 in the name of the LMS, which he had loaned out at interest. The pressure from the LMS on mission men to create self-sustaining missions was thus having an unintended effect of generating activities that took time and energy away from mission work.

Then Evans and Dyer learned that the LMS mission men in India were given an extra allowance for each child, varying depending on the child’s age. Although Milne had been given this as early as 1822, the later men at Malacca were unaware of this, and their discovery made them angry at the injustice of the LMS Directors in not providing the allowance or information about it to them. This issue percolated for years, eventually to the great dismay and disadvantage of James Legge.

#### Ho Tsunshin’s talents at Malacca and Calcutta

The Lord Bishop of Calcutta (Church of England) visited Evans and Dyer at the ACC in 1838 and was impressed with Dyer’s printing projects. He donated 100 Rupees to the ACC and offered scholarships to the Bishop’s College in Calcutta to Evans’ intelligent son John, and to Ho Tsunshin (He Jinshan)<sup>10</sup>, a talented Chinese student. Ho (1818-1871) was to receive the same education as John, but in addition was to continue teaching Chinese reading and writing to John during their stay in India. Young Ho

---

<sup>10</sup> Ho Tsunshin was the spelling most of the mission men used for Ho in their letters, but in his later life in Hong Kong and Canton he was known as Hu Fuk-tong. In pinyin his name characters are transcribed as He Jinshan. I will use Ho Tsunshin as that was the name used by the mission men.

returned two years later and became a lifelong mission man, pastor, and friend of Legge after triggering and surviving a minor scandal.

### Struggles about Morrison's Bible: Medhurst/ Morrison vs. Evans/ Dyers

With all the conflicts about the ACC and Singapore, and all the rambunctious activities of its cantankerous men, the Malacca mission was still trying to attend to its basic task of spreading the faith. This soon led to another serious conflict in 1836-37, this time related directly to the materials used in the mission.

The Chinese version of the Bible that was always called "Morrison's" had been the first published by Protestants, but as other mission men became more competent in Chinese its limitations became more visible. John Morrison knew that Robert wanted a new translation to be done, not simply a revision. Both father and son were fully aware of the rawness of Robert's Chinese skills when he had first worked on the Bible only seven years into his acquaintance with Chinese. They also both know that much of it was just direct copying from earlier and primitive versions Robert had found in London. Eventually Gutzlaff, Medhurst, and John Morrison prepared a revised version of Morrison's Chinese Bible, expecting the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) to pay the publication costs because this was the main role for the BFBS in missions. A devout American merchant in Canton, G. Tradescant Lay wrote the BFBS that a new version was necessary, and included examples of significant problems in Morrison's Bible. In the most telling example, Robert Morrison had inadvertently used Chinese characters to denote an angel becoming "excited" by an altar, using characters (*shoo lieh, shu li*) that implied sexual erection in popular usage, but that had not been properly identified in that way in Morrison's dictionary.

John wrote the BFBS urging them to publish the new Medhurst-Gutzlaff-Morrison Chinese Bible, but the BFBS was getting conflicting advice about the need for the new version. In Malacca Evans and Dyer in Malacca were against the new version and in April 1836 they wrote a blistering letter to the BFBS against the new translation of the New Testament (P. Hanan, 2003), taking some guidance from their Chinese Christian printer Liang Fa. But John Morrison knew that some of the guidance Evans and Dyer had from Liang was not sound. He was the senior Chinese Christian in Malacca, but John, who was by now an exceptionally talented reader and speaker of Chinese, observed that Liang actually spoke baby-talk when he spoke in Cantonese about Christianity. Liang had left Canton as a child and lived in expatriate communities most of his adult life, and it appeared that his spoken mother-tongue Chinese was childish, a phenomenon typically found in migrants. John Morrison argued that Evans

and Dyer had similarly such limited skills in Chinese that their views should not be honoured by the BFBS.

In July 1837 John renewed his arguments, explaining that the first Morrison Bible was not by “Dr. Morrison, the Sinologue of 1834”, but by “Robert Morrison, the heavily-burdened student, in 1812”. John was stunned at the extreme letter he had received from Evans and Dyer against the new Bible translation, and dismayed by rebukes from England by people who did not know anything about the Chinese language. Evans in fact knew very little Chinese at this point and never tried to do any Chinese translation; his main objection to the new version was based on strained comparisons to the Greek original that Medhurst was easily able to rebut.

#### The Morrison Educational Society, Canton

By early 1837 John had completed the formal papers to establish the Morrison Educational Society as a living legacy to honour his father. The plan was not for the MES to create or run schools, but to provide financial support to existing approved schools, and scholarships to good students attending good schools. Gutzlaff's wife had opened a school for girls in Macau, and the MES had ended up supporting the whole school because it included blind children. Next to lepers, blind children were the most abused members of Chinese society, and one blind girl at the school had been rescued after having been found with her sores deliberately kept open by a man using her as a beggar. The ultimate goal of the MES was to train generations of Chinese teachers who would also be Christian and capable of spreading Christianity within China. Two students had already been sent to elementary school in Singapore; if they did well they would be sent for advanced study in India, Britain, or America.

John expected improved relations and trade treaties between China and Britain because he realized that the opium trade had become much worse since the breaking of the monopoly of the EIC, and expected that the Chinese would probably move to control it by legalizing it. Events did not unfold in this way.

### Chapter 14 Legge discovers Malacca problems

Escalating events in Canton that were leading to the first Anglo-Chinese war formed a background to Legge's assignment in Malacca, but he was not focussed on political and trade events. More importantly for his new life, he knew nothing of the long troubled history of the Malacca station and its argumentative and self-serving station chief Evans until he started get hints during his in-transit stops at Jakarta and Singapore. Legge was entering the world of the South-East Asia at a time when Darwin's old ship the *Beagle* reached the north coast of Australia in 1839 during its third voyage, giving rise to a port named after Darwin, whose work during its journey 1831-1836 had greatly interested the captain.

#### The Legges arrive at Malacca 1840

James and Mary left the Stomachs' comfortable mission in Singapore in the evening of January 9, 1840 for the last 100 km. of their long journey, arriving at Malacca in a small Chinese sailing boat at noon the next day. Their journey had lasted more than five months. They did not yet realize it, but Malacca had become a backwater of British interests, which had shifted to Singapore and China.

When Legge arrived at Malacca he was more worried about what he would find at the ACC and at the LMS mission in general, than about the brewing confrontation in Canton. Not only had Medhurst in Jakarta and the Stronachs in Singapore alerted him to problems with the academic quality of the college, they had also had shaken his faith in Morrison's Dictionary and his Bible translations, as well as in other religious text in Chinese. Legge was now uncertain if he was being guided into mispronunciation every time he consulted Morrison's *Dictionary*.

James and Mary landed and walked the short trip to the main LMS building, the Anglo-Chinese College, where Mr. and Mrs. Evans greeted them with warmth. Evans was "tall and stout, of magisterial appearance and manners". Evans suggested the couple should live with the Evans family at the ACC for a few days until a separate house recently occupied by Sam Dyer was made ready for them.

The College was an attractive and substantial two-story building 34' by 90', surrounded by a veranda enclosing an area 103' by 162'. Consistent with Chinese building designs for two stories, it had no internal stairs, and entry to the second floor was via a rickety, narrow stair clinging to the outside of the building. It was nicely set facing the sea and was surrounded by mission buildings including a chapel, a printing office and press for English and Chinese printing, schools, apartments for the native schoolmaster and for workmen at the press, and the two-story LMS house vacated by

Dyer. The cool sea breezes, large shade trees, and flourishing vegetable garden completed a picture of tropical heaven.

The other member of the mission was Evans' assistant Henry Werth (1806-1855). He was a humble German man with a pregnant wife and three children, who had parted in rancour from three German missionaries who had been sent by a society in Basle that disapproved of all structured mission societies. Until the quarrel, the men had actively opposed many of Evans activities at the LMS, and had even helped Tomlin after he had been fired from the LMS and had set up his own competing school.

After his quarrel with his German colleagues Werth desperately needed a job. He confessed great repentance for his former activities against Evans and the ACC, hoping that Evans would hire him. Werth's skill was in Malay, and Evans decided that Werth could be hired as an assistant to handle the Malay ministry while he and Legge worked at the college on Chinese. Evans was very explicit in his recommendation to the LMS that Werth be hired as an assistant missionary rather than a fully ordained missionary, on the reasoning that Werth had been ordained in Hackney by a Mr. Hughes of "very erroneous" views, and therefore could not be allowed to administer the sacraments. Further, Werth was relatively uneducated, and did not know Latin, Greek or Hebrew.

Evans initially said that he would pay part of Werth's \$8 per month salary out of his own LMS salary, but quickly managed to avoid that by getting donations from others to pay all the costs. Later Evans told James Legge that he had increased Werth's salary and back-dated his payments to the beginning of Werth's work, but Legge discovered that Werth had never received those funds and wrote Tidman explaining this. Evans was similarly slippery when he failed to tell the LMS that Werth had been working against the LMS mission with Tomlin and his breakaway private school.

### Malacca and the Malay states

The Malay states surrounding Malacca were still involved in bloody tribal rivalries, and the local culture was alive with deadly traditions. In 1828 Medhurst took a boat trip along the east coast of the Malay peninsula and found the men completely immersed in battles and arms. On the main street of Tringano every man carried one or two knives and usually a sword, along with up to three spears on his shoulders. Men were so attached to their weapons and so weighed-down by them that they did no ordinary productive labour. Instead they were all macho idlers while the women did all the work. Quarrels were common and because the men were all so highly armed, these quickly turned lethal. The spears were designed as javelins which gave them great strength and accuracy, and they could go completely through a fleeing man's body at 12

paces. Murders occurred every night and the ruler took no interest in them. There was no tradition of public punishments for anything, and everyone agreed they would rather die than be imprisoned. Things were slowly becoming calmer, but Malacca was an island of law within this more anarchic region.

#### ACC condition in 1840

The LMS directors in London told Legge that the College had a strong history and a fine reputation. Evan's letter to the LMS in November 1839 continued to boast that the college was "quite full" of pupils and had thriving external schools, but he failed to give any precise counts, compared with his report two months earlier, which had recorded only nine students at the ACC. In fact Evans had not sent the LMS any annual report about the ACC since 1836, and by the time of Legge's arrival all the feeder schools had been shut down. In Jakarta Medhurst had set up a very different system, with a large boarding school for 140 Chinese-Malay children, so that all the teachers were mission people and the children were receiving an integrated experience rather than being taught in day schools by local untrained and non-Christian men. The goal of Robert Morrison's ACC had been a college for "the reciprocal cultivation of Chinese and European literature and the diffusion of Christianity" for Chinese students, but Legge understood that it also trained the students to become evangelists and pastors. London told him that it was a thriving college where he would be a master, and he probably expected something similar to his own college in Aberdeen.

The ACC had significant connections to Legge's own history, as well as credentials as the main place for Chinese mission work. His family's friend, senior missionary William Milne, had been sent to the College as its founding Headmaster decades earlier, laying the foundation in 1818. It was there that Milne had learned Chinese, eventually translating and printing educational and religious texts in Chinese characters, including the fragile books that James had held in his hands in his childhood home. Young William C. Milne was that founder's son, and been a fellow scholar of Chinese with James with Professor Kidd in London before leaving with him on the voyage to Java.

The first Anglo-Chinese war was starting up in the area between Hong Kong and Canton in 1839, ensuring that the missionaries were kept out of China, but from Legge's point of view the hostilities were not a significant problem for his long-term plan. He would use any delays in getting into China to spend learning the language, and go into China once orderly relations were established between the two empires.

#### Legge learning Chinese

After he learned of some of the problems with Evans and the Malacca mission en route, Legge decided that once he arrived in Malacca his best plan would be generally to minimize contact with Evans, and work on learning Chinese. He then made a foolish decision he thought would help in this plan. He knew that Evans was fluent in Cantonese and that Dyer had been fluent in Hokkien, the language of the Chinese migrants from Fujian. When a Hokkien-speaker offered to go with Legge to Malacca and teach him that dialect, Legge reasoned the lessons would be a good means of avoiding time with Evans, so he agreed.

In Malacca Legge threw himself into mastering Chinese, setting up a “European” schedule of eight-hours daily for these studies (R. L. O'Sullivan, 1980). All his work in London on the northern (mandarin) dialect with Mr. Kidd and throughout his voyage was no help to the Hokkien dialect he needed to use with the Chinese migrants living in Malacca. He also began to realize that even though the Hokkien dialect was necessary to work with the Chinese colonists in the Strait, it was not a good long-term choice for oral Chinese because educated Chinese spoke the northern dialect. Faced with these challenges, Legge put immense efforts into his studies, working full days on Chinese, and hiring Mary's Malay teacher for an hour in addition. He hoped to begin preaching in Hokkien by May, to help Evans.

#### Reality in the Malacca mission

Legge was disappointed by most of the things at the LMS mission. He was surprised at the small size of the LMS congregation, far fewer than the 30 communicants that Evans had reported to London. He could not be convinced to do quick baptisms in line with Evans' practice, explaining later to the LMS that he wanted to create a nucleus of members more truly devoted “in principle and life” to Christian ideas, rather than accumulate large numbers with uncertain convictions. Legge wrote hinting delicately that the LMS would surely be learning many important things about the Malacca station from Mr. Dyer upon his arrival there.

More troubling, the ACC was very different from the description originally given Legge, having shrunk into a very small operation. The LMS had over-ruled a plan Evans had started in 1836 to run only elementary schools, and had forbidden mission support for a network of pathetic “out-schools” teaching rote Chinese to Malay-speaking children. Lacking feeder-schools, there were only a few students at the ACC, children of the Chinese Christians, and neither Legge nor Evans needed to teach or superintend them.

In fact Evans was incapable of teaching Chinese at any advanced level. Worse, the Strait was full of gossip about the waste at the ACC, and even old Beighton up in Penang thought he might angle for some of the ACC money and create a good Anglo-Malay college there. He wrote London, “but I would never consent to be called either Principal or Professor in it... such titles only cause ridicule from enemies and grief from friends” – a not very subtle comment against Evans’ pretensions in Malacca where he called himself both. The Singapore newspapers ran an energetic discussion by friends and enemies of the LMS, and in February the Recorder in Singapore, Sir William Norris, even wrote Beighton suggesting that the LMS owed the Straits community an explanation about the pathetic operation of the ACC. Sir William had standing in this argument because he had donated money to the college. Beighton wrote in a Private letter that he hoped that with the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Legge, “the old Malacca contentiousness had better be buried in oblivion”.

Legge began to suspect that the exit of Sam and Mrs. Dyer from Malacca in May 1839 was a bit of a mystery. The public story was that in 1839 Dyer knew his wife was seriously ill and they would be returning to Britain to try help her recover. He gave the LMS no hint of problems in the Malacca mission. Evans smoothly explained that Mrs. Dyer nearly died of liver disease before they left Malacca in May, but Legge gradually realized there were other factors.

#### James and LMS money- allowances

Legge was also frustrated with the LMS preparations and financial arrangements by the time he reached this last stage of his journey. He was annoyed to discover that the LMS failed to tell him a number of important things, starting with details of the financial support that he should expect. He discovered that according to policy the LMS was supposed to have given him a £60 furniture allowance, a housing allowance, and a monthly salary for the hire of a day labourer. He was upset that he had had to discover this policy accidentally, and wrote a balanced letter pointing out the unfairness of the Directors having failed to inform him. He added an apology for any misunderstandings about money in his previous letters. “It surely was never intended that I should be dealt with differently from every other missionary. But the Directors should never leave a young missionary to derive information on subjects of importance from others, when they themselves can supply it.”

#### Postal operations

All letters back to the UK had to take the leisurely sailing trip, and in the long gaps, there were often communication problems that created more trouble at the



missions. In addition, postage was very expensive. The letters that the mission families wrote often used a money-saving convention of the time, in which they were first written in the conventional orientation, then over-written rotated 90 degrees in order to save money for the recipient of the letter. Until 1840 in Britain the recipient rather than the sender paid the postage cost of a letter, and postage was charged by distance and the number of sheets until a reform of the postal system to charge a flat rate by weight in Britain. Proof of payment was shown by the presence of a stamp. The new penny post establishing one penny as the cost for mail within Britain soon led to the invention of a new custom to create income from the post, the Christmas card.

Legge calculated that weekly letters sent from him to Britain by the safest and fastest route (steamer to Calcutta then overland) would cost his recipients £1 -£2 per month, so his overwriting method saved the costs of extra sheets. He advised his brother that the cheaper route via Marseille would cost less but would take three months to arrive. Although the expenses were transferred from recipient to sender in postal reforms in 1840, the costs were still high. By 1843 a 1-1/4 ounce letter sent from Canton to Britain cost the sender seven shillings nine-pence, a major expense (Author, 1843b).

#### News about events in China

Other aspects of his new life pleased Legge. He was cheered to receive a letter from his friends Hobson and Milne from Macau in February 1840. Their ship had survived the voyage from Java to Macau without suffering a pirate attack in the South China Sea, and they reported on delicate political events that were taking place in Macau. On January 31, 1840 the British government in India had declared war against China based on advice given by retired old Canton tycoon William Jardine to Lord Palmerston about the necessity to support free trade with China (Ingrams, 1952). Britain began forming a giant fleet to sail to the Chinese coast to provide support to the merchants and their quest for orderly free trade. Dr. Hobson was expecting to be forced out of Macau and the hospital there at any moment, just as Dr. Lockhart had been a few months earlier.

#### Legge health problem

Legge plunged into his Chinese studies, but these obsessive efforts were interrupted by a painful and serious gut disorder in March in which he was unable to leave bed for nearly two weeks. He was treated with the customary fierce emetics and purges of the day, luckily successfully rather than fatally. At his lowest he had feared for his life, and wrote his brother John explaining his sudden rush of worry for his wife.

“Everything happens quickly in this climate – cut down the jungle – it’ll flourish again in a month... The man who rises in health, before evening may be stretched a blackening corpse...

I had been studying hard, too hard for the climate - I was obliged to call in the doctor. It was nearly too late... The difficulty, intensity, and engrossment of the studies to which (the missionary) is compelled, fag and exhaust the mind. To all persons illness is an evil, but to the missionary, situated as I am, it is attended with circumstances of peculiar distress. Supposing the issue to be fatal, the stroke will smite & smite deeply not himself only. There was my dear Mary, so young and so confiding - the prospect of (death) was not half so painful as of leaving her a stranger in a strange land, desolate and heartbroken, and separated both from her own friends and mine by the intervention of 12,000 miles of ocean. But when the horizon clears, and the danger is past, then comes a joy in the heart which only one in similar circumstances can know - an almost choking swell of gratitude. The hollow rushing of the waves sounds like music, the note of every bird as if it were the voice of an angel. And at morning and night the wind comes repeatedly upon you as if it passed over and bore with it all the perfumes of Paradise” (H. E. Legge, 1905), p. 15.

Following this luscious Victorian expression of feeling, Legge added that he was sending a box of birds and birds-nests, for he continued to have the interests in natural history and in birds that he had shown in childhood. He also gave specific instructions for making jelly from the summer berries of Scotland in a way that would be safe to keep (and send), expecting to receive such family treats. After recovery from his initial illness, Legge wrote of his return to health as “vigorous and elastic as ever” he had been when “drinking (health) on the mountain’s brow in my native land”.

He returned to his intensive study of Chinese, began learning Cantonese and much about Chinese culture from the talented young student, Ho Tsunshin.

While studying with Ho, Legge developed an increasing interest in a group of 13 traditional Chinese texts known as the Confucian canon. These classic texts and the centuries of commentaries on them constituted the subject matter of the famous Chinese system of imperial civil service examinations. All Chinese who aspired to become officials memorized these texts in preparation for their examinations, and studied the most important commentaries on the texts across two thousand years of history. Legge was beginning to appreciate the “massive and rugged” nature of Chinese,

and to realize that it would take him years with a good teacher before he could be an effective missionary in China. He was determined to master the language, and argued against critics that every missionary had to be a scholar “thoroughly equipped” with the language.

#### Mission health problems in the Straits Settlements

Others in the mission became incapacitated by illness, and Legge soon became critical of Evans’ care of his wife, who had been ill for more than two years. For a while the Evans family moved out of Malacca to a village a few miles away on the pretext that Evans could do itinerant preaching there with Chinese settlers, although his Chinese was not very good. By this time Legge and Evans had begun to come into conflict, and it is more probable he moved away to reduce contact with Legge. After they returned to the ACC Mrs. Evans had been prostrate with severe pain in her right side for three weeks yet Evans let it continue unattended. Legge could only speculate charitably that this casual regard for her health might arise from the fact that Evans had been married 20 years and thus might be slow to recognize the severity of her illness although it was clearly apparent to everyone else. Finally her doctor ordered her to return to Britain just as he had ordered Mrs. Dyer.

Before long Mrs. Beighton in Penang was also deathly ill, with cancer, but she and Beighton refused to leave what had now become their entire life. By early summer Mrs. Evans left for England accompanied by her son John. He was a promising young scholar who had been educated at Bishop’s College in Calcutta and had come back from India bringing Ho Tsunshin. Legge regretted the Evans lad’s departure, recognizing that he had respectable accomplishments in Chinese that could have helped the mission.

#### Straits events in the summer of 1840

The Strait was busy with political and community gossip that summer. The massive British fleet came through the Strait, leaving Singapore in late May 1840 for its showdown with China, but no news of events in China had come to the Straits missions by early August. One Stronach sister came from Scotland to Singapore to live with John but died of dysentery after a year, and another sister came out to live with Alexander up in Penang that summer. Beighton was amused to hear that Dyer planned to return to the Strait with a boat (the paddle-wheeled steamer Dyer had been trying to get the LMS to buy), but joked that “I cannot promise to sail with him in the vessel he is building as people say it will be “going to sea in a nut-shell”, and they wonder what it is intended for”. In Penang the Church of England Chaplain Rev. Jones was harassing those within his congregation who also attended the LMS “chapel”, telling them it was evil. In

response, a Capt. Scott replied that there was a danger when “shepherds do not feed their flock”, and Beighton was delighted when Jones refused to talk to Capt. Scott any further, “We anticipate only good to result from this affair”. Before a congregational showdown could develop Rev. Jones became ill and incapacitated, and everyone moved to the LMS chapel.

#### Legge vs. LMS and the ACC 1840

The LMS changed foreign secretaries in October, 1840, Ellis retiring because of illness and being replaced by an older man, Rev. Arthur Tidman (1792-1868). The foreign secretary received and sent all letters between mission men and the Directors, and could affect the way in which the Directors viewed the operations of any particular mission. By early August Legge was complaining that the LMS had sent him only one letter across all the full year he had been gone, presumably the Letter of Instruction he read in Singapore.

Mary was teaching eight Chinese girls a regular curriculum that included English and basic sewing, in a schoolhouse Dyer had built adjoining his house. James was being besieged by men wanting contracts to teach in the little feeder “out-schools” that Evans had been running. Legge knew these schools had already been identified as useless because the teachers themselves knew so little, and he refused to recreate them. In his Chinese language work he was doing simple preaching in Hokkien, creating a romanized text in that dialect from Milne’s printed Chinese sermons with the help of his teacher Ho. James began teaching half-days and evenings with the best students at the ACC, and praised Ho, the most talented of these.

Legge wrote to the LMS as he discovered the various mission problems, and delicately complained about the lack of background information he had been given about the Malacca mission and the ACC. In such matters, he advised that for any new missionary, “let him not be permitted as I was to enter the station entirely ignorant of its history, excepting in so far as he himself may have gleaned some knowledge from books”. In particular, “If there have been quarrelings and bickerings and things which ought not to be named among brethren at the station, let him not be left to learn them from any other quarter, as I was left to learn such things at Malacca from the “Memoirs of Dr. Morrison”” he found in the ACC. He recommended that new missionaries for Malacca should meet with the LMS Ultra-Ganges committee to learn the whole “history of the station”, so that unlike him, they should not find themselves “entirely ignorant” of its problems on arrival. He was also annoyed that the ACC was operating, as Medhurst and the Stronachs had warned, simply as an elementary school and not as a college. By

now, Evans was seriously depressed and lonely with the departure of his wife, and for a while he and Legge began to have a more cordial relationship.

James's happiness broadened when on August 27, 1840 he and Mary celebrated the birth of their first child, a daughter, Eliza Elspeth. Their initial joy in the event gradually became tempered because Mary was ill for nearly two months after the delivery. To counter this worry, they finally had the excitement of receiving their first letter from home. Legge's father Ebenezer had written in December 1839 encouraging James and adding surprising news. Scotland was in the middle of a "moral revolution" in which everyone was being urged to abstain from all intoxicating drink, including porter, wine, brandy, gin, and whisky. The old man was somewhat sceptical of the need for such an extreme approach. Instead, he suggested that although James might find abstinence useful in the hot climate, yet these drinks could still be useful as medicines. James showed a similar lack of doctrinaire rigidity in relation to such comforts of daily life, and never adopted the abstinence doctrine.

These joys did not fully compensate for the core problem that Malacca represented as a base for missions to China, and Legge came to realize its serious limitations even as a way-station for missions en route to China. The problem was the Hokkien language of the Chinese colonists living there, which was only a regional dialect. He understood that the LMS station would have to be moved into China as soon as treaties allowed this in order for effective Chinese language-learning, and by October he was writing the LMS explaining this. His view that Malacca was not even a good temporary station for the later real work in China undoubtedly irritated Evans, adding to other problems that had been accumulating in their relationship.

#### Legge struggles with Evans 1840

Over the months of 1840, trouble began to develop between Legge and Evans. From the outset Legge's skills and his youthful confidence probably aroused some jealousy in Evans, more than a decade older. Even at the age of 23 Legge had considerable confidence in his abilities and his opinions. With his Aberdeen MA and his prize-winning scholarship history, he was better-educated than Evans and immensely more educated and clever than assistant Werth. Evans had been a schoolteacher in England before becoming a missionary, and had no particular intellectual talents. He was quite strong-minded in enhancing his career prospects however, and upon arrival at Malacca in 1833 to work in the mission he had immediately also set himself up as Principal of the ACC without consulting Robert Morrison who was its President. Morrison was even more furious when he discovered that Evans was using money

donated to the ACC for LMS work, but Morrison died within a year and Evans was not corrected by the LMS even though they knew of his actions.

Legge was an equally determined man, having successfully battled his theological college over its unfair treatment of him, and the LMS over its medical evaluation, so there were possibilities for problems in the relationship between Evans and James Legge arising from their personalities well before any particular issues might arise. It also seems likely that Legge quickly recognized that Evans, Werth, and Hughes did not share his passions for Chinese language and culture, although Evans' son did. These different views and the possibility of Legge attracting Evans' son away from sole reliance on his father probably added to tension within the little group. Even their understanding of the role of the Malacca station was different, as Evans and Werth did not share Legge's eagerness to close down the Malacca mission that had been the focus of all their efforts. Their conflicts played out in many different domains.

#### Housing conflict

The first dispute arose out of a housing decision made by James. From the outset he had decided that it would be best if he and Mary set up their household in the LMS house that had been vacated recently by missionary Dyer. This was reasonable as Legge was essentially replacing Dyer who was also a married man, but Evans changed his mind about this plan and wanted them to live in the ACC. Evans must have written to London complaining about Legge's choice of housing, because the LMS eventually parlayed Evans' views back to Legge in a letter that led him to a testy rebuttal. London was unhappy with his move into Dyer's house rather than into the ACC, and this puzzled James, as he understood the LMS house was lying available, full of furniture and ready for a family.

Legge defended himself by pointing out that the ACC documents did not require the college masters to live in, explaining that the ACC actually owned Dyer's house. He wondered if the LMS failed to tell him because they wanted him to live in the ACC rather than in a separate house, but he pointed out that Robert Morrison's original Prospectus and vision of a group of "missionaries and learned men congregated from the universities of England and America" and living together in the College, was completely different from the reality of the small elementary school actually in operation. He was testy and annoyed with the tone of the letter from Tidman, his new LMS overseer.

#### Hughes conflict

The next conflict involved Josiah Hughes. He had returned to Malacca as Chaplain of Church of England for the English-speaking community, after having been fired in

1836 by the LMS for dereliction of duty before Legge's arrival. Hughes and Evans had a history of conflict about mission housing. In 1833 the LMS men in Malacca, Hughes and Tomlin, had refused to let new man Evans live in the ACC after he arrived at the Malacca station. After it was clear no other housing was to be had and Evans moved in, Tomlin refused to vacate his rooms there until Robert Morrison forced the issue in late summer 1834. Then Hughes stopped doing any real work for the LMS, failed to keep the accounts in order, used some of his extra-mission income to set up a competing school, and bribed away the Chinese teacher from the ACC, expecting most of the students to come as well, along with their LMS subsidies. After Hughes discovered that the Malacca church was going to be consecrated by the Bishop of Calcutta and that there would be a salaried government job as Chaplain available, changed to the Church of England in 1834. Evans was sarcastic about this Machiavellian manoeuvre, which moved Hughes into a higher social position within the community. Hughes moved out of the LMS station to share housing in a suburb with former fired LMS man Tomlin, who was trying to run a school to compete against the ACC even though he was still secretly soliciting money from local merchants misrepresenting himself as LMS. By late 1834 Hughes had begun to move LMS money to this new operation. Over the next year Hughes had alternately cosied up to Evans and rejected all LMS work, and had finally been fired, but he stayed in town and resumed a friendship with Evans after Tomlin had finally left.

Legge knew only a little of these complex battles between Hughes and Evans in the years after 1834. Hughes now lived next door to Legge, who was introduced to bachelor Hughes as the Anglican chaplain to the government, preaching in a formerly Dutch church. At first Hughes was friendly to James and Mary and sought out their company, but relations turned delicate, then bitter, as events unfolded.

Evans expected James and Mary to attend the Church of England Sunday service run by Hughes but Legge thought it was not right for LMS mission men to attend services offered by a minister whose connection to the mission had been forcibly "severed" by the LMS Directors. Evans and Hughes were both Anglicans, but James and Mary were nonconformists who were opposed to the idea of an established state church, and to the particulars of an episcopal church run under the authority of a distant bishop and archbishop. What was worse was that Evans had discontinued the LMS Sunday service so that Hughes could offer the only Protestant service at his new post with the Anglican Church. Legge quickly realized that Hughes had all the casual disinterest in religious feeling that represented the very core of the critique that the dissenting churches in Britain levelled against the established church. Legge found this bland Christianity with its cosy links to established society and government very different from

his idea of true Christian faith and the fierce independence he believed was the right of every congregation. Legge's ideas about faith also interrupted Evans' custom of easy baptism for converts just to enable the mission to list numbers of baptisms for the benefit of the LMS, and James refused to do this for families who did not understand the meaning of the sacrament, further alienating Evans.

Legge responded to the problem of Sunday services by providing a service for the LMS Chinese Christians in his home. Evans charged this was wrong because it was not in a "public place", so Legge moved it into the ACC. All this disturbed Evans, who was still a close friend of Hughes despite their institutional separation and their earlier conflicts. By September Legge thought that he and Evans had an agreement to take turns offering a regular Sunday morning service at the ACC, but Evans later claimed in a fury that he had never agreed to sharing these Sunday services with Legge, and claimed he had only agreed to give "an annual address" to the ACC congregation. Evans wrote that the ACC service had to be discontinued because his "numerous duties connected to the mission would not allow ..." him time to do it. He rolled out a long list of his daily and weekly activities to prove that Legge was being insensitive and demanding in seeking his participation in a Sunday service every other week.

#### Conflict over which Chinese language Legge should learn

Evans and Legge also disagreed about which Chinese dialect Legge should learn. In Jakarta he had learned that the mandarin dialect was not useful in Malacca, and with the encouragement of the Stronachs but little other consideration decided he should learn Hokkien, the dialect of the local Chinese. Evans argued that Cantonese would be more appropriate in the long run because the mission work would probably move to Canton once China became opened. In this quarrel Legge was wrong and Evans was right, and by August James realized this and added Cantonese lessons to his studies. In part he did this because he was afraid that Mrs. Evans' poor health would never allow her to return and that Evans would soon leave the station. To prepare for this possibility it would be necessary for Legge to master Cantonese as well as Hokkien and mandarin in order to handle both the local tasks and long-term plans. Legge recognized that his teacher and student Ho would be an excellent teacher for this new dialect.

#### Conflict over the 'out' schools

Further conflicts arose in relation to the feeder schools that were supposed to prepare children to enter the College, and by early August Legge had become very critical of the system of "out" schools that Evans was operating. These were elementary schools intended to teach Chinese to the children of Chinese fathers and Malay mothers,



and Chinese men were hired to teach. Legge quickly realized that the children spoke Malay, knew no Chinese, and were simply using rote memory to recite the Chinese characters in text without any comprehension. The teachers were using traditional memorization techniques that might have contributed to some general education if the students had knowledge of the Chinese language, but absent that, the whole enterprise was ridiculous. Legge described the schools as “radically defective”. In addition, he was disturbed to discover that none of the teachers were Christians, so they were incapable of teaching the children even the most basic Christian ideas about goodness.

#### Conflicts about Legge’s duties and the ACC

Some relief developed in relations between the two men after Mrs. Evans and son John left for Britain in early summer. Evans became seriously depressed and James and Mary responded with sympathy. The Legges were both finding the climate very congenial, and James wrote that he and Evans had developed a cordial relationship. Then new problems arose.

In late August James was hurt when Evans’ crony Hughes failed to send a note to Mary to congratulate her on her new baby girl. Evans’ assistant Werth sided with Hughes, claiming that Legge had created the problem by failing to send a formal birth notice to Hughes, possibly an excessive nicety in such a tiny community. Then Evans and Legge disagreed about Legge’s duties. Evans wanted Legge to take on teaching in English in the ACC, rather than spending most of his time mastering Chinese so that later he could do direct mission work. Legge resented this deflection of his time from learning a skill he knew he needed, to routine English teaching that would not prepare him for his life’s work.

In addition, Legge was outraged and depressed by the educational level of the ACC. At first this had merely local implications in the conflict with Evans, but by September Legge became so incensed at the gap between what he had been told and the reality, that he wrote a very tough letter to the LMS. He noted that the ACC had always been one of the most-praised elements of the LMS mission to China and he had expected it to be a thriving College at the level he had experienced in Scotland. The LMS had led him to believe that he and the other “Professors” were part of an excellent educational institution for senior students. Instead, Legge found it was only an elementary school. He had also discovered that the LMS had received good warnings about the feeble quality of the school, which they had not communicated to him, and he became indignant at the misrepresentation.

Arising from this Legge was also distraught at the way the LMS in London was misrepresenting the college to its donors, which included British churches, the EIC, and the British government. Legge pointed out that over time everyone would discover the truth, noting that whenever any visitor stopped at Malacca and visited the ACC, the accuracy of Legge's harsh account was immediately visible. Such travellers were already spreading the truth throughout the region. Further, the LMS could not depend on distance to hide its secret, for British officials returned to Britain and could report the truth there as well. Legge urged the LMS to explain publicly that the ACC had failed to meet its objectives in accordance with the ACC deed, and thus had reverted to the care of the LMS for inadequate performance. He was extremely upset to be part of an operation that he regarded as being totally dishonest, though he was careful to note that he was not attributing the problems to possible criminality.

He argued that the LMS should never have taken on the management of the College as a mission effort. He regarded Morrison's original conception of the College as far too ambitious for the facts of education in the east. He explained if Morrison's vision had been viable, it would be necessary to charge the ACC with gross mismanagement for failing to achieve that vision. The LMS was dishonest in representing the institution as a college when it was only a school, and was vulnerable to losing the confidence of its public and donors through revelations of the truth. By mid October Legge was even more furious with the whole system of education at the ACC and the LMS out-schools, and wrote another long letter describing the vast gulf between Morrison's idealistic plan and the actual operations. Too polite to name names and not wanting "to attribute positive criminality to anybody connected with the College", he still said it was because of Evans' want of "moral courage" that he had not told the LMS the truth.

Legge was also outraged at financial shenanigans involving the ACC. Both Legge and Beighton discovered and wrote the LMS that Evans awarded himself two extra salaries – one for his role as "Principal" of the college and another for his role as "Professor". Legge pointed out the impropriety of the large salaries that were being given to "Principals and Professors" (i.e., Evans) for what was only a school. Evans allowed money to be raised in England to pay extra salaries for these "Principals and Professors", in actuality combined in the person of Evans. Legge argued all these titles and salaries were simple dishonesty. He recommended the ACC should be run independently of the mission and described how to improve the College, which should only to revert to LMS supervision if it entirely failed to meet its goals.

Legge was also embarrassed and angry about the financial arrangements that implicated the LMS. If the LMS wished to continue operating the ACC, then the LMS

men should not receive any additional salaries as ACC Principal or as Professors, but should receive the normal mission salary out of fairness to all other LMS missionaries. Legge was honest in admitting that in his first six months Evans had convinced him to accept an extra salary for ACC teaching. Once he began to understand this “double-dipping” he was embarrassed even though it had yielded some cordiality to their relations. He wrote he would be glad to refund the money either to the LMS or the ACC, whichever the LMS decided. Finally, he pointed out that the College needed to be in China because Morrison’s original plan could never be achieved outside China, otherwise it should be simply shut down.

Relations between Legge and Evans became so full of conflict that by late October they were communicating with each other only by written notes. Legge thought that Werth should stop his evangelizing and settle in to the College to teach Malay to girls, but Evans and Werth were opposed to this. They all wrote letters to the LMS in London to justify their views. Evans and Werth thought that Legge was trying to get out of teaching duties which they considered to be very light because his teaching load did not require him to teach girls or Malay. That was a silly complaint because Legge had been sent to teach senior Chinese boys a college curriculum and to learn Chinese for his later work. Werth developed a paranoid interpretation and decided that Legge’s proposal was in fact part of devious plan that he had developed to destroy the ACC, and wrote the LMS that they should have pity on the young man’s struggle with his “Adamic” (i.e., sinful) nature. Legge hoped for a letter from the LMS that would bring him information and comfort, but nothing arrived, and the station was in significant disarray. James wrote his brother John that “Day treads upon day, and week chases after week, while I am fuming and fretting and labouring amid a press of multifarious business” (H. E. Legge, 1905) p. 16.

In early November Evans sent London his annual accounts for the station, noting that not only were the finances not in as good a condition as in the previous eight years, but regretting that he could not forward pleasing intelligence about the harmony and unity of the Brethren at the station. He then launched a major attack on the young Scot who had been sent there. Evans complained that because he and Legge viewed baptism and the Lord’s Supper differently, he had been unable to perform either of those services, while Evans had never had such problems with Dyer. He complained that the young man was ignorant of “local customs” (meaning Legge’s insistence on leading a Sabbath service at the mission instead of attending the Anglican church). Legge was far too headstrong, “not only desirous of introducing and setting up his own plans, but insisting on having them carried into effect”. Evans complained “it is grievous, very

grievous, for me to inform you that in consequence of Mr. Legge acting as above stated, both Mr. Werth and myself felt it to be our conscientious duty to separate ourselves from him". The next sentence is more revealing: "Indeed, to speak quite correctly, he cut us first". Evans and Werth urged that if replacements were not sent for them, it would be extremely unpleasant to continue their duties in the same college even for five or six months.

The real problem undoubtedly lay in the huge gap in the educational and intellectual talents of the two men. Legge was university-educated, had outstanding intellectual skills, broad interests, and had long-term plans for work in China, while Evans had none of these and resented the contrast in every domain that it appeared. Legge must have heightened the conflicts by his strong confidence in his dissenter tradition and in his own judgment and skills.

Legge's later memoir about this period was more mellow than his letters at the time. He either forgot, or did not record these interpersonal problems, but instead emphasized the marvellous setting of the college along the sea front where it could be cooled by temperate sea breezes.

From a distance it seems plausible that some of the problems between Evans and Legge arose simply because this young but brilliant scholar challenged Evans' personal authority, and were basic struggles over dominance. Events however soon unfolded a darker tale, with financial fraud and other deceptions and double-dealings. The deeper truths behind the interpersonal problems between the men were revealed after they were solved in a dramatic and unexpected way.

#### Cholera strikes summer 1840, Evans dies

Illness always posed the possibility of sudden death in the remote tropical missionary stations, with added risks from the mixture of dangerous and dubious Victorian remedies available. Legge typically showed remarkable fearlessness about the sudden fevers and diseases of the tropics, even offering intimate help to the sick when their families and staff had abandoned them. In one case in Malacca he provided nursing care to a Chinese man with smallpox when neither Chinese nor Malays would go near the patient for fear of the disease. Legge went to the man's bedside and "shut himself up for days alone with the man, carried in the food which was placed outside at a distance, and nursed him back" to health. In the case of Evans, events developed too quickly for reconciliation through such care.

In the summer of 1840 cholera raged in Malacca. A mother and child who worked as servants for Hughes died very quickly and he became fearful, deciding to move out of

his Chaplain's house to stay with Evans at the College. On November 24 he started to have severe stomach pains after dinner, and within two hours of violent retching and purging he was dead. After attending the funeral Evans and Werth hurriedly left town to avoid the disease, planning to stay in Werth's house 6 miles out in Balik Bamlik. After one day there Evans became violently ill in the evening, and at 2 AM managed to scribble a note for his servant to take to Legge before collapsing. The servant was afraid of the dark so did not set out until the next day, leaving Evans without any care.

Once Legge received the message he and the doctor drove a buggy out immediately. Evans crashed to the floor, dying just as they were climbing the stairs. The doctor was able to get a few drops of blood from a vein so he shouted "get him onto the bed and turn him over, he may not be quite dead". Legge obeyed but then fainted under the stress of the bloody scene. He recovered consciousness to find himself on the floor under an open window with the doctor standing over him smoking a large cigar. He shoved this between Legge's lips with the words "Smoke that and don't say a word to Mrs. Legge about this morning for a fortnight". Legge's tormenters Hughes and Evans were now both dead.

The Chinese in Malacca were terrified of cholera and Legge was dismayed at the huge amounts of money the Chinese community was spending on processions and elaborate ceremonies to drive away cholera demons. "My mind was deeply affected by the various devices they employed to secure themselves from the pestilence and to drive it from their dwellings". He prepared a simple pamphlet in Chinese to help explain the disease to the community, to help them understand that they did not have to spend this money. It was widely circulated in Malacca, probably his first printed text in Chinese.

### Chapter 15 Evans dies of cholera, Legge inherits a mess

Legge was now the LMS man in Malacca. He was also the Principal and the teacher of the ACC, the superintendent of the printing press, and a family man with a new daughter and a wife with fragile health. He was 24 years old. The station was now his to remedy or mismanage, and any excitement he could have felt quickly left him when discovered that before he could create anything new, he had a horrendous mess to clean up.

Within a very short time Legge discovered shocking evidence of professional treachery and financial fraud by Evans. He found that every management aspect of the mission was a complete mess, starting with a financial tangle including crooked land deals, secret plans to desert the mission and move its students to a private operation, and “converts” who knew nothing of Christianity.

#### Discovering Evans’ chicaner, and sealing the papers

Legge discovered that Evans had misrepresented many aspects of the Malacca station and his own activities in his reports to the LMS. In May 1839 Evans had written a glowing report to the LMS in London, complete with a financial report for 1838 done using double-entry bookkeeping. This showed the mission had income of \$2,526 and expenses of \$1,933, providing a comfortable contingency fund, but in fact the finances of the station were in “great confusion”, with little scraps of paper jumbling together LMS and ACC funds. Sums of money were “scattered here and there, with no label attached to them. In the safes even, there lay money ... without labels”. Legge realized this was serious, informed the top British judicial official in the Strait (Recorder Sir William Norris), and had all the papers and accounts sealed until they could be fully examined by officials.

Even worse, Legge discovered that Evans had a secret life with deceptions relating to the ACC, the LMS mission, and money. By the end of the year Legge summed up all the problems he had discovered in his first month as mission chief. He had had to go to court to freeze all disbursements from Evans’ estate and to place the mission accounts under seal because Sir William had not yet been able to get to Malacca to study them. The contrast between Evans’ claims and the reality that Legge came to discover was hugely shocking to him.

#### Evans cheated his assistant Werth

Some of the problems concerned Evans’ helper Werth. From the outset Evans had theological problems with Werth and excoriated both Rev. Hughes of Hackney and Werth, his ordinant: “such an ordination, by such a person, who holds such erroneous

views, I consider quite wrong, and not at all in accordance with the word of God.” In addition to this theological difficulty, there were practical problems. Werth did not know Latin, Greek, or Hebrew, and his knowledge of English was also quite limited. Werth’s main asset was that he knew the Malay people and could speak Malay, so Evans thought Werth could teach the boys in the Malay-Chinese elementary school. Evans had recommended Werth be appointed as an Assistant missionary, stressing that Werth was completely unworthy to be appointed as an ordained missionary, and that Werth had to be subject to Evans’ direction. Werth’s attributes were not so much a matter of conflict as a matter of restricted usefulness, but Evans had deceived the LMS about Werth’s salary.

In September 1840 Evans reported he was paying \$60 a month to Werth. Half the money was to come from LMS funds and half from donations from himself and “three friends”. Legge discovered that not long after claiming this philanthropy Evans had removed himself from this list of supporters. Evans had told Legge that he had paid Werth a salary increase backdated to the outset of his employment, but in fact Werth had never received this money and Evans was cheating Werth on his salary. Evans paid Werth only \$8 monthly while claiming to James that he was paying more, and at the same time claimed to Werth that he/Evans wished to pay Werth \$20 monthly but that James objected. Werth had a wife and five children and Legge was disgusted with these lies, and even more with the discovery that Evans had not even kept up those pathetic payments, for Werth was owed back-pay. Werth had no other obvious source of employment, so he had supported Evans’ complaints against Legge across 1840, but was now in the embarrassing position of reporting to Legge.

#### Evans’ secret plan for a separate mission and college

Legge discovered another problem that cut to the heart of the mission. He found that Evans was deeply involved in a secret plan to remove the LMS assets (staff, converts, students, and funds), and use the money in a competing mission and college. Evans was Anglican and had been secretly working with the Church of England Bishop of Calcutta to leave the LMS and set up a new church with the aid of the Anglican Society for Propagating the Knowledge. Evans promised the Bishop that all his Chinese converts would come to the new church, but Legge found that Evans had misrepresented membership in his LMS church in proposing this deal. Evans had written to the Bishop claiming to have made sizeable numbers of Chinese converts whom he would move over to the new mission but James discovered there were few Chinese converts, and all of them had been brought as Christians to the mission through

the preaching of Keuh Agong, a Chinese Christian working in the mission. Evans had included Werth in this decamping plan as he was developing it, but after Werth realized the true situation and the many “gross falsehoods” when James uncovered the details, Werth became mortified. He renounced his former connection with Evans, apologized for a critical letter he had written to the LMS, and became a willing assistant to James as they tried to operate the mission.

#### The ACC and the basic schools were in disarray

The educational operation was also a worse mess than he expected. Legge was especially upset that Sam Dyer had allowed himself to be bamboozled by Evans, and had sent letters to the LMS that seriously misrepresented the educational activities at the station. For example, Dyer wrote in the June issue of the main missionary journal, the *EMM Chronicle*, about the large number of children attending the Chinese “out” schools even after Evans and Dyer had closed these schools down after the LMS recognized that they were useless and ordered them closed. Evans and Dyer’s claim that Mrs. Evans had been teaching Malay girls “as their mother” for seven years was ridiculous, because she still could not speak even three sentences in Malay and could not understand one word. Legge observed that in fact Dyer knew that Mrs. Evans “students” consisted of the most ragged and filthy group in Malacca, amounting to 60 infants and mothers who had about equivalent levels of interest in education. By December Legge had seen evidence that Dyer was fully aware of all the misrepresentations yet allowed himself to be used by Evans, and Legge planned to provide the proofs to the LMS even though it was “very painful to report this”. From Penang Beighton wrote privately to the LMS that Dyer had been aware of Evans’ activities for some time at Penang, but when the LMS ordered Dyer to join Evans at Malacca, Dyer had decided to submit to Evans. Beighton believed that Sam Dyer was actually afraid of Evans. Legge found repeated evidence that Evans was constantly duplicitous, as he had even shown James some friendly letters Dyer had written to Evans, yet Evans commented to James about Dyer, “What a nothing he was”.

In addition to its primitive academic functioning, the ACC was also in a financial mess that Evans had not reported. When Evans had planned to move all 12 ACC students to his new Anglican mission he had written the Bishop that these boys were all his own private students, yet the LMS had paid Evans stipends for the support of all these students and that money properly belonged in the LMS mission for ACC expenses, rather than going to Evans as private income. Evans had even made out weird formal “agreements” assigning some of these students to himself as President of the ACC.



Legge also reported that the ACC library was in a terrible state, with not a single Chinese book fit to give to a student. He had to buy many Chinese books at his own expense, and as an inventory had never been done, he would do one and send it to the ACC Trustees. He also discovered that many valuable works were missing when he compared the holdings to a list that Evans had published years earlier. Legge reported that there were so many problems at the College that it was going to be impossible for him to take charge of it and also do mission work.

Even by early 1841 Evans' financial chicanery was still complicating mission life. Legge discovered that Evans' accounts claimed that he had been paying Keuh Agong sums amounting to \$90, but Agong had not been paid in 15 months of work he was doing solely for the LMS.

#### Evans' LMS Chinese chapel consisted of three Malay women

In early January 1841 James Legge shut down what Evans had grandly called his "Chinese church" with the full agreement of its 3 members, Malay women who barely understood the meaning of the Lord's Supper. Evans had last provided the sacrament to them three years earlier, in Chinese, although none of them knew Chinese and Evans knew no Malay. Legge tried to explain to the three woman the difference between doing religious activities to please him, and doing them "out of a living faith; the faithful have to want to praise God". After Hughes died of cholera in November 1840 Legge took on the task of holding Sunday services for the English-language community in Malacca in the LMS Chapel. It was in "deplorable" condition, so he went fund-raising in the community and raised \$30, enough to improve the chapel. This was the beginning of a life of effective fundraising for charitable causes, and over his years in the East he became very effective at raising money for charity far beyond his own mission, particularly for Chinese victims of typhoons and fires.

#### Legge summarized the academic problems at the ACC

Legge prepared a detailed analysis of the situation of the ACC in 1841 and wrote its Trustees (copied to Tidman at the LMS) outlining its problems and a way that it could be rehabilitated. He recognized that it was basically just a charity school for the LMS, and found no evidence that it had ever functioned at any higher level, certainly never as a college. James was indignant in reporting that not one serious Chinese scholar had ever been produced by the College. Ho Tsunshin, the sole current student with any accomplishment, had learned most of his Chinese and English in Bengal. The building mainly served as a dwelling for the missionary, and the mission and college had suffered by having their operations in a common pot. While most of the public in Britain and the

east understood the College was mainly an educational institution, this conflicted with the founder Morrison's plan, which had set it to use education as a means of spreading the gospel.

Legge discovered that Evans had never paid the native steward and Chinese teacher the full salary set out in the College By-Laws written by Morrison. He was especially indignant that in contrast, the Europeans had all received the full salaries in that document, with Evans, already in receipt of a full-time salary from the LMS, paying himself two additional full salaries of £100 each for serving as the Principal and as the Professor. Evans (unnamed, but the man in question) had apparently had a slight twinge of conscience in that he had not gone so far as to take on a third European salary available in the By-Laws.

Next, and perhaps more horrifying to a book-loving scholar, Legge found evidence that both Evans and Hughes stole books from the ACC. Many of the books in Evans' home had the LMS insignia partially scribbled or rubbed out, with "JE" written on top. Legge wanted to know if Evans had ever paid the LMS for these books, and took possession of ACC books he found in Hughes' library.

To remedy the pathetic condition of the College Legge recommended that it should be independent of the LMS. It could function with one man appointed to serve in place of the three designated offices, with a salary of £300, the same as received by a married LMS missionary. In its early years Morrison had convinced the EIC Select Committee to provide an annual "land" grant of \$1,200, but it had been discontinued for some years.

Legge began to understand that the ACC accounts were in such dark condition that the College would need some help from the LMS in order to remedy its worst problems even to get into a condition from which it could seek public support. For its part, the Indian Committee of the LMS and the Trustees of the ACC were trying to find out who had been named as recipient of the EIC land grant for the ACC. The ownership records were in a muddle, and these committees authorized Legge to take possession of all documents and property in the ACC and keep them safe until the LMS sent further instructions.

Legge recommended that the LMS should have a dominant role in appointing a new ACC Principal because the LMS would be providing most of the funding. In return the Principal could superintend some school classes in the building as well as the LMS Printing Press. The Principal should be required to master written Chinese so that he could write texts for use in the Chinese mission. Legge explained that his own duties with the mission prevented him from considering such an appointment, and

recommended that the college should be rehabilitated regardless of whether it were to stay in Malacca or move to China with unfolding events.

He had begun to realize how silly it was for a college to work on preparing Chinese students in the Malay colonies as eventual pastors for China when there was no local education system in Chinese. This meant the ACC had to teach both Chinese and English to the Malay-Chinese students, and he realized how inefficient this was. Instead the need was for such a Chinese-oriented college to be in China rather than in the Strait. By March 1841 the Trustees of the LMS Indian Committee met with the ACC Trustees. They recognized that Evans had “monopolized all the College offices into his own person...” and decided that the ACC management now devolved onto the LMS.

The actual operation of the ACC improved considerably within months of Legge becoming its chief. He had inherited a dozen students who were there “by force and terror” arising from contracts Evans had done with their parents. Legge became active as a teacher and soon earned the respect of the Chinese parents. Within months he set up a system in which they could sign a three-year contract with the school to have their child educated. Things were running so smoothly that by August 1841 he had 30-40 regular students and realized he could actually accommodate 100.

For the first time, the boys were beginning to read and spell English, and could do arithmetic from a standard textbook, and he planned to run public examinations within a few months. Despite these gains he was increasingly convinced that there was no point in setting up a major College outside China for training Chinese. He explained to the LMS that there were no converts at all to be educated for a Chinese ministry, and he thought it would be a terrible idea to educate non-Christian Chinese and hire them as evangelists.

#### Problems in the accounts of the LMS and ACC and Evans' estate

In the meantime, Legge was still struggling with Evans' accounts, sending reports to the LMS as he uncovered one problem after another. He was deeply embarrassed to discover that in the ACC safe that contained all the mission funds, the sack that should have held more than \$400 for the BFBS, contained only \$71.80.

Legge even had some of his own money intertwined with Evans' because of the method that missions used to get cash to run their work. Because Malacca was dying as a commercial centre the missionaries could not find any local merchant to cash their usual “bills”, and had to send this loan request to Singapore. Piracy was a huge problem, so the cash would be sent back in small batches so prevent any catastrophic loss. At the time of Evans' death, Legge and Evans had sent out one of these bills for

£200 (about \$820 Spanish, the currency of the region), of which Evans had received \$400. When Evans died suddenly, Legge used nearly \$300 from that money to keep the mission running, then when he wrote asking for the balance to be paid, was shocked when the merchant refused the request because Evans had died. Legge understood that the debt would be held against Evans' estate so he did not criticize the firm as acting illegally, but he reminded the LMS board that the mission would have been paralyzed without Legge's lucky discovery of a small surplus. In the meantime he was using LMS funds to support all the Chinese students living at the ACC.

By late February 1841 he had to write the LMS some grossly embarrassing news. Evans had "borrowed" more than \$1,000 from the Widows and Orphans fund, and owed money to the *Chinese Repository* journal, to the Bible Society, the Tract Society, and to Dyer. Evans had been using everyone's money for his own purposes, mostly land and property ventures. Legge wrote to Sir William Norris, Recorder for the Straits Settlements, seeking interim advice on what to do. He needed to know how to take all the claims on Evans' estate into court on behalf of all those who were owed money, pending formal instructions from the LMS in England. Legge was still very upset that Dyer had written an article in the missionary *EMM Chronicle* without mentioning any of the problems in the Malacca mission, and that the Directors in London seemed unable to use the information James was sending them to understand the true conditions. Finally in July 1841 he received some relief from all these vexations with the news that the LMS had set up a committee of inquiry into the Malacca mission affairs.

The ACC accounts were finally completed for the period January 1841 to July, and Legge provided them to the Trustees using double-entry bookkeeping. It is not clear where he learned how to do this medieval Venetian business technique during his classical education, but possibly he learned while helping his father's business. The total balances were \$945, and James had to explain that he had had to borrow \$500 just to keep the College running because there was only \$284 in the cash at Evans' death. The mission roof and building was in deplorable condition, the main ACC house had no furniture (so he moved his in), and the Library did not have enough books to be a college library. He also worried about the \$10,000 ACC endowment, which was loaned out for mortgages by two Singapore merchants. The problem was that this fund should have earned \$900 interest at the prevailing rates, but the merchant responsible for half of that fund only provided \$84 to Legge and was withholding the remainder of \$248, so the ACC was still grossly short of its expected income. James also wrote John Morrison seeking the \$1,200 annual grant that he had traditionally sent on behalf of the EIC.

The Recorder was expected to visit in late August and this was a source of more worry. Legge had been able to have a local court freeze all disbursements from Evans' estate until all the creditors had a chance to make their claims, but the Recorder's Sessions could overturn that ruling. In the meantime, the LMS and ACC buildings were still under mortgages, with the LMS owing \$3,000 on its main large house, and Dyer apparently owing \$400 on the second, small house. Legge urged the ACC and LMS to waste no time in deciding what to do about these mortgages, fearing foreclosures and the closing of the station. He realized that he would have to lodge a public claim against Evans' estate for the moneys Evans had appropriated from the LMS, the ACC, the Bible Society and the Widows and Orphans fund, which he did (R. L. O'Sullivan, 1980).

The Recorder arrived in mid-October and confirmed the accuracy of the notes and accounts that Legge gave him. Sir William had met Evans some years earlier and had had "an unpleasant collision" with him. Now Legge and Sir William discovered there were even more tangled problems than first appeared. They had to separate Evans' estate from the accounts of the LMS and the ACC because all were intertwined. It seemed that the \$3,000 mortgage owing on the LMS/ACC building had actually been borrowed against its value by Evans and used to build a private house on land he leased from the Government in 1835, all in his own name. He rented that house to Dyer and charged him \$30 a month (\$360 a year) rent, but the money returning annually to the College was only \$270 because Evans was skimming off the top. He had not leased the lot nor built the house in the name of the mission or the College, but rather as a personal venture.

The lawyers for Evans' estate were trying to claim the ACC owed Evans the \$3,000 for the costs of the private house, trying to claim that the ACC owned the house (that Evans had purchased in his own account but using ACC money), but in truth it was the other way around. Evans was using ACC money to do land deals on his own account. Evans had always paid the annual tax assessments in his own name and paid for all the repairs, suggesting he and the tax authorities regarded him as the owner. Even worse, several individuals told Hughes and Legge that Evans planned to sell the house to the ACC.

Further fiddles came to light as Sir William and Legge studied the documents. Because the true cost of his house was only \$2,000, Evans had taken the extra \$1,000 he had borrowed from the LMS, for other land deals. In the true spirit of a developer with access to deep pockets Evans then bought another house (in some sort of loose arrangement with Hughes), in which Evans again provided the capital as if it were his, even though it was actually ACC money. The money was to be repaid to Evans by the

girls' school Evans and Dyer were operating in it for a different mission society for girls' education. In turn, their school was supposed to receive some share of the rents the school was paying to itself and Evans. The deed of purchase in this bizarre deal was made out in Evans' name, and again he paid the annual taxes and all repairs, even though he considered the house was Dyer's and paid the taxes in Dyer's name. \$1,400 was owed to the ACC in this complex scheme. All that Legge and the Recorder could figure out was that there was a question as to whether Evans alone owed the money, or whether Dyer would pay half, or whether the mission society supporting the girl's school would pay for it. Beighton wrote the LMS as all these miseries unfolded, explaining, "Legge has been exceedingly kind and has had much trouble in getting the intricate accounts" sorted out.

The accounts were finally all corrected and settled in March 1842 when the Recorder made his second visit, and Legge sent the BFBS a final payment of \$300. The Recorder decided that the various houses were in fact owned by the ACC and not by Evans' estate, and once he had completed his evaluation of all the financial documents, the LMS was able to recoup all but \$30 owed to it by Evan's estate. In the meantime the first Anglo-Chinese War staggered forward and news arrived that the British had taken Haimen Bay near Xiamen.

#### LMS having financial problems in Britain

Mission life at Malacca was not helped by the news that the LMS itself was having money problems. Critics were complaining that foreign missions to Africa and China were not gaining many converts, so Legge wrote explaining the special needs of the missions to China. He pointed out that in Asia missions were confronted with ancient historical civilizations and this presented them with an especially challenging task in which missionaries had to master complex written languages in order to read about the civilizations and prepare good religious texts in those languages. In contrast, most African missions encountered illiterate people without written languages or literary traditions. Missionaries there could alphabetize the spoken languages and easily prepare texts including dictionaries that would aid communication at a rapid pace that was impossible in China. In fact LMS men used simple phonetics based on these spoken African languages to create the first written texts for a significant number of African groups.

Legge was frustrated that the Directors did not respond with accuracy to his reports, and he was eager for the return of Sam Dyer so the horrendous private land deals could be sorted out from the mission's affairs. As Dyer was returning to the Straits

in 1841 he stopped in Cape Town, where he reported that the Boers were furious at the English missionaries for Britain's emancipation of the slaves in 1833. The Boers indignantly complained emancipation had "done them an irreparable injury", but Dyer commented, "what they call injury is only justice to Africa". He also stopped in Malacca in early 1842 and met Legge, then in the middle of all his attempts to sort out the financial problems. Dyer, ever the Pollyanna, was very pleased with what Legge was doing; "the feeling in our Straits Mission is good; the men are of the right stamp; all are hard at work, and the work prospers".

#### The LMS press in Malacca: Malay printing and Thomsen

In February 1841 Legge began to study the operations of the LMS press, starting with its Malay printing. This had been started by Thomsen then inherited by Dyer when Milne pushed out Thomsen in 1822 because the mission was supposed to be focused on Chinese. Legge recommended that the mission printing presses be consolidated in one station in the Strait so that an expert printer and printing manager could run the operation. In addition to wasting the time of the missionary with his amateur skills, printing interfered with the time he should be spending on other mission tasks. He recommended Penang or Singapore where there was more staff.

At the same time, the natural direction of Legge's talents led him to work on projects with a scholarly aspect that could make use of the LMS press. He was now in charge of the sizeable printing operation, which by 1836 had printed more than 8 million books and tracts in Chinese and Malay (L. O'Sullivan, 1984). The press had a number of unfinished projects, and Legge began to sort through these and plan for the completion of those he considered useful.

The British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) had sent money to Evans for Malay translations of scriptures, a project begun by Thomsen. When Legge examined Thomsen's Malay work in February 1841 he wrote the BFBS to provide them with an accounting of their money and to recommend that the Malay translations of Bible texts should be completed. He recommended Werth in conjunction with Malay-literate missionaries in Singapore and Penang for this work, suggesting that committee effort could be an important way of spreading out the workload in completing such big jobs.

#### Major illness strikes Werth, with financial complications for the LMS

While trying to sort out the wreckage of the mission accounts, Legge was faced with another serious problem. His sole helper, assistant missionary Mr. Werth became so ill by November 1841 that something had to be done. Normally individual mission stations were part of a group under the general supervision of a "District" mission

committee, but the LMS had disbanded the district committee for the “Ultra-Ganges” missions in the Strait, so Legge had no group to consult for advice.

Werth was severely ill, probably with major liver damage from repeated malaria bouts, and Legge first sent him north to Penang where the cool and bracing air of the hills was believed to be healthful. After two weeks he returned more ill than ever, and independent doctors told Legge that Werth had to be sent to England to save his life. Beighton at Penang also urged this course of action. He had just suffered the premature death of his adopted Malay son (named Ince after his close mission friend who had also died), and was miserably aware of the suddenness of death in the tropics.

The problem was that Werth was a German who had not been sent out by the LMS, but had been hired on site by Evans, and only as an “assistant” missionary. Because of this unusual status, Legge did not know if the LMS would pay for the passages of Werth and his large family, who never had any connection with Britain. Lacking any committee guidance Legge decided his top priority was saving Werth’s life, so he issued blank “bills” for Werth to use to get cash backed by the LMS, and sent the family on its way. In the meantime he had to explain it all to London, and could only hope the LMS would cover the costs. In January 1842 the LMS Board decided to “urge” Werth to return to his European homeland, as it contemplated the closing of the Malacca station and opening of stations in China where Werth’s Malay skills would be of no use.

#### Legge discovers problems with Evans’ converts

Eventually Legge was able to return to the tasks of the mission, with all the real estate, financial, and personnel matters more or less settled. He recommended the LMS hire his talented Chinese Christian student Ho as an Assistant Missionary at the same salary as the senior mission stalwart Liang Fa. Ho was about 20 years old, just a few years younger than James. Legge forwarded a letter of application from Ho written in English, and noted that Evans had such high regard for Ho’s intelligence, character, and translation skills that he had proposed to the Bishop of Calcutta and to Ho, that he become a deacon then eventually a priest in the Church of England. Ho had held back on this plan because he had rather Scottish dissenter views about the proper forms of church government, with a distinct unhappiness with the hierarchical structure of the Anglican Church.

Early in 1841 Legge and Ho began regular preaching in Cantonese in the bazaar, aided by visiting American Protestant missionary Mr. Abeel using the Hokkien dialect of Fujian during June. Ho’s first address to the crowd caused a huge sensation, and some



Chinese responded by posting a counter-address on the wall of the ACC. Ho's talk had criticized a traditional Chinese ceremony, the festival of tombs (*qingming*, currently undergoing a revival in China), using Scripture to explain a better kind of true filial piety. The agitated poster response urged those Chinese who had embraced the doctrine of Jesus "to throw themselves quietly into the fire or the sea and escape the impending vengeance of heaven".

As he participated more in mission work Legge was beginning to be troubled by the nature of "conversions" and baptism in the mission. He realized that few of those seeking baptism understood the new religion, and he was unwilling to baptize any until his Chinese language skills were good enough to speak clearly with the people to fully assess their understanding of the religion. He didn't want any converts to say later that they had not understood the ceremony. With natural dissenter caution about the outward forms of religious behaviour, he wanted to be sure that those being baptized truly understood the Christian message. He sought policy help from the LMS on baptism, and on the question of whether new Christians should be encouraged to live separately from their countrymen, as argued in a recent book.

Augmenting his concern Legge discovered that all but four of Evans' "Christian converts" were members of a secret Triad society and had been participating in nightly gatherings of the triad all the time they had claimed membership in Evans' congregation. This couldn't even be called "backsliding" because they had been doing it all the time. Men in the triads were known for their extortion, gambling, and other criminal activities, all described in a then-recent paper of the Royal Asiatic Society. Although Legge begged the LMS Directors to write frankly to him and provide him with all the information they had about the true state of affairs at the Malacca station, these local events did not harm Legge's work the way they would have had even one year earlier, for Legge was now in favour with the Chinese community. The ACC was thriving, he was sure he could easily get 100 boarding students the next year, and reported that the boys were all making good progress in their studies.

#### Ho Tsunshin, a promising young man; they begin joint translations

One of Legge's happiest discoveries at the ACC was the talented Chinese student Ho Tsunshin. Ho was three years younger than James, who was himself just 25 when he had to take over the entire Malacca operation. In his home district in Canton, Ho had obtained a good Chinese literary education and was familiar with the classical books taught to all scholars. He had come originally to the mission working alongside his father at the LMS printing press. Seeking relief from poverty, Ho had moved to Calcutta

where he worked as a pharmacy assistant and learned good English both through his work and through classes he attended at Bishop's College with Evan's son before they both returned to Malacca in 1840 just after James and Mary arrived. He came back to the ACC in 1840 as a block-cutter and printer with the Press where his father was still a block-cutter.

Ho was an enthusiastic young man, highly intelligent and interested in learning everything. Legge realized that Ho had a particular gift for language learning, with the same easy mastery of new languages that Legge had, and Ho's progress in his studies was wonderful. In addition to his skilled Chinese and English, already good enough for fluent translations, Legge taught Ho a broad general Western education that included history, Greek, Hebrew, and geometry, as well as Christian history and ideas. Legge complained that the only book of Euclid in the ACC library was very out-of date, and he was working on the translation of a more modern work from French to Chinese. Within two years with Legge, Ho could read the New Testament in its original Greek, and the Old in Hebrew. He joined the small Chinese congregation and the two men developed a cordial relationship. Legge recognized that Ho loved learning, had great religious and philosophical insights, and the gift of translating the core ideas of a text from one language to another with eloquence.

Legge decided that he and Ho should work on a joint translation project that would improve both their translation skills, proposing that the LMS provide funds to support a Hebrew-Chinese dictionary. He knew it would be a great benefit to all missionaries as they worked on translations of the Old Testament into Chinese. Ho's translation skills from Hebrew into Chinese would soon be good enough for him to do a translation of the Old Testament and Legge asked the BFBS to support Ho in this big project. If the LMS approved the dictionary project, Legge further requested two sets of type-punches of Hebrew letters to use to make metal fonts for printing the book, and a German book on Hebrew that might help the two of them in the job. He explained that the two previous Chinese translations of the Old Testament (those of Morrison, and of Medhurst) included many errors and difficulties that Legge had directly observed during Bible classes with adult Chinese, because the missionaries were not sufficiently expert in written Chinese. In contrast, Ho was well educated in Hebrew, Chinese, and English, and had great skills in communicating ideas.

Legge was involved in another scholarly project with Ho to help in the Chinese missions. He had been asked to help David Abeel (1804-1846), a passing American missionary from Canton, to finish work on a textbook for Chinese students studying English and Malay. Legge, Ho, and printer Mr. Brown worked on this little book of 110

pages, and it was published in October 1841 by the LMS press, as *A Lexilogus of the English, Malaya, and Chinese languages; Comprehending the Vernacular Idioms of the Hok-keen and Canton Dialect*. The book contained parallel sentences in the four languages in a format designed to teach beginners. Previous Malacca missionaries had prepared rough work of this, then Legge put it into its final form and published it after he was left on his own at the station. Abeel was connected with American Protestant missionary Rev. James Bridgman in Canton, and was very impressed with Legge's work.

The warm and respectful relationship between Legge and Ho was suddenly disrupted when Ho became embroiled in an amorous event that deeply embarrassed the tiny fragile mission. One night in August he was discovered in compromising relations with a Chinese woman married to a Chinese Christian of the congregation. Although the woman described herself as Christian, her behaviour did not match the high standards expected in the fledgling Christian community, and she was soon discovered to be an adulterer who was having affairs with a number of men.

This was extremely upsetting to Legge. He held very pure ideas about the sanctity of marriage yet had also developed a strong respect for Ho, and for a while the controversy threatened to destroy the vulnerable group. In the Scottish church of Legge's upbringing all matters involving moral behaviour were the proper province of the elders of the local congregation. They must examine the problem, establish the facts, then determine any corrective action. In Malacca Legge followed this tradition. He knew that Ho had been spending more time on the printing of the new *Lexilogus* than on his studies of the scriptures, and thought that imbalance in his work might have disturbed his judgment. Legge had such affection and respect for Ho that the event was "as if a knife pierced my heart".

Tracking down the facts Legge was quickly convinced that Ho was "not the tempter but the tempted", and soon learned that the same woman had seduced other men during Evans' time. The tiny congregation was devastated because it was a community of believers rather than simply a weekly social gathering. Ho's lapse was a huge blow to James and to the Chinese Christians in his little group.

The congregation decided that some kind of punishment was necessary to show that Ho's behaviour put him outside the community of believers, deciding to banish Ho from church services and communion until he had convinced them of his repentance and reformed behaviour. Ho apologized to his church and cut off his relationship with the woman, and his period of penance unfolded as they all hoped.

Everyone was relieved when he was brought back into communion after some months. Legge and the tentative congregation had weathered a significant challenge, but

they ended up with a stronger communal feeling for the standards of Christian behaviour, along with relief at regaining their friend. Ho returned to his studies and was beginning to compose texts in Hebrew when his family called him back to Canton. They required him to marry a girl to whom his family had betrothed him as a child. This intrusion upset their scholarly plans, and Ho's absence led Legge to consider what he kind of scholarly project he could do to help all the missions to China.

### Chapter 16 Legge creates a grand plan for the Chinese Classics

Legge's initial task in Malacca had been to master basic oral and written Chinese because that was essential to his work as a missionary. Despite its flaws, Robert Morrison's mandarin-based *Dictionary* continued to be his guide as it had been when Legge was studying with Kidd in London. He also began to learn other oral languages used in Malacca, showing again his remarkable gift for learning languages. Twenty years later he was still able to speak fluent Malay to a man he met in a chance encounter during a trip to the interior of China, after having had less than three years of exposure to it in Malacca while his major efforts there had been mastering Chinese.

Despite his early death at 52, Robert Morrison's massively productive work with Chinese texts and printing had laid down a base from which Legge could develop a more skilled and extensive mission literature in Chinese. Morrison's vigour in learning Chinese, in translating and publishing countless Christian works including the Bible into Chinese, and his significant works in English to explain Chinese language and culture, had been done within a remarkably short but eventful working life of only 27 years. These books, his 93-volume woodblock Chinese-English *Dictionary* of 4,595 pages, and his establishment of the ACC with Milne at Malacca, were lasting legacies that were directly beneficial to James Legge as he studied Chinese in Malacca six years after Morrison's death.

As the months of studying, teaching school, and preaching evolved in Malacca, Legge began to understand the extent to which the manners, customs, and ideas of all Chinese were regulated by a huge written corpus of ancient classical books of history, philosophy, and poetry. He realized that he must study that classical literature very thoroughly if he were to have any real understanding of the culture in which he was to do his work. As Legge studied Chinese texts and some of their commentaries with the help of the books in the ACC library, he began to realize that there was no book about the Chinese Classic texts that provided the full intellectual overview that was needed to satisfy him as a scholar. He wanted "some Work upon the Classics, more critical, more full and exact, than any which he had the opportunity of consulting" (J. Legge, 1861) pp. vii-viii.

### Legge's revolutionary idea: educating mission men in Chinese culture

Legge began to develop an idea that was revolutionary for his day, that it was crucial for missionaries to know the native culture and religion before proposing an alien gospel. "The idea that a man need spend no time in studying the native religions, but has only as the phrase is, to "preach the gospel" is one which can only make

missionaries and mission work contemptible and inefficient' (Author, 1909a). He argued that it was necessary for missionaries to study the classical literature of China and to recognize the genius of Confucius in guiding moral behaviour in China. Without this detailed knowledge and appreciation of the magnificent moral and literary roots of Chinese culture, missionaries would make serious errors in their work. Instead of assuming European superiority, they needed "meekness and lowliness of heart. Let no one think any labour too great to make himself familiar with the Confucian books. So shall missionaries in China come fully to understand the work they have to do; and the more they avoid driving their carriages rudely over the Master's grave, the more likely..." they would be to succeed in their mission work" (Ride, 1960).

Legge realized that the Chinese were "far from barbarism", having sustained an empire for 4,000 years while the Assyrian, Persian, Greek and Roman empires had come and gone. He concluded this showed that "there must be among the people certain moral and social principles of the greatest virtue and power (Author, 1909b). The direct way into learning about that moral tradition was clear; it was necessary to study the Chinese Classics.

The full complement of these Chinese Classics of literature and philosophy was not yet known to the English-speaking world or to the educated in any other European languages. When he first recognized the missions' need for these texts Legge hoped that some outstanding Chinese scholar would take up the task, but during 1840 he began to plan to translate them himself. By 1841 Legge realized the project had to be more than simple translation, it had to be more scholarly and critical. The work would have to provide essays exploring questions of textual accuracy and authenticity, dating the probable origins of the works and their commentaries, explaining geography and political situations relating to them, as well as providing supporting notes to explain many mysterious details in the text. This highly disciplined approach was relatively novel, for Europe was in the heart of its Romantic enthusiasms, and Chinese scholars and scholars of Chinese did not use the critical and empirical investigation methods that were part of the Scottish enlightenment tradition.

#### Initial translations with Ho

While these ideas were brewing, Legge decided to try out some serious translation efforts from written Chinese, initially with the help of his talented student Ho. Legge decided to work with Ho first on a task of translating a Chinese book into English. Ho would do the initial rough draft from Chinese into English, then Legge would study the two texts, both to learn the Chinese and to edit the English. The book he chose was the *Book of Historical Documents (shujing, the Shoo King)*, one of the Classics whose

mastery was required of all Chinese officials. After receiving the first draft from Ho, Legge quickly realized what a challenge the tight and elliptical style of classical Chinese writing posed when it had to be transformed into meaningful English. Legge eventually abandoned this project with Ho because he realized that such a complex work needed one person with mastery of both languages.

As a result of these problems Legge decided to practise on text that was simpler than the complex terse written style of the classical texts. Ho and Legge chose a well-known Chinese novel, *The Rambles of the Emperor Ching Tih*. A seven-volume version had been published in 1832 and was reviewed in the *Chinese Repository* in June 1840, perhaps coming to Legge's attention that way. Ho produced a draft in English for Legge to revise and to use in learning Chinese. The final version was sent off and published in London in 1843, with Ho identified as the author-translator while Legge provided a Forward to introduce the work. The story was a typical quest-adventure tale in which the emperor learns virtue. The success of this project convinced Legge that he was ready to take on more translations. Later in his life some of the more doctrinaire missionaries criticized him for this work, for the sinful frivolity of spending time working on a mere novel.

Over these early years Legge gradually began to understand that his own intellectual interests went far beyond simply learning how to read and write Chinese for daily mission work, and beyond learning important features of Chinese culture. He discovered that he had a passion for the Chinese language and its literature, and soon realized that no other scholar was taking on the task of translating the classic Confucian texts into English. He began to think this might become his life's calling, gradually realizing that he would be the person to venture the majestic plan of scholarship that would be required to translate all the Chinese Classics into English and provide necessary essays and notes. He understood that major scholarship would be required to learn and write about the complex philosophical ideas and historical contexts of the works. His grand plan was to bring China's culture to the West.

Legge believed translations and explanations of this rich cultural knowledge would be instructive for all missionaries in China, and his plans were initially framed in this way rather than as a grand intellectual endeavour for the entire English-speaking world. He was eager to begin this without having any idea how much his own ideas and values would be changed by this experience.

### The Chinese Classics

The Classics James Legge wanted to study and translate were the “thirteen books” studied by every educated Chinese. They were the only books allowed in Chinese schools, and were the basis of the Imperial civil service examinations. Legge wrote that he could not be considered truly qualified to work as a missionary in China until he “had thoroughly mastered the Classical Books of the Chinese, and had investigated for himself the whole field of thought through which the sages of China had ranged, and in which were to be found the foundations of the moral, social and political life of the people” (J. Legge, 1861), vii. He understood that these books played the same historical role in China that the Bible had in Western cultures (Lovett, 1899), providing a rich mixture of stories and moral guidance that was known even to the illiterate. Legge began to think he would be also helping the Chinese by letting the rest of the world to learn about them, indicating that he considered their culture admirable, because he believed that being known would be beneficial to them.

Legge was becoming unusual in another way; he had begun thinking that the Classics included “sacred” books rather than just historical documents. The general consensus among Westerners and missionaries was that China had no tradition of a true religion, and lacked any notion of a deity or an afterlife. No Chinese book could be “sacred” under these conditions, and the prevailing idea was that traditional Chinese books provided only history, stories, poems, rules for rituals, and moral precepts. Legge disagreed with these narrowly Christian evaluations of Chinese beliefs.

In taking on this project Legge initially regarded himself as in a particularly fortunate situation because he thought the ACC library held “translations and dictionaries in abundance”, although he soon recognized that this was a vast overstatement of the reality of the resources available to him. In fact, there were very limited scholarly resources anywhere in the world for such translations.

Legge knew that this scholarly work had to be done outside the hours of his regular mission duties, thus he simply continued to use the system he had begun in London. He would wake to start work on the classics at 3 AM and work for five hours until his household was ready for breakfast and he was ready for his mission work.

By this time Legge must have begun to understand that he had a unique combination of two exceptional attributes that such a project would take. First of all, he had extraordinary talent for all kinds of learning, including language-learning. Secondly, he was extremely interested in learning about Chinese culture, history, and philosophy as recorded in its classics. In contrast, most missionaries were more interested in translating their own religion and culture into Chinese than they were in learning about the culture they were seeking to influence. While there were some exceptions, both



historically among the Jesuits of 300 years earlier and among a small group of contemporaries, Legge had a greater passion, superior skills, and a more intense focus for his interests in Chinese literature and culture than any other.

From today's vantage, Legge's plan represented an almost unimaginably ambitious and massive undertaking for many reasons. First there were huge problems in translation because very few Chinese-European language dictionaries existed, arising from the great isolation of the Qing dynasty, and the main Chinese-English dictionary available, Morrison's, was full of errors. Secondly, there were major political obstacles to learning the written language from any serious Chinese scholar. These problems had faced all foreigners working along the China coast, arising from Qing dynasty laws making teaching Chinese for foreigners a capital offense and forbidding foreigners any residence in China. In his remote outpost of Malacca, Legge was fortunate that Ho had been well-educated in the Classics and that he was eager to help James learn Chinese.

While Legge was working in Malacca struggling to untangle Evans' complex financial arrangements and restore the mission to better health, Britain's erratic conflict with China had been lurching toward resolution. Britain was now a land of 18 million including the Scots and Welsh and the 5,000 "travelling by railways and canals". Religious affiliation was a matter of intense interest among scholars, and Oxford was scandalized by the defection of a Balliol College man from his establishment Church of England parish to enter the Church of Rome, the fifth such conversion in a recent series. Events in China were also turning into open conflicts with Britain.

### Chapter 17 Britain and China struggle; effects on missions

While Legge spent 1840 lurching from the thrills of his new tropical home to the miseries and fears of severe illness, from the joys of new fatherhood to despair over Mary's health and worry over the spiritual and financial crises of the mission in Malacca, the problems between Britain and China were continuing in the Pearl River estuary.

Legge's mission friends, young William Milne and Dr. Benjamin Hobson had been helped by John Morrison and allowed to take up residence in Macau despite the general expulsion of the British. He arranged for them to stay in Lockhart's hospital/house, along with American missionary Elijah Bridgman from Canton, whose family had fled to Macau under the safety of their status as Americans. Because Hobson and Milne were new in town and the Chinese did not know them as an Englishman even though the Macau officials were fully aware of their nationality and of the slipperiness of this logic, the officials were happy to facilitate the arrangement because they wanted to stay on good terms with the English in anticipation of their return once hostilities ended.

#### Hobson in Macau; money problems, and hostilities begin

Hobson had arrived in Macau on Christmas Day 1839 after his trip out from England of four months and 14 days, having left the Legges in Anjer in early November 1839. During their long voyage out together Hobson had provided medical services to almost the entire complement of passengers and crew. One of the most serious cases was the First Mate, who had suffered a stroke with residual paralysis after more than three months at sea. By 1840 Hobson's wife was expecting a child in late February, so the young couple was grateful for the chance to live in the hospital at Macau with the American missionaries.

They settled down to study Chinese while the political and military disputes continued. Most British were living on ships at that point, having been expelled from Macau. Hobson wrote delicately to the LMS apologizing for not having followed their rules about obtaining his salary, explaining that the Expenses Schedule that was supposed to be attached to his Letter of Instruction had not been provided to him. He was short of money and simply took the initiative of writing a bill on the LMS for £100 (\$406 in Spanish dollars, the main trading currency in the region). His problems with the specific salary arrangements were echoes of those that Legge had in Singapore.

Political events were moving quickly as Commissioner Lin tried to bring the opium trade under control. On January 5, 1840 an Italian sailor killed a Chinese man in Macau. The Portuguese immediately imprisoned the sailor but Lin responded by putting out an Edict prohibiting all foreigners from commercial dealings with the British. On January 7

the British retaliated, threatening a blockade of Canton if a British Captain was not released from a Canton jail by January 15. The Captain and crew were released one day early and came down to Macau on the *Volage*, so the blockade threat was removed. Next two edicts in Canton on January 19 ordered execution for opium use, and within days there were reports of bloody encounters between opium vessels and Chinese cruisers. By the end of January most British ships left Whampoa and anchored up a river to the east in Dongguan (Tung Kun) Bay. Lin had not been able to stop the opium or the tea trade that the opium sales were balancing, because American traders stayed in Canton acting as agents for the British, buying tea and taking it out to the traders in Hong Kong, where Chinese traders were buying the opium from British ships anchored at Lintin island and selling it off along the north coast.

In Jakarta Dr. Lockhart viewed the entire conflict as arising from the “hateful” and “reprehensible” opium trade. He ranted “How can the Chinese believe Christianity to be pure and holy when so many Christians are propagating vice?” The British were reluctant to apply force to make Lin fulfil some promises, because he still had all the foreign traders as captives in the Canton factories. Lockhart had advice for the LMS arising out of these events; he strongly recommended that any oncoming missionaries should go to either Jakarta or Singapore rather than to Canton. Jakarta was best because of Medhurst’s station there and his superb mastery of mandarin, the dialect that Lockhart viewed as the most appropriate language for new mission men.

Lockhart argued that learning oral Chinese was the most crucial of all skills required of any missionary and explained that this was best done in a setting where Chinese was spoken, rather than in the libraries of London. He urged the LMS to send out additional mission workers immediately rather than delaying their arrival out of concern for the political instability along the Chinese coast. He became convinced that the political events would force the end of the opium trade, and this would open up opportunities for missions in China in which foreigners would not automatically be linked with such a “dark cloud”. He hoped the moral outrage of the public of Britain would force the government to outlaw the trade.

#### The British government in India declares war against China, January 1840

In Macau and Hong Kong there was restless excitement as the British traders waited news from England. All the events of 1839 were documented by slow and clumsy communications by letters that sailed from Macau to Calcutta and London and back again, yielding formal British decisions that unfolded long after the events that had triggered them. On January 31, 1840 the British government in India declared war

against China for its repeated failure to honour treaties it had signed, and under Lord Palmerston's orders began forming a giant fleet that included warships from Britain and Calcutta. Two sections of the fleet left from Calcutta under the leadership of Commander James Bremer. Admiral the Hon. George Elliot, cousin of Capt. Charles Elliot in Canton, left London, picking up additional vessels from the naval station at the Cape of Good Hope en route to Singapore for a giant rendezvous in Hong Kong with Commander Bremer and his Indian fleet.

James and Mary could see Bremer's huge fleet as it sailed in the narrow strait past Malacca that spring, headed for Singapore and China. In Canton the situation was deteriorating again. On May 18, fifty foreign houses were burned, and on May 22 the vessel *Hellas* was attacked, with one British death. While the captain claimed that pirates had set upon him, more knowing opinion had that he was an opium trader attacked by Chinese officials. It seemed to the local British that the Chinese did not expect any major British military response.

Dr. Lockhart left Jakarta and arrived in Singapore just as part of the fleet was leaving there on June 1, so he hitched a ride in one of the troopships heading toward Hong Kong. At that point the fleet of 50 ships included 16 sailing ships-of-war, four armed steamers, and 28 troopships carrying 4,000 soldiers in addition to the marines. The rumours in Singapore were that this first fleet was supposed to destroy the Bogue Forts protecting Canton, then to go north up the coast to Zhoushan (Chusan) to await the arrival of Admiral Elliot, coming from the naval station at the Cape of Good Hope with the remaining fleet. His orders were to go north, capture any posts en route necessary to show the force of British intentions and to provide strategic protections, then go to Beijing to establish diplomatic relations and a trade treaty with the Empire.

Lockhart considered the war was not against the Chinese people "who are for the most part very friendly", but was against the corrupt Qing officers and officials. He was disgusted to observe many opium vessels still coming to Singapore from India and trans-shipping to Chinese junks down from the north. He and the mission staff in Singapore were all horrified to learn that an LMS mission man, John Williams, had just been murdered and eaten by cannibals on the South Seas island of Erromango (now part of Vanuatu) where he was visiting for the first time<sup>11</sup>.

---

<sup>11</sup> In 2009 the descendants of John and Mary Williams went to Erromango where they were given apologies by the descendants of the cannibals, in a ceremony of reconciliation. A bay was renamed Williams Bay as part of this occasion.

Macau was full of rumours of the expected fleet that Dr. Lockhart had joined leaving Singapore. Young Milne was amazed at the stubborn refusal of the Chinese officials to pay attention to their own wise men, who were warning of the risk of a significant British naval response. Milne had now been in Macau for six months. He had moved his family from Lockhart's hospital to rooms in a house owned by the Morrison Education Society because everyone expected Lockhart's return to Macau and the hospital, assuming that the British fleet would return and set everything to rights. Meanwhile, the British in Canton had discovered a poster outlining the reward money for different kinds of English captives. For the captain of a man-of-war with 80 "great guns", the mandarins would pay \$20,000. Qing officials offered smaller awards for lesser captives, down to \$100 for live Englishmen or Parsis, or \$20 for each dead. Captured "Han rascals" were worth \$100. The largest awards were for intact vessels and live officers.

Commodore James Gordon Bremer (1786-1850) arrived in Macau with the first part of the Indian fleet on June 21, and the rest arrived the next day; they had enjoyed a two-week sail with good winds. In response, the Chinese sent out ten Chinese fire ships in the middle of the night into the British anchorages in Capsungmun (Kap Shui Mun) Bay to try and destroy the British ships. In Macau the British fleet posted its plans on June 22: Commander Bremer announced one fleet would blockade the river and port of Canton by all its entrances, "on or after the 28<sup>th</sup>", leaving 4-5 ships to guard Macau. Nearly all the British traders fled from Canton to Macau. The opium trade along the north coast was dropping off, and even though supplies were dwindling the price was falling.

A small segment of the fleet under Commander Bremer proceeded up the giant Pearl River estuary to Canton. Just as Commissioner Lin had used a blockade of the trading warehouses in Canton as a weapon in 1839, Commander Bremer used this tactic and blockaded Canton from the sea as a show of power in June 1840. Lin did not have sufficient resources to attempt any real opposition to this and the Chinese navy was incompetent in organization and material in comparison to the British, so Canton officials eventually ransomed the port from the naval blockade with six million dollars. The settlement provided for reparations for the destruction of the British factories to be paid by the Qing government, and the port was to be opened to free trade. A modest show of passive power had shown that the British were determined to be taken seriously in seeking a formal trade agreement and diplomatic standing.

Within a short time the brash European traders of Canton were in full operation again. They ran a regatta for their amusement, printing their announcements on white

silk satin. Their champion, young Capt. Charles Elliot, was the umpire. The prizes consisted of good silver cups and plate presented by the Parsi opium merchant Mr. Rustomjee.

Rear-Admiral George Elliot arrived on 28 June, happy with Commander Bremer's success in Canton. He immediately headed north to Beijing with the assistance of the Commander and the fleet. The Admiral would take any necessary strategic positions en route, and open negotiations with the Emperor for free trade and for diplomatic relations between Britain and China as equals. The Admiral took young John Morrison as his translator, while Commander Bremer had flamboyant but erratic Gutzlaff as his. They arrived at Zhoushan, a rich agricultural island of one million inhabitants that effectively controlled access to the Yangzi. It was chief of a group of islands just off the giant Hangzhou Bay bracketed by Ningbo on the south and Shanghai on the north. In early July the British accepted the surrender of Dinghai (Tinghai), the main city of Zhoushan, after a nine-minute bombardment of the fortified tower. In accepting the surrender of the city Rear-Admiral Elliot issued a public notice explaining that the Chinese would continue to be governed by Chinese laws, excluding torture, and he set up a small administration that lasted about six months as other political events evolved.

The LMS men had hoped that the Admiral would go directly to Beijing without naval engagements en route, in order to limit the amount of bloodshed that would occur, and were disgusted when they eventually learned of the destruction at Dinghai. They worried that the British government did not realize the extent of the "illegality and injustice" of the opium trade, especially as it had operated in the past few years. They hoped that the Admiral was under orders to be moderate in the demands against the Chinese in recognition of this illegality, and hoped that the British would agree to cooperate with the Chinese attempts to eliminate the opium trade. The mission men were opposed to the insistence of the foreign merchants in Canton to receive total reparations for their losses of the opium confiscated by Lin.

The Admiral's plan was that most of the ships of war were to wait at Zhoushan under Commander Bremer, while Elliot continued north to Tianjin (Tientsin) in the Bay of Bohai (then called the Chihli Gulf, off the Beihe river) as a diplomatic mission. Forts at Dagu (Taku) at the river's mouth protected Tianjin, the nearest port to Beijing. Admiral Elliot brought a letter from Lord Palmerston to the Viceroy of Zhili (Chihli, the large province containing Beijing, now named Hebei), demanding redress for Lin's actions.

Lin is fired, replaced by Qishan in September

Beijing officials were in a panic about the British arrival, and in August the Emperor dismissed Commissioner Lin from his position in Canton for his “lies”, his “extreme zeal”, and his failure to improve the situation, not realizing that officials who had lied to Lin had created some of these grounds. Viceroy Qishan (Keshen), an extremely skilled negotiator, was named in September as Lin’s replacement to deal with the intrusive foreigners, although Lin stayed in Canton until July 1841 observing events and privately advising the new Viceroy. Lin was eventually exiled to flood and irrigation management in the remote northwest frontier province of Gansu.

The Emperor wanted the treaty negotiations to be done in Canton rather than Beijing because it was in Canton that all the disturbances took place, even though the Emperor eventually had to agree to any treaty. The British fleet returned to Canton to await the arrival of Qishan. Viceroy Qishan was grand, wealthy, and very clever. Admiral Charles Elliot replaced Commodore Bremer as CIC of the British forces in July 1840 shortly after his military victory at Zhoushan, and until November shared the military operations with his cousin Capt. Charles Elliot. Qishan soon had the Elliots placated and convinced that the Empire would be responsive to new treaty talks in Canton. The Qing court relaxed and within a short time became convinced that it did not need to undertake any serious negotiations. It altered its policy away from the agreed plan, believing that the blustering foreigners had been successfully deceived and there was no need for any further agreements with Beijing.

#### Shaou Tih causes trouble at the Macau mission

While these dramatic events were unfolding in the summer of 1840, Hobson and Milne had domestic problems at their small mission in Macau. Shaou Tih (Xu Dilang, or Choo Tihlang) was the young man from Canton who had been converted to Christianity by Medhurst in Malacca sometime between 1817-1820, had been a student at the ACC, and had helped with an English-Chinese handbook that Milne had created for the ACC students, before going to study in England for nearly four years. He returned with Dr. Lockhart in 1838, placed in Lockhart’s care for the return journey to his wife and family. Lockhart gradually realized that Shaou was often headstrong, unreliable, and had developed grandiose notions of his own importance that he used against other Chinese.

After their arrival in Macau, Lockhart warned the LMS that Shaou should not be hired as an evangelist because his own character needed much improvement. Shaou returned to his family in a rural village, but by the summer of 1840 he had returned to Macau with the news that his wife was seriously ill, that one daughter had died during

his absence, and his parents were now providing all his support. He started hanging around the LMS hospital, seeking a job. The mission men decided that they could not hire him as mission staff because of the poor example he set, but they would hire him privately to preach to Chinese in Macau. They soon discovered that he spoke a dialect no one understood, and could not even be hired as a Chinese teacher for that reason.

Shaou began acting badly in July, and in August Milne, Lockhart, and Hobson wrote a joint letter from Macau to the LMS outlining all the problems with Shaou's behaviour. He had begun secret opium smoking, lied when asked about it, and deceitfully borrowed money from various missionaries for opium. The missionaries were so alarmed they held a hearing and brought in two American missionaries to listen to all the proceedings and help in the decisions. They all questioned Shaou. They decided he set a very bad example for the Chinese Christians in the mission so had to be seen to be punished, although they did not want to cut him off entirely from the community. On July 24 they met with him to explain their decisions. He was to be excluded from the Sabbath services and restricted to the mission unless explicit permission was obtained to leave. In addition they established a system for the repayment of all his large opium debts from his salary.

To their surprise Shaou was sullen, expressed no remorse, and within days he had absconded without permission. After many efforts to track him down they finally decided he had to leave the mission and packed up his belongings, which they discovered included opium tools hidden inside a wall. They also discovered that he had been using opium during his stay there before he had ever left for England, and even on the return voyage that they had shared. Shaou denied the opium tools were his, sulked, then a few days after leaving came back to demand the return of the tools. The mission men were worried that Shaou was still getting money from the London church that had supported him there, and wanted the LMS to provide their new information to that church.

Nor did mission life in Macau provide much immunity from the more tangible conflicts associated with the Anglo-Chinese struggles over trade. In early July Dr. Hobson and S. Wells Williams, an American printer and mission man from Canton, were attacked by a mob using sticks and stones while on an evening stroll; they managed to escape to their boat with little harm done.

#### Lockhart goes north, Capt. Smith conquers the Barrier, a battle in Zhoushan

By mid-August Dr. Lockhart had enough of being cooped-up in Macau, and with the capture of Zhoushan Island decided to resign from the Medical Missionary Society



and establish his medical work in a new setting north in Zhoushan now that it was under British control. At the same time Capt. Smith decided he needed to protect the English in Macau, and attacked and conquered “the Barrier”, a Chinese fortress protecting Chinese territory adjacent to the Macau harbour. The Chinese soldiers on land fled without firing any shots or suffering any damages, and their 27 cannon were spiked, a process in which the touch-hole for the powder that served as a fuse was rammed with a spike that was levelled off to make it impossible to remove. Macau was no longer under Chinese control. Rumours were that Commissioner Lin had been planning to come down with a large military force, but the chances of that receded with the easy victory at the Barrier.

Dr. Lockhart headed north to the town of Dinghai on Zhoushan in September 1840. He wanted Milne to come with him as the sailing season was coming to an end, but Milne was undecided about the future of missions along the north coast and stayed in Macau because Dinghai had been entirely deserted by the Chinese during the British attack. When Lockhart arrived there he found the British troops, the 26<sup>th</sup> Cameronian regiment, were suffering terribly from fevers and dysentery; within one year of the regiment having left India in February 1840, 500 of the 900 died. Before long Lockhart had up to 500 men sick in the miserable hospital, and 84 died that October. When many were evacuated to Manila for their health, of the remaining 273, 163 were sick at the end of the year. Lockhart identified the heavy physical labour, the extremely hot climate, the lack of fresh food, and the swampy locality and its stagnant canals as the sources of the problems. He recommended good drains for the dysentery and cold weather as the main solutions to the malaria problems. Gutzlaff had become the official interpreter for Capt. Caine, the Chief Magistrate of Zhoushan, as British institutions were established. In the countryside of Zhoushan and in the sea there were minor skirmishes. Lockhart wrote that Chinese had captured an artillery captain and sent him to Ningbo, the nearest mainland city, when Lockhart was out sketching nine miles from the city.

Other hazards affected the morale of the British. On 15 September a fierce storm led to a crisis involving an armed brig, the *Kite*, and its Captain, his wife and infant, officers, and crew. Capt. Noble and his infant child had been flung overboard when the ship hit a sandbar in a violent storm and tipped over; they were swept away and drowned. An officer in a lifeboat snatched Mrs. Noble from the water and three others got into it before it was quickly swept away from the ship. A day later the boat was forced back near the wreck of the ship but was unable to rescue the remaining sailors, and the plan was to try and reach the safety of the British at Zhoushan. The five in the lifeboat had no food, water, or sail, and looked for help when a fishing boat came to

them. Unfortunately it provided them with rice and water and then left, so they were forced to try to reach land. On reaching the mainland coast they were treated in a kind way by some villagers, but when the mandarins arrived they were immediately put in chains and required to walk across a rainy landscape of towns and villages toward imprisonment in Ningbo. When they were too exhausted to walk the men were simply dragged, while Mrs. Nobel was put into a bamboo cage, chained to it, and carried. In early October one sailor died in the filthy prison conditions, although hope rose in late October when a mandarin presented them with supplies and gifts from Admiral Elliot, promising freedom in 4-5 days. It did not arrive for another four months. The British bargained for their return, proposing to leave Zhoushan if the prisoners were released. The captives finally arrived back in Zhoushan in late February 1841, where Mrs. Noble wrote an account of her experiences. For his part Dr. Lockhart hoped to stay in Zhoushan and offer a medical mission to the returning Chinese even if the Britain relinquished the island.

By the end of 1840 young doctor Benjamin Hobson was feeling quite isolated in Macau. Fellow-doctor Lockhart was gone, Milne was planning to leave, and the LMS had not written him for months. Although earlier in the year the region's conflicts had made life quite dangerous, since then everyone connected with the mission had been safe even through the armed conflicts. Hobson had now been in China long enough to have the same insight that Robert Morrison had had nearly 35 years earlier, that the Chinese staff and teachers were all terrified of the Imperial officials. The continued ruling against Chinese teaching foreigners the Chinese language continued to make learning the language a huge problem for the mission men in Canton and Macau. Even so, by now Hobson realized that sending new missionaries to Jakarta or Singapore to learn Chinese was a very poor second choice because of the different dialects required in each location in China.

Shaou was getting into more trouble in Macau but he was not showing any signs of contrition. In December he wrote Milne complaining about his punishments for smoking opium and lying. He argued that the Scriptures required the missionaries to forgive him, cagily observing that his opium use was a problem only because Christians allowed it to be brought to China. He noted that the sainted Robert Morrison, the "first Christian missionary to China" had put aside his missionary work to be interpreter for opium merchants because he earned a lot more money from that. Shaou stressed the fine house, many servants, and the fine clothes and food that Dr. Morrison enjoyed as a direct beneficiary of the opium trade. In addition he argued that Morrison's son John was now translator for the British negotiating with the Chinese to support opium

merchants' claims for money. Shaou concluded that this was not Christian behaviour. Shaou also added some uniquely Chinese arguments about his own behaviour, pointing out that Chinese think it is all right to tell lies because Confucius told lies. He argued in his defence that he had not committed adultery, fornication, lasciviousness, idolatry, coveting, hatred, wrath, strife, sedition, heresies, stealing, or murders, and had not eaten food sacrificed to idols, so he didn't consider his sins very serious.

Shaou then turned to legalistic arguments, claiming that because Medhurst had originally baptized him, Medhurst was the only man who could decide to exclude Shaou from the Christian community. He threatened Milne that if the Macau missionaries were to send a report to his London church about their "loss" of Shaou, they will lose those London friends. He then launched into a complicated series of lies about his actual behaviour, trying to justify why he was hiding from the police, asserting his innocence in an extortion scheme, trying to claim confusions, and blaming a friend for the opium found in Shaou's wall, claiming that he forgot he had hidden it. He complained that all these problems with the opium created huge money problems for him, and men were trying to get money from him. He ended by reporting that he has now repented, and that he prays all day for Milne to believe him and to "send word". He wanted a job, a salary, and status.

#### Admiral Eliot returns to Macau where Qishan is stalling

In early August 1840 Rear-Admiral George Elliot, his cousin Capt. Charles Elliot, and the huge fleet returned south to Macau. The 37<sup>th</sup> Regiment from India was at anchor up an easterly river at the Dongguan anchorage, and the flotilla included ships with as many as 74 guns. Capt. Elliot anchored the steamer *Madagascar* in the river, awaiting the arrival of Viceroy Qishan from the north for the treaty talks. The Emperor had dissociated himself from all of former Commissioner Lin's assertive actions trying to enforce the opium ban, and offered to punish Lin in order to mollify the British government, but rumours in Macau held that Lin was advising the Emperor against any terms. The British traders in Macau did not believe that the Chinese intended to make any kind of treaty despite the success of the Admiral's fleet all along his expedition north. The big sticking point was the question of reparations to the opium traders for opium Lin had confiscated.

In mid-November the Admiral sailed to Whampoa to open the talks with Qishan, whom the mission men believed to be a peace-oriented mandarin. Lin was now degraded in rank and disgraced, but still in Canton. Arriving in Canton, Qishan began a policy of stringing out the British while he secretly waited for the Chinese army to arrive.

The British had decided that if new trading ports would be opened they would return Zhoushan to the Chinese. Lockhart hoped to stay somewhere on the north coast and set up a full medical mission; he had large numbers of Chinese patients and was full of enthusiasm for his work there.

#### The Chinese empire and maps, and Lin and Wei Yuan

Part of the problem the Qing dynasty had with emissaries from western governments arose from its very flawed understanding of world geography, arising from its grossly incorrect maps. While Chinese maps of the eastern coast had improved over the centuries, they were heavily influenced by cultural and ideological considerations as many traditional maps have been. Ideas not used in Chinese map-making included the use of measured distances, uniform projections and observed latitudes and longitudes, first described in the west by Ptolemy around 150 AD, with maps using this system of coordinates first published at Bologna in 1477 (Shirley, 2001). While Chinese astronomer Chang Heng working at about the same time as Ptolemy used a comparable grid system (Jones, Nelson, & Wallis, 1974), Chang's insights were lost, and scholar officials into the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> c. still used maps missing these crucial features and grossly in error despite the introductions to China of much more accurate maps by the Jesuits in the 16<sup>th</sup> c.

Starting with Matteo Ricci's first Chinese map in 1584, the Jesuits brought hugely different information about the rest of the world, and introduced the ideas of using a grid to make distances proportionate and cardinal directions a standard orientation in their earliest Chinese maps. Despite that, Chinese *literati* did not learn this new information, and Chinese map-makers instead continued to design their maps to illustrate that China was the kingdom that comprised "All under Heaven" (L. Zhang, 2002). A giant Chinese map of 1743, with copies now in the Bodleian and the British Library, still has no grids or numbered coordinate system to give an idea of proportional distances, and Hong Kong is not even shown although the map is titled "a universal map of the Qing Empire". Western lands are shown as small islands around the left edge of the central rectangular content comprising the Empire of China. Chinese maps used variable scales and perspectives in aid of enhancing the purpose of each map, which might be to indicate district taxes or historical events. The one concept from Ricci's map that survived was the idea that China was the centre of the world, the Central Kingdom, still reflected in its modern name *zhong guo*.

Thus across the period of conflict between Britain and China in the 1840s the Chinese officials were still ignorant of the scale of the world, of the distances mastered

by the British in reaching China, and of the size and number of other major countries beyond east Asia. The one major historical venture beyond China's close neighbours had occurred during the Ming dynasty when eunuch Muslim eunuch Admiral Zheng He (1371-1433) made a series of amazing voyages following long-established trades routes through south-east Asia to the Indian Ocean, the Arabian peninsula, and probably to the coast of Kenya. Ming court politics stopped further explorations and many of Zheng's maps were destroyed, reflecting the court's loss of interest in the world beyond China. In time the conflict in Beijing between the sophisticated Jesuits and the rough Dominicans who disagreed that missions to China should use science to help, led to the fall of Jesuit influence and official denigration of Ricci's maps as "vague and fictitious" and as "a wild fabulous story" (Jones et al., 1974).

The most accurate topographic map of China was the 1705-12 Jesuit survey located in Beijing, but it seems not to have been known to Qing officials there or in Canton when the west began active trading, and Chinese officials literally did not understand the scale of the western world. In 1840 Imperial Commissioner Qishan upbraided Captain Elliot for his ignorance in attacking vast China coming from such a tiny country as Britain. Qishan showed Elliott the gross discrepancies in size using a map typical of those available in Canton at that time. On these maps the 18 provinces of China were depicted as 18 times the size of all other countries of the world. Russia was shown as a band across the top of China, and the rectangular outline of the world had an ocean from north to south along the western edge. Seven countries were placed along this western coast following one another in order from north to south: England, France, Holland, Portugal, Goa, Persia, and India, while Spain, Burma, and Siam were placed along the south-west coast of this rectangular world. Accurate placements increased as the southeastern edge of the giant continent came closer to China.

But by the 1840s intelligent Qing officials began to understand that western maps showed many important things that were missing or wrong in Chinese maps, and began studying British geography texts and maps. During the first Anglo-Chinese war of 1839 Commissioner Lin became acquainted with Hugh Murray's *Cyclopedia of Geography*<sup>12</sup> and articles on geography published by Gutzlaff in the 1830s, and recognized these provided geographic information vastly beyond that known to Chinese officials. Lin had genuine intellectual interests and was eager to learn about the world beyond China's

---

<sup>12</sup> Murray's *Catechism of Geography* was published in 1833, and his three-volume *Encyclopaedia of Geography* was published in 1844.

borders. Lin realized that the foreigners and their books had much to teach China, and organized the creation of a giant encyclopaedia of British texts translated into Chinese.

Lin used a young man of the LMS mission, Liang Tsintih, as translator during his political negotiations with the British. After Lin's disgrace and degraded status he was no longer allowed to have an official translator, but in December as he awaited his punishment he hired Liang Tsintih privately to continue with this encyclopaedia, planning to publish it in Chinese for all mandarins to read.

Tsintih was the son of Liang Fa, Legge's friend the veteran Malacca LMS Chinese printer. The young man had been well-educated in the mission, and the LMS men were quite titillated with their mission's connection to the powerful mandarin during the political negotiations and the work on the geography texts. In 1841 Lin published a short compilation of Murray's material translated into Chinese as a *Gazetteer of the Four Continents* (*ssu-chou chih*), a 20-volume geography text. In late 1844 Lin gave one of his scholar-officials Wei Yuan the job of compiling more translated information into a larger encyclopaedia. Lin wanted Wei to do a compilation of all important geographical and historical information from Jesuit, British, and Chinese books (some of which Lin translated), and three years later Wei published a 50-volume work of geography and history, "Illustrated Treatise on the Maritime Kingdoms" (*hai guo tu zhi*) (Wei, 1844) summarizing all the valuable information Wei could compile about the worlds of "the ocean kingdoms", from foreign books and newspapers, including information about guns and steamships.

In Wei's first edition, the work included a copy of a famous Chinese map of the world from the Imperial Palace that was remarkably incorrect and was deleted in later editions after Wei and Lin had learned more accurate information from western books (Author, 1876). Wei's compilation was updated and expanded in 1847 and 1852, and is credited with "launching modern China's long project of "learning from the West" (Ip, 2000) even though his compilation did not attempt any evaluation of the accuracy of the varying maps, and mixed in many Chinese maps without any coordinates. Wei Yuan was one of the first major Qing intellectuals to recognize that the Qing Empire had major flaws and that its scholar-officials needed to work on practical solutions to problems rather than discussing ancient texts.

Wei and Lin's first printing of the 50-volume work in 1844 was considered by its anonymous European reviewer to be "without anything to equal it in the history of Chinese literature" (Author, 1847b). In the usual Chinese manner the source books and articles were not attributed to their true authors, but were printed as Lin's publication. What was regarded as plagiarism in the west was understood quite differently in China,

with its ancient tradition of repeating earlier works in compilations attributed only to their editors.

In his later years Lin repeatedly wrote letters to Chinese officials urging the adoption of the western ideas that he had learned of during the compilation of this encyclopaedia. He realized that they provided many advantages and explained that this information could allow the Qing government to master the foreigners. Although he was in disgrace, his books became of great interest to Qing officials and set off great studies in Western geography. While still in Canton, Lin introduced the young mission student Liang Tsintih, to Qishan (1786-1854), who was not only the new Viceroy but also the new Governor-General of the “two Kwangs”, the two southerly provinces of Guangxi and Guangdong.

Because of their serious misunderstandings of some material, even these modernizing Chinese geography books still included significant errors. They still mostly failed to make use of the grid conceptions of longitude and latitude, thus scale was erratic and distorted. A few years later, in 1848, scholar-official Sū Kiyu (soon to be Governor-General of “the Two Kwangs”) published a 10-volume work, *Universal Geography* in Fuzhou, based on information he gleaned from Legge’s old acquaintance Xiamen mission man Rev. Abeel and from a Chinese man who had recently returned from a four-year visit to the US. In the traditional Chinese map manner Sū showed the world as one great rectangle. He was surprised to note that the extreme south of the globe was cold; he had always learned that heat increased as the traveller went south. He commented, “Chinese vessels have not gone so far since Fukien and Canton were to them the extremes of land, and thus we have erroneously supposed the South Pole to be the Equator. Yet I am quite sure that I shall not be believed in this by my readers”. Sū showed the Great Wall as extending completely from east to west, and still considered the Central Kingdom the “lord of all the great lands of the world”. He reserved the title of Emperor for the ruler of China, referring to all other rulers in terms such as king, prince, and lord, denoting lesser nobility. Sū’s narratives describing all the major nations, their features and history, mix accuracy and error, with Sū conscientiously trying to judge when material seems incredible.

Just as Legge and the mission men were having trouble transcribing Hebrew and Greek religious terms into Chinese characters, Sū had trouble transcribing European place-names into Chinese characters using rough phonetic principles. He wrote at length about these problems, and the characters he chose often varied in different parts of his work. Long names were a special problem. For example, he used five characters to write Florida, representing the sounds “fuh –lih –rh –lih –li”. Overall Sū’s book was seen

as a respectable improvement on the geographical information previously published by Chinese scholars.

#### Qishan and Capt. Elliot negotiate with John Morrison's help

John Morrison worked as a translator for the British as the negotiations went on between the British and Qishan in early December 1840. Admiral Elliot had such severe heart disease that he was incapacitated and resigned in November, Capt. Bremer resuming the command he had relinquished in July. The plan was for Admiral Elliot to leave on the *Volage* now commanded by Capt. Charles Elliot. The 39-year old captain was severely criticized by the local traders and the press for his apparently conciliatory role in the conflicts. He was personally very opposed to the opium trade and had written Palmerston explaining that and complaining that his opposition to it had led to “the total sacrifice of my private company” among the traders, but he had been under private instructions from Palmerston to ensure that the opium trade would be legalized in China as part of the treaty. He was instructed to argue that the Chinese would not be able to stop the trade anyway, and they might as well benefit by receiving taxation from its commerce, an argument also being made to the Emperor by Chinese officials. Lin had already discovered that stopping the trade was a huge problem within China when he tried to fire all the corrupt customs officers in Canton. He found the corruption so widespread and the ingenuity of the determined Chinese traders so extreme, that across 1840 he was unable to control it.

There are conflicting views about the nature of the problems in the negotiations between Capt. Elliot and Qishan. Some historians believe that the imperial officials in the north were at odds with the officials in the south. The Imperial government increasingly understood that there was a great world outside their borders and that other countries might need diplomatic recognition on an equal basis with the Qing Empire, but officials in Canton in the south had very different views. This meant that Imperial officials could agree to terms in reasonably good faith, but the local mandarins in the south often did not enforce agreements with which they disagreed. In that they were also responding to pressure from the local “gentry” including Chinese opium traders, who were significantly anti-Manchu and typically resented attempts at regulation from the empire's northern heart.

The upshot of the slow negotiations was that Capt. Elliot gradually realized that Qishan was deceitful, that he was deliberately delaying the negotiations and had no real intention of reaching terms with the British. 1840 ended in an atmosphere of increasing



distrust on the part of the British, and a feeling that nothing was being accomplished in the talks.

#### Canton: The First Anglo-Chinese Treaty War 1841-2

By the end of 1840 Capt. Charles Elliot in Canton decided that the talks with Viceroy Qishan were not making any useful progress and some new source of pressure would have to be used. On January 6, 1841 Elliot sent an ultimatum to Qishan that if no agreement were reached, he would fire upon the Bogue Forts. On January 7, 1841 there were fresh disturbances in Canton, and when the Chinese officials failed to respond to his message, Elliot decided that a show of force was necessary to focus the attention of the grand mandarin on more serious negotiations. With a fleet of well-equipped ships Elliot sailed up to the narrow straits where the Chinese had installed forts along the Bogue leading to Canton.

The British forces attacked and the forts were captured with ease from 200 Chinese troops; three Sikh soldiers held these until additional British troops could climb the hills to reinforce them. A smaller fort was soon captured as well, and though the Chinese forces fought bravely, they lost. The forts were razed, their cannons spiked, and some war-junks were burnt in the harbour, with great loss of Chinese lives. The Bogue forts were the strongest in the Chinese Empire and were considered impregnable, so their losses of the forts and many troops were deeply surprising and unsettling to the mandarins. The next day the Chinese Admiral Kuan asked for a cease-fire while he consulted with Qishan.

Qishan realized that Canton was now at the mercy of the British but little happened. Later in January the frustrated British captain seized a Chinese fort at nearby Chuenbi to remind the officials that the need for a trade treaty could not be ignored, and within a week, on January 20, Capt. Elliot and Qishan had negotiated another agreement to end the hostilities, at Chuenbi, just outside the forts.

Under the Convention of Chuenbi Viceroy Qishan agreed to re-open Canton to trade along with four other new ports, Hong Kong was ceded to the British Crown, the Qing government was required to reimburse the British traders \$6 million for the opium Lin had destroyed, and orderly plans were to be made for the establishment of trade and diplomatic relations. Britain was to return Zhoushan to China, and British officials would be allowed to write letters to imperial officials as equals rather than petitioners or tributants. All that remained was ratification of this "Convention" by the Chinese and British governments. This quickly became a problem because both governments were furious at the treaty with serious consequences for both Elliot and Qishan.

Legge's friend Dr. Benjamin Hobson was writing of these events from Macau, partly excited by the rapid changes, but also deeply disgusted with the fact that the whole expedition was mostly in aid of the opium trade even though that was part of a larger push for free trade. "It is a matter for the deepest regret and I fear a lasting stain upon the national honour of our country that its expedition is so identified with the opium trade". He thought the British government was correct in seeking reparations for the destructions of British property at Canton and in seeking free trade, but was disgusted that it was demanding re-imbusement for the value of the destroyed opium. The British opium traders ranted that all the seized opium had already been entirely within Chinese waters and thus within normal Chinese regulations that were routinely ignored by the Qing officials because of their corruption. In addition the traders believed that the opium smugglers should have been seized along with the opium, because they were now free to resume smuggling with their contraband product now much more valuable to an eager market. Hobson noted that since 1839 all opium trade had been illegal according to British regulations, and it was only a smuggling trade, so it was the British blind eye to the trade that led to these endless "irregularities". Hobson observed widespread British admiration for Qishan's skills and amicable intentions; in addition, his written reports were described as exciting "great attention and much admiration".

#### British occupation of Hong Kong in early 1841

In light of the apparent agreement, adventurous traders immediately moved onto the island of Hong Kong early in 1841 and began setting it up as a base for trade. On January 26, 1841 Commodore Bremer, the second-in-command under Admiral Elliot, landed on Possession Point at the foot of Taipingshan on Hong Kong, hoisted the Union Jack, and the British began to use the island. Officers and men toasted Queen Victoria's health, shouted out three cheers, and set off a huge gun salute from warships anchored in harbour. Capt. Elliot issued a proclamation on February 2 taking possession of Hong Kong in the name of the young new Queen and putting all activities there under the governance of the Chief Superintendent of Trade (in Canton). All Chinese in Hong Kong were to be under Chinese law, with the exception that torture would not be allowed.

That summer Captain Elliot held an auction for leases on land in the town (named Victoria), traders began building warehouses and offices, and opium boats began anchoring in the harbour. Hong Kong had the unusual conflicting attributes of being particularly subject to typhoons and of having a particularly good typhoon harbour. Hobson planned to move his family there, accurately expecting Macau to become a backwater and Hong Kong to become a major centre. Lands were distributed starting

early that year, on a “quit-rent” leasing basis with the Crown retaining ownership. A land officer surveyed each property to create accurate property descriptions. At just this time John Morrison and the Macau mission men learned of John Evans’ death in Malacca. Morrison understood the value of Hong Kong and wanted the LMS to move the ACC and the LMS press from Malacca to Hong Kong.

Unfortunately the Chinese Emperor was furious with Qishan and the Convention he had signed with Capt. Elliot. Before he had news of the agreement the Emperor had ordered that he wanted the foreign barbarians “exterminated”, but Qishan received this edict just after he had signed the agreement with Elliot, so Qishan was in a quandary. When the Emperor received news of the agreement in February he refused to ratify it, recalled Qishan to Beijing, and ordered further military actions. By March 12 the Qing Viceroy was on his return to Beijing in disgrace and in chains. He was tried by a Board of Punishment, found guilty of having given Hong Kong to the barbarians, and sentenced to be beheaded later in the year for his poor political judgment. The Emperor announced a \$50,000 reward for the capture of the British Commodore and Capt. Elliot if they were captured alive, or \$30,000 if only their heads were returned. Later the reward for Capt. Elliot’s capture was increased to \$100,000 plus an award of imperial rank.

The Emperor sent new officials to Canton. He ordered them to take a hard line, and starting in February 1841 the first serious fighting began. By now Elliot knew of Qishan’s disgrace and realized that it was the local officials in Canton who were so aggressively hindering every action toward re-opening trade. At the end of the month Elliot sent warships up to Whampoa, including an exotic ironclad paddle steamer, the *Nemesis*. She was the first armed iron ship in the Royal Navy, and had a shallow draught of six feet that made her well-suited to action in the shallow river deltas of the China coast. The Chinese were flabbergasted by a ship that could move without a sail, but with fire and smoke, and wrote with excitement of her skills in manoeuvring backwards without wind. The Bogue forts were knocked out again on February 26, newly arrived Commissioner Lin’s recently purchased warship *Cambridge* was blown up, and the Chinese Admiral was killed. Elliot’s fleet continued to move until it was in sight of Canton.

John Morrison worried, realizing that these events interfered with any new agreement. By the end of March, the Cantonese officials begged that their city be spared. Elliot again let himself be convinced to avoid bloodshed, and agreed to suspend hostilities on condition that the British would be allowed to trade. He offered to return Zhoushan on the condition that the Chinese cede Hong Kong to full British sovereignty.

The British traders were upset with Elliot for accepting easy terms, and in fact the mandarins in Canton were again simply stalling, awaiting Chinese army troops.

The British Government finally received in April 1841 reports of the deal that Capt. Elliot had negotiated in January, and Lord Palmerston was as furious as the Emperor had been. He fired Elliot from his position when he found out that Elliott had accepted Hong Kong, which the British government considered a useless pile of rock. Capt. Elliot did not learn of this until four months later however, and continued to lead the British side representing trade interests. The British still had major forces farther north along the coast and still occupied Zhoushan. There Dr. Lockhart was busy treating Chinese and the British troops; by February 1841, he had treated more than 3,000 Chinese. In the meantime, the opium trade continued and Dr. Lockhart was furious that the British force in Zhoushan was permitting an opium ship to anchor in harbour and run its illegal trade in open view.

By mid-February the British forces in Zhoushan had learned that the Emperor had refused to ratify the treaty, and that all Chinese forces were ordered to “exterminate the red barbarians”, so they began to leave Zhoushan. Dr. Lockhart sailed back to Macau in late February, where his ship was forbidden to land as pressures from the Chinese government squeezed cooperation from the Portuguese. His ship then headed north to the Bogue, where it met the war-steamer the *Nemesis* carrying Capt. Elliot and John Morrison. In mid-March Lockhart was again settled in Macau with his friends Dr. Hobson and Milne, all feeling great relief at their common survival and their reunion. The young doctors were soon ordering additional medical supplies from the LMS, seeking especially quinine, “as it is much wanted here” for all the fevers. Quinine was known to be helpful against malaria although no one yet understood that mosquitoes were the vector of malarial transmission, as Scottish doctor Ronald Ross did not establish that proof until 1870.

On March 16 events turned for the worse again when those in Macau learned that the Emperor was calling for the complete extermination of the foreigners. This did not seem to disrupt local activities in Macau and Hong Kong however, and in late March 1841 the young missionaries went on an overnight trip from Macau to visit Hong Kong. They found the island was mostly barren rock, with an Indian regiment set up on the narrow edge of land between the steep hills and the sea. They walked everywhere to explore, and tallied up the local population, estimating that it was no more than 2,500 in small villages and on boats anchored in bays.

Qishan was back in Beijing in disgrace by early March, but the capacity of the British fleet to use force on coastal ports to demand compliance with the treaty seemed

to be so clearly established that the Qing dynasty tried to make a new deal. The Emperor issued a proclamation to encourage the Chinese to trade, and Dr. Hobson went to Canton to find his Chinese teacher and re-open his hospital. Howqua, the hong chief, had rented out Hobson's hospital and was reluctant to have it open again as a hospital even though the wounded Chinese in town wanted it. Hobson's Chinese teacher had fled and Chinese friends were amazed to find him return so soon after all the bloodshed, but trade was rapidly becoming normal again. Whampoa was full of anchored trading ships and the hong were busy, all "trading as if nothing had happened". The Chinese were eager to sell tea again but were still refusing to buy any foreign goods, which were rapidly filling up warehouses.

This appearance of normalcy was soon revealed as illusory, as Capt. Elliot discovered in April when he visited Canton. He realized that Chinese soldiers, ammunition, and artillery were being accumulated just outside Canton. On May 21 he ordered all British merchants to return to their ships, removed the 12-man Marine guard at the British factories (warehouses supervised by "factors"), and that same night the Chinese attacked all the nearby British ships. The British had 74 gun-ships aided by smaller vessels, and their men-of-war returned the fire. Then the Chinese sent out fire-rafts, a terrible weapon when giant sailing ships were anchored in a close harbour and unable to flee. The British blew up some of the fire rafts loaded with ammunition, and sank 71 junks. On land the British factories were quickly gutted by mobs, so the British moved from defence to offense and landed 2,000 troops. Over three days of fighting they took control of the heights on the north of the city on the foothills of White Cloud Mountain by May 26. The south and west of the city was bounded by water, so the east was the only direction of escape.

The Canton officials parlayed for peace a third time, and rather than continue hostilities, Elliot again agreed to a truce and a withdrawal of forces, to the fury of other British navy and army officers. He again demanded payment of the \$6 million and specific terms were arranged. The Chinese were to dismiss their troops, pay six million dollars reparations for the destruction of the trade factories and opium, clear the waters around the factories of all stakes, leave their Canton and Bogue forts unrepaired, and reopen trade. The British in turn would remove the naval fleet from Whampoa.

Ever the optimist, Elliot had reason to believe that the Chinese would now honour their agreement. In mirror image, the Cantonese now again concluded they had won the victory and saved face by achieving withdrawal of the British forces. They wrote to the Emperor to report their great victory over the barbarians, never revealing the extent of the British naval superiority in the battles.

Elliot was uncertain how his efforts were being viewed in Britain, and waited to see what would happen next. He was confused and frustrated, even more so because he had never approved of the opium trade and found all the military activities to support the traders very distasteful. In Hong Kong many Britain troops were falling ill with serious summer diseases including fevers and intestinal disorders. Canton appeared calm but relations with China were still very unsettled. In early May the Canton officials had started putting stakes in the Pearl River again and repairing the forts.

#### Lockhart in Macau, May 1841

Despite the continuing uncertainty, Dr. Lockhart was married in May 1841 to Catherine Parkes, sister of Harry Parkes and a niece of Gutzlaff's second wife Englishwoman Mary Wanstall. Catherine had been on Lockhart's voyage from London to Macau and was fluent in Chinese. Lockhart was invited to take over a medical practice in Macau when the surgeon there had to leave for health reasons. Lockhart would be able to earn a living from that practice, so he told the LMS that their salary for him would be saved, £300 per annum for this one-year appointment. He expected to return to LMS work as soon peace was established with China and he could go north and settle in one of the treaty ports and do medical mission work. American Rev. Samuel Brown from the Morrison Education Society in Macau visited Legge and the ACC in Malacca, and was able to report back that James had regained 35 boys for the college since the death of Evans.

The MES meeting in October found its members convinced that remote outposts of Chinese expatriates such as Malacca were never going to be useful sources of Chinese evangelists because the Chinese in those colonies had lost Chinese culture and language. Boone, the American lawyer and PM whom Legge had met in Jakarta studying Chinese with Medhurst, had gone to Macau after three years in Jakarta had affected his health. Boone began to recover and became friendly with the LMS men Milne, Hobson, and Lockhart. The Malacca Chinese evangelist Liang Fa was also living in Macau, teaching his daughter to read, and writing and preaching. In a massive typhoon in July 1841 both John Morrison and Lockhart's Capt. Bremer were threatened with death while sailing on different vessels the 40 miles to Macau, but both were rescued after one of the boats was dashed to pieces. The Emperor announced that the storm had been sent by the gods to punish the barbarians, even though far more Chinese were killed (Hobson, 1842).

More political events unfolded rapidly in Hong Kong across the summer of 1841. In Britain Lord Palmerston decided that the British Government had to negotiate directly with the Qing Emperor after all the failed attempts to attain lasting treaties through

dealing with officials in Canton. In light of the repeated collapses of the earlier agreements and the attempted resumption of hostilities, it appointed Sir Henry Pottinger as High Plenipotentiary to replace Elliot for further negotiations directly with Beijing.

In June, property auctions were held in Hong Kong for leases for 50 lots of land (with the option of freehold purchases if the Crown decided to sell), and roads and building began to be constructed. Enterprising Chinese merchants began flooding in from China. In late 1841 American Baptists opened a school and chapel in Hong Kong, and traders and missionaries quickly began moving onto Hong Kong even though its final status was unknown.

#### Britain outraged at Elliot's treaty; Sir Henry Pottinger arrives

Sir Henry arrived in Hong Kong on August 9, bringing a letter from Palmerston to Elliot, furiously complaining that Elliot had failed to secure reparations sufficient to cover the co-hongs' debts and the costs of the expedition. It charged that he had abandoned Zhoushan instead of holding it as security for Chinese compliance, and had accepted Hong Kong although it was not clear the Emperor had actually ceded it. Palmerston scorned that it was only a "barren island with hardly a house upon it", and it could well end up as a useless enclave such as the Portuguese had with Macau.

Other British commentators were equally outraged, arguing that the Chinese only ceded Hong Kong because it was so badly situated for trade, a useless place of banishment on the far edges of the Chinese empire, with no population. Queen Victoria was also angry. Everyone believed that Elliot had settled for the lowest possible terms. Palmerston thought that Zhoushan was a much better location than Hong Kong for a British holding because Zhoushan was close to the mouth of the Yangzi and could control the trade into the west and north of China. Palmerston did not even believe that Britain needed any territory around China, instead thinking it only needed some treaty ports that would operate normally for trade. Palmerston's letter fired Elliot, telling him that he no longer had an appointment for work in China, and Sir Henry took charge of all political and military plans. Meanwhile the government changed in England, and the new government favoured a different plan for the negotiations with China.

#### Sir Henry sails north in August

Sir Henry Pottinger sent a new large British fleet sailing north in late August 1841 under orders to establish formal relations between the two empires. The tactics were to disable all the fortified places along the coast and up the Yangzi River west of the coast to the point where it connected with the Grand Canal, and to disable all the ships that

were taking grain and tribute to Beijing. The Grand Canal was a marvellous waterway that went north inland to take supplies from the rich south to Beijing. The British would move up the Yangzi, and would draw the attention of the Emperor using an economic blockade rather than through the tedious business of the northern coastal and land route past the Dagu forts and Tianjin to Beijing, with its possibility of armed conflict.

At Xiamen the fleet found major Chinese defences and resistance, so the fortifications were conquered and the Britain took possession on 26 August, leaving a small garrison on a nearby island. The fleet headed farther north, met resistance, and recaptured the island of Zhoushan on October 6 after many troubles with severe storms. They intended to use the good harbour there as a rendezvous point for the expedition up the Yangzi. Ningbo, a nearby city on the mainland, was captured on October 13 after strong resistance, and by December 1841 the fleet assembled there. Garrisons were established at Xiamen, Dinghai, as well as at Hong Kong. The complement in the British fighting vessels included large numbers of Chinese employees, who had a significant lack of enthusiasm for their Manchu rulers.

#### Hong Kong turmoil and war with China

1842 was the most momentous year in Hong Kong's history, as the confrontation between the world's two empires persisted in prolonged tussles that often became hot small wars and finally led to a treaty. In early January the British fleet continued past Ningbo where they captured two ports without much battle, then opened the granaries to the people before returning. Shanghai, then a small city, was captured. In February Sir Henry Pottinger declared Hong Kong and Dinghai on Zhoushan Island to be free ports, open to all trade without customs duties and under British protection. In March American and French flags were hoisted by national merchants at their revived Canton warehouses, Canton was again open for all trade, and a substantial illegal trade in opium had freshly re-established at Whampoa. The hong merchants asked Sir Henry if the Bogue Forts guarding the entrance to the Canton region could be rebuilt, and he declared they could not.

In March some Chinese attempts to recapture Ningbo and Zhoushan were repelled by the British Indian troops with significant losses to the Chinese, and the exotic paddle-wheeled steamer the *Nemesis* was active in reconnoitring the movements of Chinese troops in the Yangzi. Chinese fireboats sometimes got into the anchorages, blowing up troop transports. Across April and May more British navy sailing and steam vessels, both war and troopships, continued to arrive from England and India, stopping at Hong Kong en route to the hostilities up the Yangzi, while a giant fleet with about 16,000 men



was formed for this third campaign. John Morrison went with Sir Henry as interpreter to the mission that sought direct treaty talks with the dynasty.

In early May the British fleet began its final campaign to reach Beijing. It left Ningbo, destroyed a huge armaments depot in the small port of Zhapu on an island about 80 miles southeast of Shanghai, captured Shanghai, then headed up the Yangzi. There it captured the important city of Zhenjiang despite a heroic resistance by the Manchu troops, who had been deserted by their Chinese army. Many in the Chinese army were members of the Triad secret societies hoping to revolt against the Manchus. For their part, the Manchus were part of a strong warrior tradition that expected no gentle treatment upon surrender, so thousands committed suicide rather than fall into foreign hands.

In June 1842 the American Commodore at Canton was paid by the Chinese all the compensation owing to American traders for their losses during the May 1841 attacks, and colourful British Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas Cochrane arrived in Canton after a very fast trip of 90 days from England<sup>13</sup>. He became the commander at Hong Kong and in mid-June the British fleet captured Wusong at the entrance of the Yangzi route to Shanghai. The British captured large gun batteries, then the fleet proceeded up-river past Shanghai and captured two more cities, releasing 16 British men who had been held captive. Commissioner Lin wrote privately to some friends, telling them that the barbarians had superior military skills. He knew his views should remain private, because he had tried to explain this two years earlier to the Qing court and he knew the court was opposed to recognizing any aspect of barbarian superiority. Fresh turmoil arose in Canton on July 2 after a Manila sailor on an opium boat anchored at Whampoa killed a Chinese man. All the foreign merchants in Canton met in emergency session to try to respond in a way that would not involve another huge disruption of trade. The fleet went west up the Yangzi as far as Zhenjiang, capturing it in July and cutting off the Grand Canal as a transport route for supplies to Beijing.

#### Treaty of Nanjing August 1842

---

<sup>13</sup> Sit Thomas Cochrane became immortalized in modern fiction in the books by C.S. Forster about Horatio Hornblower and in the books by Patrick O'Brian about Jack Aubrey, who both used aspects of Cochrane's career in their stories. He was a red-head well over six feet tall with a daring style that had achieved both success and notoriety in the battles against the fleets of Napoleon and his Spanish allies.

By August 29 the British fleet was in a position to use small boats to block all trade on the Grand Canal north to Beijing, and captured the old capital of Nanjing where Sir Henry waited for word from the Emperor. The Chinese government finally realized that it could not match British military actions and recognized that some kind of treaty was inevitable. Officials signed the protocol for the Treaty of Nanking the same day, Capt. Elliot for Britain, and Qishan and a Manchu general for the Emperor. Four copies were made, one each for the two nations' rulers to formally ratify by signing separate documents that were to be sent to their counterparts, and two to be held as extras by the top diplomat for each empire. Within a month the Daoguang Emperor ratified the treaty, and eventually Queen Victoria approved it on behalf of Britain.

The Treaty was one of four copies made at Nanking the previous August. John Morrison wrote the Chinese text on straw-paper four feet long and 10 inches wide. It consisted of texts written entirely in Chinese and entirely in English to accommodate the unusual requirements of Chinese text, rather than in the usual bilingual treaty format of parallel columns. Each copy was bound as a small book, with vermilion characters and the Imperial seal documenting the Emperor's assent. The book was bound in sandalwood decorated with carved jade, all wrapped in imperial golden silk showing the Imperial dragon.

The British copy of this precious artefact was soon put on a steamer for Bombay and by December 1842 this Chinese version was in London being copied through an early version of photography (contact printing by means of light), the first treaty to ever be "photocopied" (F. Wood, 1996), (R. D. Wood, 1997). All versions of the final approvals were in place on 26 June 1843. Sir Henry Pottinger was now the Governor of the new colony of Hong Kong, and Queen Victoria had her own photographic copy of the Treaty framed under glass. The original of the treaty document she ratified was removed from China to Taiwan in 1949 by Chiang Kaishek's nationalist forces.

In the Treaty of Nanjing of August 1842, the Qing Empire agreed to let the British trade at five ports, Canton, Xiamen, Fuzhou, Ningbo, and Shanghai. All British subjects in these five treaty ports were to be under the legal jurisdiction of British officials including a British consul, supported by a ship of war. In addition, Hong Kong was granted in perpetuity to the British to provide a place for ships to be repaired. The two nations were to have equal standing, officers at various ranks were allow to communicate to each other as equals, and the traditional monopoly of the co-hongs was abolished. All British subjects imprisoned in China were to be freed, and all Chinese subjects imprisoned in China because of their employment with the British were also to be freed under amnesty. The Emperor agreed to pay 21 million dollars to the British.

This was comprised of 12 million for the costs of the British expedition north to try and get the original treaty enforced, six million to the British traders as compensation for their destroyed opium and warehouses, and three million for the payment of debts built up by the British traders in Canton when the co-hongs became bankrupt during the suspended trade. The opium repayment sum eventually represented £65 per chest after calculations were done in London, about half of the original true cost, not to mention the five years of lost principal funds since the opium's surrender in 1839, and the traders were furious about these losses. By September 1842 British ships were being loaded up with millions of silver dollars as these payments were shipped back to London (Bruce, 2000). The shipments of cash took years to complete.

All correspondence was to be done on a basis of perfect equality between the two nations rather than as petitions from the British to the Qing Emperor, and rules of trade were to be established. British troops were to be gradually withdrawn from the Chinese ports they had conquered, on a schedule determined by the pace of the payment of the compensation and the full resumption of trade. It seemed a new era of trade and diplomatic peace had finally arrived.

#### Doctors Hobson and Lockhart

Drs. Hobson and Lockhart were still living in Macau in early 1842. Hobson planned to move to Hong Kong, set up a hospital and learn Cantonese from the flood of migrants, while Lockhart wanted to head north to Zhoushan or Ningbo as soon as things settled. In October Hong Kong was now flourishing with 15,000 Chinese migrants, many British soldiers, land sales, and thriving produce markets, even though the formal treaty documents had not yet reached their final destinations. The large mat-shed shacks that had early housed large numbers of Chinese were being replaced with permanent brick dwellings, and the harbour was salubrious. The original small Chinese population on the island living in fishing villages was being overwhelmed by Chinese migrants rushing in because they wanted the relatively greater freedoms offered by the British compared to the Qing government.

Dr. Lockhart had now treated nearly 4,000 Chinese patients, who were coming from increasingly great distances in Canton province to see him. The LMS men realized that they had misunderstood how their mission work would be carried out during their voyage to China, when they had expected their main task would be translating and printing Christian literature. Once in place, they realized that the great challenge of learning an ideographic written language meant that literacy rates were low in the Chinese population, and that preaching and direct actions would have to be the main

activities of the mission in China. American missionary doctor Parker planned to close his Macau hospital and move to Canton, while most of the British traders in Macau were planning to move to Hong Kong. Young Milne was north, at Dinghai, and was resisting the LMS order (and Legge's "tender invitation") to join him in Malacca, on the grounds that it was not a good place to master Chinese. Malacca was no longer an important setting for the Chinese mission. When the Emperor finally accepted the need for an effective treaty in late August, the LMS men already in Macau were all agreed that Legge should move his mission to Hong Kong.

In London the LMS was not thriving, complaining of money problems. John Morrison warned the Directors that the ACC had been such a failure as a higher education institute for training competent Chinese translators that there was going to be trouble convincing the new British government in Hong Kong to continue the annual subsidy that his father Robert had been able to negotiate originally from the EIC. John scolded the LMS that Legge knew nothing of this problem when he arrived in Malacca.

### Chapter 18 Problems at the Anglo-Chinese College

In Malacca Legge had suffered in trying to sort out all the problems that became visible when Evans died, and had developed a clear understanding that many of the problems in the Straits missions had come about because of blurred ideas about the boundaries affecting many financial transactions. These ambiguities affected the work that the mission men did that generated income, as college instructor, property developer, plantation manager, and publisher. Further, these blurred boundaries affected the management of funds that belonged in a mixed manner to multiple owners ranging from the LMS, to the college, and to individual mission men and their private ventures often based on borrowed money based on implicit guarantees that the LMS would cover the debts.

In light of the financial confusions he found in Malacca, and now that a move of the entire mission to China seemed inevitable, Legge argued to the LMS that when the ACC was properly set up there the college instructors should become employees of the college alone, even though they would not “cast off” their missionary character, and John Morrison agreed with this plan. They disagreed mainly as to the location of the ACC, for John recognized that England had no territorial ambitions in China but simply wanted diplomatic and trade agreements, and he believed that the northern ports currently held by the British would soon be returned to China. Under the circumstances there would be no benefit to locating the ACC in such cities, and John wrote both Legge and the LMS strongly recommending Hong Kong as the best location. He recommended the ACC be set up as a school of higher education in association with the lower school MES, and under MES trusteeship as the local managing committee. Teacher Samuel Brown could educate boys in the MES school to the level needed in the ACC.

### Legge enjoys a quiet period in Malacca and receives an honorary degree

While Hong Kong was in turmoil, Malacca in 1842 was much quieter for James and Mary. They were pleased with the birth of a second daughter, Mary, on 9 May, although they were worried because Mary again remained ill for many months after her delivery. Despite his early gut problems and occasional bouts of fever, James enjoyed his new life with his wife and children in a land of warmth and sunshine, and family lore suggests he was a playful young father. During the short time they waited for a ship in Singapore in 1843 he adopted a young crocodile as a pet, kept in his bathtub. To amuse his children he would entice the crocodile to grab onto a piece of wood, then whirl it around his head to show the strength of its jaws. Early in the morning he would go out to the trees and bring in a novel creature his daughter called “climbing fish”. Other lore

had him trying to keep a pet elephant until he couldn't afford the tremendous amount of milk it required (Author, 1909b).

That summer Legge was awarded an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from New York University on 23 July 1842, as was another China missionary. American Rev. E. C. Bridgman, founding editor of the Canton mission journal the *Chinese Repository*, was John Morrison's old colleague in Canton. In its citation the university described Legge's degree as honouring his "distinguished literary attainments and piety". It seems probable that both their degrees arose from recommendations from American missionary Abeel, a colleague of Bridgman's and a recent visitor to Legge in Malacca. Legge's degree was probably granted as recognition of his 1841 publication *The Lexilogus*, which devout Lancelot Dent had praised in Bridgman's publication in October 1841. Dent was a Canton trader active in good causes, serving as President of the Morrison Education Society (MES) which had been founded in Canton in 1836 to teach Chinese students English, secular subjects, and Christianity. The American missionaries clearly recognized talents in Legge that had not yet yielded much else in concrete works. The *Chinese Repository* for that month concluded that the little *Lexilogus* book was serviceable, though it regretted the short sentences had not been organized by subject in a way that would allow for quick reference.

Bridgman in 1830 had censored some of Robert Morrison's articles for the *CR*, considering them too controversial. This probably arose because of Morrison's criticisms of the opium trade, whose American and British traders surrounded Bridgman in Canton. Over time Bridgman increasingly represented the interests of traders from his homeland in Canton in a way very different from LMS men such as Legge, Hobson, and Lockhart. Earlier Bridgman had written "If all countries fail in persuading China, then it should be forced to take our rights and interests as its duty.... As far as China's attitude is concerned, no government can treat it politely without the use of force" (Mei, 2005).

#### Legge's insight – education is crucial for Chinese Christians and for missionaries

During the day in Malacca Legge worked as a teacher and missionary. He taught daily school lessons to more than 35 Chinese boys and young men in the College, and he preached at the college and in the community. In the course of this work he became convinced of a major idea that was to affect the rest of his life in China. This centred on the importance of a broad education – both for Chinese students and equally for foreign missionaries.

Legge realized that the only way for Christianity to make its way into China was through providing smart young Chinese men with a good broad education that included mathematics, science, history, and geography, in addition to training in the Chinese classics and Christianity. He understood that mass evangelism by foreigners would never effectively bring the Christian message to China. Instead, an educated cadre of young Chinese men would become the most effective missionaries to their own people. He wrote that the most efficient missionary would be one who

“shall raise up workers from among Chinese young men – men who are able to teach others also. The more the subject occupies my mind, the more do I feel convinced that the great work must be done by native teachers – men speaking to their countrymen as brother to brother, full of zeal, discretion, and disinterestedness. And how are these to be trained up? That will be a work of great delicacy and difficulty. Such youths must on the one hand be pervaded with the idea that they have a great work to do, and yet must their preparation for it be made so that they shall not be puffed up. Lessons of self-denial, simplicity, entire consecration to one object, and spirituality of mind, must be inculcated upon them at once by precepts and example.”

Legge noted that the early Nestorian mission to China had been effective not because of the Nestorians' superior general or Christian education, but because they were “natives of the East – operating on their own countrymen, or upon others in everything but religion on a par and of a hue with themselves”. His emphasis was shifting toward providing good education to effective Chinese Christians who would become evangelists, rather than to direct public preaching to masses. His ideas about the nature of good education were modelled on his own experiences in Scotland, whose modern broad and scientific curriculum provided the best education in Europe at that time.

This model governed his daytime activities, and its reciprocal governed his “night job” studying the Chinese classics. He had long developed a more nuanced thinking about the direction of cultural influences that should be associated with missionary work in China. He now knew that effective missionaries would have to become deeply educated in the literature, culture, and history of China in order to respond to the complexities of ideas underlying Chinese culture, and his own program of studies of

Chinese literature was opening up a wonderful new universe of ideas to him just as China seemed to be opening to the west.

#### Moving the ACC to China: Legge vs. John Morrison

In Malacca during this eventful year of 1842, Legge had another grand educational plan, a plan for the LMS - ACC Chinese mission. Even before the war between Britain and China ended with the Treaty of Nanjing, Legge was eager to move the College and set it up in China. In March 1842 he explained to the LMS that in Malacca the vernacular of the mixed-race population was Malay rather than Chinese, and that even if he succeeded in creating a successful group of Malaccan-Chinese ministers, their “foreign” origins would limit their effectiveness if they went to China as missionaries. Legge had become convinced that it would be impossible to find and nurture any “first-class Chinese scholar” in the mixed culture of decaying Malacca, and reminded the directors that the real goal of the Malacca mission had always been that of bringing Christianity to the Chinese.

The logical step was moving the ACC into China as soon as political conditions allowed. Across the dramatic political events in early 1842 Legge became very excited about the possibility of moving the College directly into China. As each news bulletin about the Canton hostilities became available to him in Malacca he had it translated into Chinese and posted on the walls, “to no small excitement of the people”. When news of the final August treaty came, the Chinese residents were very excited to read the news of open trade. Legge wrote, “This treaty is the lifting up the scene for a mighty drama”. It was clear to him that this opening was going to have a huge impact on both China and Europe. He wanted the LMS to move the ACC either to Canton, Nanjing, or Beijing, the most influential settings, rather than into a protected and foreign colony such as Hong Kong was promising to become<sup>14</sup>. This bold recommendation was not successful, reflecting the influence of John Morrison on both Legge and the LMS.

John Morrison had briefly attended the ACC in Malacca in 1828-1830, then had been hired by the EIC in 1830 as a translator for the British traders in Canton. He had taken over his father’s government job as translator when Robert had died prematurely in 1834. In particular John had worked as interpreter during the cold and hot wars of

---

<sup>14</sup> Modern scholar O’Sullivan claims that James was “manoeuvring” the LMS to get the ACC moved to Hong Kong rather than China, in a letter of Jan 3/6, 1844, but this is quite untrue and the topic is not covered in the letter O’Sullivan cited, which was written long after the actual move occurred.



1839-1842, going north with the fleet, and he knew that the British had a plan to develop Hong Kong as their trading base. Four months before the final treaty of August 1842 John wrote the LMS to explain this, and within weeks of the signing of the treaty he wrote urging the removal of the ACC from Malacca to Hong Kong rather than into China. In September 1842 John, still in Nanjing working as a translator with the treaty officials, also wrote his friend Legge that his scheme to move the LMS station directly into China was “too imaginative”, urging him to move instead to British ground in Hong Kong. “Make up your mind, then, to Hong Kong; hasten my dear Legge, to make your arrangements for settling there...”. “Come and give us a little of your life, my dear Legge. Come and share our love and affection. We have enough for all – let yours be mingled with ours”. The LMS agreed and decided to move its Malaccan Chinese printing press and Chinese type-foundry to Hong Kong, along with their intense young Scot scholar and the revived ACC.

### Hong Kong is now British

Upon the signing of the full Treaty of Nanjing, Hong Kong was now British and its superb port and British laws began to attract Chinese and British traders in a massive migration. Prior to that Canton, 40 miles north up the Pearl River, had been the only trading port with China. Merchants trading in Canton had previously only been allowed up the Pearl River to anchor 12 miles below Canton at the Whampoa anchorage and to live in their factories for a winter trading season, then were required to go downstream and live the summer in Macau in their real residences. The new treaty meant a major shift of activity away from Macau’s dominating political and religious institutions, as British quickly moved their offices and factories to Hong Kong. They were closely followed by Chinese from the mainland.

A new system of greater freedom in trade was established for Canton. The old co-hong system that had functioned as a Chinese monopoly since 1757 had controlled all import trade and taxes in Canton. It was now disbanded in favour of freer trade open to all Chinese merchants, a late parallel to the termination of the EIC monopoly in 1834 on the side of British trade. Sir Henry also hoped to get Chinese agreement to allow legal trade in opium even as the trade was attracting debate in Parliament. As trade regulations began to be developed the plan was that all trading should be faced with identical Imperial tariffs in each of the new ports. Prior to the new treaty it was common for the Cantonese hongts to charge up to 400 times the official tariff for their personal advantage, and traders had no recourse because of the monopoly. Ilibu (Elepoo), the

new Qing High Commissioner recognized this problem early in 1843 as new tariff rates were being established (Slade, 1843-1845).

### Extraterritoriality

The British in the treaty ports were exempted from Chinese jurisdiction for crimes, in a provision called “extraterritoriality”. It gave the local British judiciary the right and duty to handle such offences, and Britons alleged to have committed crimes in Chinese treaty ports were allowed to be held responsible under the laws of their homeland rather than under Chinese jurisdiction. British traders had been horrified by the workings of Chinese law since an event in 1784 when a gunner on an EIC in firing off a ceremonial salute, accidentally killed a Chinese sailor alongside the ship. Chinese authorities responded that all trade would stop until the gunner was turned over to their custody, as Chinese law required “a life for a life” even though there had been no criminal intent<sup>15</sup>. The EIC responded with cowardice, handed over the young man and he was strangled to death, leaving a legacy of injustice remembered that affected all trade (Blake, 1999).

Remnants of the extraterritoriality model still exist in the modern concept of diplomatic immunity, but the Treaty of Nanking allowed this protection to all the traders, sailors, missionaries, and other settlers, rather than just to diplomats as in most usage today. This extraterritoriality clause aggravated Chinese officialdom across the next century, but the need for it lay in its roots in the degradation of the judicial system during the late Qing dynasty. Even as the mandarins refused to recognize individual rights, consistent with Confucian principles, rich Chinese often fled their own judicial system seeking sanctuary and the protection of their individual rights in Hong Kong and the treaty ports (Coates, 1988).

On the British side the claim for immunity from the Chinese legal system was seen as essential because, to paraphrase a missionary writing in the *Chinese Recorder*, “we would be happy to abide by the laws of China if they were written down and we could find out what they are”. Although the Qing dynasty did have written laws for criminal behaviour, these were not well known to the foreigners, and there was no written civil or commercial law. In addition, in practise all legal matters were settled by the “rule of man” rather than by the “rule of law”. The “man” was the local magistrate, and popular tradition in Canton during the dying decades of the corrupt Qing dynasty was for him to rule in favour of the party paying the biggest bribe. Later an eminent Hong Kong reformer Sir Kai Ho Kai (son of Ho Tsunshin) explained that until the Qing government

---

<sup>15</sup> Criminal intent did not have the same status in Chinese law that it had in British law.

reformed away from its “loose morality and evil habits”, Europeans would continue to distrust the Chinese system of law and its administration (Choa, 1981/2000).

Even today, modern China is still struggling to create a good corpus of modern written laws for criminal and civil matters, and to establish a rule of law that is not corrupt. The absence of clear written laws and a continuing problem with reliable independence of the judiciary in adjudicating conflicts according to laws remains a significant problem today for foreign companies when they try to make business contracts that will be orderly and enforced in Chinese courts. Even the American giant McDonald’s was displaced to its chagrin, after its contract was unilaterally violated in a major fiasco in Beijing in 1994.

In addition to the problem of unreliable justice, Chinese criminal investigations required the suspect to confess, so they routinely included excruciating tortures to procure these confessions. Further, punishments were far more fearsome than European punishments of the day, still including death by “a thousand cuts”. The local mission journal routinely extracted and translated the details of Chinese punishments from the official Beijing Gazette, so all were familiar with these. British justice in Hong Kong was not as extreme but not exactly tender either, as in the case of an Englishman found guilty and hanged within 60 hours of his sentence. Civil disputes over ownership of property, taxes, and business arrangements in China were often fraught, with missionaries being regularly and sometimes violently displaced from properties they had bought with all apparent official approvals.

Extraterritoriality was not a foreign British concept to the Chinese, but was well known and used by the Qing, who used it as policy for dealing with the Manchu population, the victors of the Chinese and the overlords of the Qing dynasty then ruling China<sup>16</sup>. Manchu soldiers and officers were entirely under the jurisdiction of Manchu officers, rules, and punishments, and not subject to Chinese laws. Today, China still uses the idea of extraterritoriality in dealing with international crime. In 2003 in Canada, a young Chinese man from China was accused of murdering a young Chinese woman from China living in Vancouver. He fled to China and the Chinese government refused to extradite him for trial in Canada, arguing extraterritoriality and asserting jurisdiction re the murder because both victim and accused were Chinese nationals. That is, China refused to accept that another legal system had jurisdiction over a crime committed in its jurisdiction, if the accused were a Chinese national (York, 2004b). By modern eyes

---

<sup>16</sup> Chinese Repository 1846, p. 201

then, the foreign traders' insistence on extraterritoriality seems a reasonable and unexceptional feature of the Treaty in its time.

#### Legge recommends a move to Hong Kong

In light of John Morrison's arguments and the treaty, Legge wrote in September 1842 to the LMS, urging a quick removal to Hong Kong. Malacca was quickly becoming depopulated, with Chinese moving out to follow the new trading paths, and British troops leaving the Strait. Although the Recorder had concluded that the ACC was the rightful owner of two of Evans' houses (which Legge had then been able to rent to British officers), the officers were leaving and the loss of income was not going to be readily replaced. Legge was especially worried about the ACC, because he and John Morrison warned the LMS that it had not managed to graduate even one Chinese interpreter across eight years of its annual subsidy and they knew the British government was justified in its reluctance to continue to provide the subsidy of \$1200.

Legge recommended an early sale of the mission house before all the property values fell, and a removal of the Malay-type press to the Singapore station so that the Malacca station could move unencumbered. Legge knew that having a Press made a station more important, but he also told the directors that a sole mission man could not run schools and churches, preach and translate, as well as superintend a Press. In November he sent the Bible Society \$317 from Evans' estate, most of their debt, and wrote that "we are all bending forward on the tiptoe of expectation" waiting for instructions for the move into China. He urged them not to sanction any new Bible translations done by a sole translator or even a group all located at one mission, explaining that such translations would be more prone to errors than versions done by larger groups seeking consensus on difficult texts.

By late September 1842 Legge had news of the peace, and began preparing for the move of the mission. He sent the printing press and its English, Malay, and Chinese fonts to the LMS Singapore, where Stronach's larger mission and larger Malay and European populations made that press more useful. He wrote John Morrison that he expected he and the ACC would be ordered to Hong Kong, where it would amalgamate with the existing MES school run by Samuel Brown "as soon as those other pupils gain some fluency in English". He expected to become the master for "theology and biblical science". He was happy to have baptized his daughter Mary, along with a Chinese infant, and complained about the local Church of England Chaplain, who "is next door to (being) a Papist". In Britain the LMS was petitioning Sir Robert Peel to allow the

nonconformist LMS missionaries to conduct the sacrament of marriage in their mission congregations, a service still restricted to the Church of England.

### The LMS sends Legge Hong Kong

Mary and James had established a good life in their 3 years in Malacca despite the problems of their first year, and their daughters were thriving. Eliza, at two and a half in February 1843 was “excessively active and intelligent, nattering away at Malay, Portuguese, Chinese and English all through...”. But in London the LMS members of the Indian committee of the LMS were grateful for the end of the war with China and ready to get their men moving. They decided to send all the mission men from the Straits and Jakarta to the new British territory of Hong Kong for a meeting to plan mission stations in China. The Indian committee had decided against Legge’s plan to move the ACC to some city farther north in China, but instead ruled that it should go to Hong Kong. The stations in Java, Penang, and Malacca were to be closed, and the printing press moved to Hong Kong or some other useful location.

The LMS Directors wrote on December 31, 1842 ordering all the “Chinese” LMS men to meet soon at Hong Kong. Upon receiving this letter months later, Dyer protested that this order ignored the problem of the monsoons, predicting that they would not all be able to get there until possibly September 1843. Dyer, Hobson, Legge, Lockhart, Medhurst, Milne, and the Stronachs planned to meet in the summer of 1843, and with the expert local help of John Morrison, to plot out their deployments along the Chinese coast. The LMS Indian Committee wanted to ask the Directors to send 10-12 new men to China now that seven Chinese cities were open to foreigners. In December the committee wrote Legge that the ACC was never intended to be a senior school for Chinese literature, and that LMS funds should not be used for it in that way. Instead, the LMS funding to the ACC would only be for its use in training Chinese Christians to become evangelists.

The committee ordered Legge to seek a land grant from the new government in Hong Kong for the ACC, and for housing two mission families and a printing operation in association with the ACC. The LMS Indian Committee told the mission men that if the new government in Hong Kong refused to grant land to them, they were directed to sell off all the building and lands in their old stations and use that money to purchase Hong Kong land. The LMS provided the Powers of Attorney to them so they could sell these properties.

In January 1843, Beighton in Penang was devastated that his Malay mission was to be closed and he was to be pensioned off at age 53. He wrote pathetic letters to the LMS

in London begging to be allowed to keep working even when they ordered him to send his very sick wife back to England. His own health was so precarious that he was now incapable of writing and used a daughter as amanuensis. Only very reluctantly he accepted that "... my energy isn't as great as formerly". He was so distraught at being forced out of his mission that he aroused the sympathy of the Recorder. Sir William Norris wrote him that "I'm sure the Directors would never have written to cause you such deep anguish – nor expected you to bear the stigma of a recall which you would not long survive", and Beighton sent this sympathetic letter along with his own. Beighton was disgusted with the Stronach brothers "...these great overbearing gentlemen... who boast about their Chinese preaching and upset the labours of others with their "dagger words". Apparently they used some of their government subsidy to pay for Chinese schools and cut back support to his Malay schools. Beighton claimed that he was willing to accept a reduced salary, but the Stronachs explained to London that Beighton had an additional income in that he had five or six "half-English girls" boarding in his house, a source of income that he had not revealed to the LMS, suggesting that any reduction of LMS salary would be no great sacrifice.

#### The Legges sail for Hong Kong

Legge's final act for the Malacca station was to draw up the closing accounts of the mission. His double-entry bookkeeping showed a cash balance of \$1,148 on May 1. He also compiled the final accounts for the ACC, including payments to Dyer for rentals on the buildings that Evans and Dyer had taken on at the expense of the LMS. He auctioned off three major properties yielding \$3,600, and was able to take \$4,610 in cash to Hong Kong to use in setting up the college there.

On May 9, 1843 James Legge and his establishment set sail for Singapore and Hong Kong. At the youthful age of 27 he had to move a sizeable contingent of people, equipment, goods, and even livestock from Malacca to Hong Kong. He had his wife, two young daughters, some of his best students, and some of the ACC teachers. Legge also brought the printer and the LMS Chinese printing press and type foundry. His livestock included a pregnant goat soon to provide milk for his children during the voyage. He estimated the costs of the move at \$542, including short-term rental of a house in Singapore while they waited for a ship for the second leg of the trip.

#### Dangers of the seas

The trip from Malacca and Singapore to Hong Kong was dangerous in many ways. Robert Morrison and his wife Eliza had survived a voyage of huge drama in this region in 1826 on their return to China, during which storms and a terrifyingly incompetent

and vicious crew threatened their lives. After 100 days on board their sailing ship the rotten main topsail collapsed, the extreme rolling of the boat threw loose a one- and a half-ton cannon, two iron chests broke free and smashed jars of turpentine and spirits in the dark below decks which threatened fire if anyone took a lamp to see and remedy the dangerous mess. The captain and “tyrannical and profligate” officers were vicious and punished the sailors (whom they called “refuse and profligate landsmen”) with floggings. Eliza and the children wept as one sailor screamed in anguish while his leg was amputated after his foot was shot off in a conflict in the cabin next to the Morrison’s.

Pirates were still a huge risk on this route, and ships sailing from Australia to Hong Kong were still frequent victims of attacks and murders by cannibals if the vessels stopped at small islands as they wended their way north through the islands of the South Pacific, reported in news articles for years during this period. The danger did not end even at Macau, for pirates were boldly boarding vessels in the area between Macau and Hong Kong and all the way northwest up the Pearl River estuary to Canton. Pirates stole cash and goods, then often killed all on board and set the boat on fire.

Newspaper articles argued that British officials were not aggressive in tracking suspicious boats because of hypocrisy about opium smugglers, suggesting that officials were reluctant to interfere with opium smugglers and did not want to risk confusing opium and pirate vessels. This may have been only a small part of the problem, for at the height of the opium trade, both Chinese and British traders for their own benefit kept piracy well under control. Further, pirates were casual in their targets and more than once directly attacked official vessels of the colony’s government. During one night in February 1843 a British government lorch<sup>17</sup> anchored off Macau was attacked three times by the same group of pirates.

Things were further complicated by a protection racket, in a system in which Chinese boatmen could buy a “pirate pass” for \$17 from a gang of pirates. This would provide them with safe passage if pirates boarded them, but the system was risky because pirates of one clan often refused to honour passes issued by a rival clan. Some pirate fleets were organized as tightly as a modern corporation, with formal contracts as part of their operation, and extensive written records of these. Ships, merchants, and villages were all targets of these pirate activities, and one of the extremely successful

---

<sup>17</sup> Lorchas were a typical boat design on the China coast, having a hull designed in a European style but sails set in the Chinese style.

pirate leaders was a brilliant Cantonese woman Zheng Shi who commanded nearly 2,000 vessels and finally retired vastly wealthy to Canton where she died in 1844.

### Hong Kong thrives, but it is lawless

By June the reparation payments that were owed by the hongts to the British traders arising from the recent hostilities were beginning to be paid off in orderly instalments, and Hong Kong was booming with floods of British and Chinese traders sharing a strong interest in commerce. In April British traders bought more than 11 million pounds of tea for export to England, but in Canton fractious activity continued. In Hong Kong small groups began creating the institutions of civil society and quickly had a Chapel for English and Chinese congregations on Queens Road. In late June a mosque was built 'in a commanding position' in what is now Central, about six streets up from Queen's Road, the main east-west street along the waterfront.

The rush of traders and new wealth into Hong Kong shared some features with the wild west of the United States of that same period, including lawlessness. Chinese pirates were living on boats in Hong Kong harbour and landing at night to plunder the houses that were springing up everywhere. In May 1843 young John Morrison had a house that he shared with Benjamin Hobson and Samuel Brown, the new American master of the MES school. Part of the house also served as a temporary school. Their house was attacked and robbed during the night by a gang of 30 pirate-robbers from Kowloon. The burglars attacked at 2 AM, breaking through the door with an axe, then stabbing Brown twice in the chest with a bamboo spear. He retreated to his bedroom and his wife locked the door, but the burglars broke it down with their axes. Mrs. Brown grabbed her baby and they and the rest of the household all fled barefoot into the night. The burglars looted everything, set fires, took their loot to their nearby boat, then returned for more. Nearby citizens responded with pistol shots but the pirates kept at their work for two hours until dawn, leaving fires burning throughout the house.

Arising from this attack Dr. Hobson lost about \$1,000 worth of surgical instruments and John Morrison was robbed of the official government seal or chop used on all communications from his master Sir Henry to the Cantonese officials. Hobson had already lost \$700 worth of surgical instruments in a shipwreck, and he was forced to buy firearms and hire a guard to try and protect the little medical mission. The complete lack of nighttime police or water patrols in Hong Kong led to frequent robberies of this type. Worse followed when Hobson's second son died of dysentery in June, his wife became sick in October, and he wrote the LMS explaining his desperate



need for an improved salary. Overall, 1843 was a very challenging year for young Benjamin Hobson.

#### British ships active in the new peace, October 1842

Late 1842 saw great movements of British vessels in Chinese rivers and seas. Chinese cash payments to settle the war began to arrive in Canton in late 1842, where they were loaded onto British ships for the trip back to England. One million of the first six million dollars of war reparations left for England on October 27. This meant the colony was handling huge amounts of cash, and the amount of silver was beginning to cause logistical problems. Insurance companies in Hong Kong refused to insure vessels carrying more than \$1.4 million worth of silver (14 lakhs or 100,000 sycee). The Chinese had paid six million at Nanjing, and sent more than \$15 million in silver dollars between October 1842 and May 1843. British vessels up the Yangzi headed east back to the Chinese coast, taking up temporary anchorage at Zhoushan Island. Many troopships returned from the north, stopping briefly at Hong Kong on their way back to India. Small numbers of troops were left at some of the new treaty ports, and 850 were left at Hong Kong.

The peace was fragile and volatile however, and in November it was again threatened when the Chinese started to rebuild the Bogue Forts until warned off by the Admiral at Hong Kong. Very aggressive pirates on the route between Hong Kong and Canton constantly vexed all shipping. In mid-November Sir Henry wrote the British merchants that they could resume trade at Canton, although he warned the traders that they could not set up trade at any of the new treaty ports until customs duties and officers were established there. Canton merchants and gentry who were upset by the terms of the treaty began publishing anonymous papers with inflammatory articles against the foreigners (*fangu*, foreign devils). Some Canton gentry wrote an aggressive and grandiose forgery purporting to come from an English “generalissimo”, apparently to foment anger within the always-volatile Canton citizens.

In Britain the *Spectator* of November 26 railed at the idea that any “glorious victory” had been achieved by Britain fighting an independent country for having seized illegal opium supplied to smugglers by the British government. It noted that a new scramble for similar treaty rights was going to be engaged by other nations including France and America, who were already sending ships of war to China despite widespread opinion against the entire British actions against China. Speculators in London’s stock markets were already dreaming of instant profits in the huge market of the Chinese population just as they are today, while cynics at the *Spectator* noted that of

China's four main export products, Britain now made more, better, and cheaper, cottons and porcelains.

### Opium opinions in Britain and the United States

The *Times* of London wrote about the opium trade, reporting that more than 200 merchants in northern British cities had written Sir Robert Peel urging the government to stop EIC production in India and to stop the illegal trade to China. The *Times* itself argued that terminating the EIC production in India would merely lead to other nations such as Turkey and Egypt growing more to be traded by American and French traders, to a drastic drop in price once the monopoly in Bengal was disbanded, and yielding overall an increase in Chinese consumption. Traders from other nations were already active, and although the *Times* deplored the harms of opium use in China, it saw only lost revenues and no change in consumption if Britain unilaterally declared the crop and its trade illegal. The British government in India was earning 10% of its budget (£1.5 million annually) from taxes on the trade. In Bombay the English press reminded everyone that the tax revenues to the government in India were so easily obtained from opium sales that there would be a financial crisis in Britain if opium growing were ended. The *Times* observed that the northern UK merchants might be arguing against the opium trade from some self-interest, as all were active in selling cotton and wool to China and could be expecting more Chinese money available for these products if it could no longer be used for opium.

Another article heaped ridicule on the idea that England should be turned into a giant Temperance Society in aid of the Emperor of China's Edict against opium, suggesting that preachers of this kind of benevolence were most zealous when its subject was farthest from home and preferably in a remote latitude. Editor John Slade of the *Canton Register* judged that the Emperor's motives in prohibiting opium were far from noble, ascribed instead to his fears of the trade imbalance in sycee (*xisi*, silver). The edict resulted only in an increase in smuggling rather than a drop in the trade because there was an active consumer demand, which was the main problem that had to be confronted in China. The excesses of whisky and gin drinking in Ireland and England were said to be a far more important social problem than Chinese opium use.

In the end, both China and Britain seemed resigned to letting the trade continue as contraband. Although Sir Henry wrote a fiery proclamation denouncing smuggling, at the same time he was allowing opium to be landed and stored in Hong Kong. There was a genteel hope that smuggling under the watchful eyes of the officials would be associated with less danger and conflict than if it were aggressively prosecuted and

driven underground into the hands of more vicious scoundrels on each side (Blake, 1999) p, 104. The Qing Empire was tired of the fight, and was resigned to “soothing the Barbarians”, rather than having them “run over our country like wild animals”. Britain was convinced that opening China to free trade was for the good of China and the west, and that the treaty would also open China to western values and practices to its benefit.

The LMS Board of Directors wrote in January 1843 of its deep concern of the “multiplied evils that have arisen from the opium trade with China”, and how the continued trade would be “highly derogatory to our national character”, and decided to ask the LMS China men for their ideas on how the LMS should work to suppress the trade. Dr. Hobson had already written an essay on opium in 1840 for the LMS, but expanded it in 1843.

In the United States there had been some support for the “opium war” from a former president. Late in his life John Quincy Adams made an address justifying the Opium war that the *Chinese Repository* printed in 1834 (Harris, 1991).

The growth of peaceful trade was threatened when on December 7, a fight between some lascars (Indian sailors) and Chinese triggered a riot in Canton in which all the British and Dutch warehouses were sacked and burned. The British traders again appealed to Sir Henry in Hong Kong to send military protection, which he refused, thus rousing their great indignation. He wrote instead that the Viceroy of Canton promised to remit all their losses after they were calculated, and that HM government in Hong Kong would pay out the reimbursements when bills were rightly submitted. In the meantime, the great fleet that had been assembled to demonstrate British power had been slowly dispersed, and 50 more vessels of the expedition left Hong Kong to return to India. Opium sales were continuing in Bengal, holding steady at about 14,000-18,000 chests per annum across 1836-41.

#### Sam Dyer makes progress in creating metal fonts for Chinese characters

One of the major mission tasks affected by the move from Malacca was the LMS printing press with its various systems for printing texts in Chinese, Malay, and English. Sam Dyer had discovered to his horror on returning to the Straits in early 1842, that the punch-cutting tools he had used to create a large stock of metal Chinese types in Malacca had all been stolen during his absence in England. He was very pleased, however, with his new small Chinese font types, which reduced the Bible to ¼ its former bulk. The size of Chinese characters cut from wood had been a huge handicap to printing any sizeable text; Morrison’s Dictionary had required 43 volumes because of this problem. By February 1843, after eight months of Dyer’s new work back in

Singapore, he had 244 new punches for these Chinese characters, and now had good fonts for printing in English, Chinese, and Malay.

More importantly, Dyer had also prepared a crucial document for printing Chinese with metal type; this was a list he had compiled of the 250 most frequently used characters arranged according to their radical number in the traditional way of a Chinese dictionary. This list allowed a printer to locate a desired character out of the massive set very quickly. Other mission printers began trying to create components of Chinese metal character types in which the smaller components of complex characters were made to fit into the larger character, either in a horizontal half or a vertical half, and Dyer's list was a tremendous aid in keeping all these elements sorted<sup>18</sup>.

Dyer's genius as a printer lay in his combination of talents. In adapting modern European printing methods to Chinese characters he had the skill to incorporate the special problems of characters with their separate components of 'radical' and its additional component, he had intimate knowledge of Chinese, skill at selecting the most important characters and their frequencies of use, and had the capacity for physical work on the detail of the type-foundry sufficient to ensure the quality of the characters (Ibrahim bin Ismail, 1984).

Dyer's work in creating this large set of punches, moulds and metal characters was extremely time-consuming, and by 1843 his Chinese punch cutters had taken eight months to cut only 244 punches of the new smaller-sized Chinese font. Across years of effort he was scraping for donations from the LMS and others to support the printers as they worked, and to pay for the metals used in the process, steel for the punches, copper for the matrices, and lead for the types.

The LMS Directors were generating rules to control expenditures but they had limited understanding of the realities of mission life half a world away and Dyer complained about a new LMS rule that required prior approval for any expense not already budgeted. He indignantly wrote that if that rule had been in place when Stronach had been deathly ill and needed money to go to Penang for the mountain air, he would have died before Dyer would have been able to secure approval for the expense. "The LMS has no idea how hard we economize, try to save money even from our allowance".

Now freed of the overbearing power of Evans' personality, Dyer was taking a more independent view of the state of the Christian books available for the China missions, and recognized that indeed a new version of the Bible was necessary. In

---

<sup>18</sup> Chinese Repository, 1845, March, 126.

Singapore he was already training a new staff of printers to create the new small Chinese fonts in his moveable metal format. He had devised a much better method for making the matrices, and his workers were carving about 40 steel punches per month. Dyer was happy: "I once thought I would die happy if I saw Negro Emancipation, and I saw it, then if only I could see China opened, and now I see that too, I could die happy". But the Singapore station was diverted to more concrete problems when John Stronach became very sick.

#### Effectiveness of the Straits mission work

By the time Legge left Malacca in May 1843, he knew that the quarter of a century of mission work there had yielded few results in terms of Chinese Christians for mission work, or in terms of educating students and the community away from ancient beliefs. At the same time however, the LMS press had created increasingly efficient printing methods for Chinese and Malay text, and had used these to print hundreds of thousands of documents, both Christian and educational. Legge knew some of the ACC students and LMS printers had been educated to a very high level that could lead to improvements in the mission to China, and he hoped that Hong Kong would be a more promising location for that.

Hong Kong represented a challenge to the decaying Qing dynasty and a huge opportunity for east and west to begin to learn about each other. Legge was now convinced that the effort to bring Christianity to China would have to be indirect, through educating Chinese in a broad curriculum as well as in Christian history and beliefs. These educated Chinese would become the means of bringing modern science, mathematics, and knowledge of the outside world to China, as well as a means of evangelizing of the giant nation, a task far beyond the capacities of Europeans.

#### Larger world events 1843-44

In 1843-44 there were significant events in the world beyond the Chinese coast. In Britain a Mr. M'Naghten transfixed the country with the assassination of Sir Robert Peel's personal secretary Mr. Drummond. M'Naghten was apprehended without difficulty, and was to lend his name for the next 180 years across the English-speaking world to the legal defence of "insanity", termed monomania at the time. The major North Atlantic powers were still skirmishing with each other directly or through proxies in remote regions. The Queen of Tahiti sought the protection of a British vessel during a conflict over flags with a ship of war from Tahiti's French colonial masters. Farther away, the US Navy lost the giant vessel *Missouri*, one of its only two steamers, in a huge fire in Gibraltar. British vessels tried to help and saved all the sailors, while in contrast,

Americans and Britons were in a low-scale war about the slave trade, which Britain had abolished in 1807. The *Hong Kong, late Canton Register* newspaper provided updates indignant about the persistent American slave trade. In 1843 it reported on a recent boarding of a slave ship by a British ship seeking to stop American slavers on the high seas, while Daniel Webster as U.S. Secretary of State, was arguing against any international controls on the trade. The Anti-Slavery group in England was planning to offer to purchase and free all the slaves in Texas, with Texas in turn to offer land at fair value to the emancipated.

The Mid-East was modernizing: The Pasha of Egypt was hiring European engineers to build a road across the desert, its country devastated by several years of locust and cattle plagues. Farther east, the desert nations were still engaged in fierce struggles. After murdering the Shah in Afghanistan, the Shah of Persia was minting new Afghani coinage showing his own face. Britain was rushing into its new industrial age, and successful experiments were being done with a “steam carriage”, while those with an “aerial carriage” were repeatedly failing. A sceptical editor coyly flourished that even if the Queen were to agree to make the first ascent in one, “we doubt if the ungrateful and disloyal machine would agree to go up”.

For a few hours on February 28, 1843, a remarkably bright comet appeared in the region and beyond, later named the Great March Comet and estimated as more than 20 times brighter than the Hale-Bopp comet of 1997, itself very bright. The Great Comet, the brightest in seven centuries, was observed south of the China Sea by Nantucket sailor Joseph Starbuck whose name appeared in Melville’s *Moby Dick* then was adopted in modern times as the name of a vast chain of coffee houses. Melville’s acquaintance with whaling and Starbucks had occurred when he had sailed with a New England whaler and jumped ship in the Marquesa Islands south-east of the South China Sea in 1842. While James Legge was struggling with the Malacca mission, Melville was captured by cannibals, had an affair with a tribal woman, and stole hidden glimpses of taboo rites in huts piled with human bones. In Australia the comet caused great alarm in among the aboriginals, and was seen as far north in America as Connecticut. In 1844 in the United States Samuel Morse sent his first formal telegram, from the Capital in Washington to Baltimore.

#### Part 4 Busy in Hong Kong, with politics, poverty, scandal, and illness

Hong Kong was full of excitement about the political settlement with China and many changes were expected. On January 10, 1843 new Chinese Imperial Commissioner Ilibu arrived in Canton to join Sir Henry Pottinger in final talks about tariffs and trade regulations. Despite the treaty, imperial and local sentiment among the gentry of Canton was still very strongly opposed to foreigners. The three Cantonese officials who had presided over the city and province just prior to Ilibu's arrival had all been sentenced by the Emperor to be jailed, degraded in rank, and decapitated because of their failure "to attack and exterminate the English". They were accused of wasting money and "sitting still and losing opportunities of engaging the enemy", according to the Imperial Edict of November 21, 1842.

#### Chapter 19 Diplomat Qiying enters negotiations

Ilibu was old (82) and sick, and on March 4, 1843 he died in the middle of the trade talks, eventually to be replaced by a new commissioner, Qiying (Keying). Ilibu's death forced the suspension of trade talks until his successor arrived. Rumours in Canton hinted Ilibu might have been poisoned, or that he had broken his own head with his ink-stone in disgust at his tasks. Anti-foreign gangs were still active in there and in mid-January one gang was caught with bags of gunpowder trying to blow up a bridge connecting the little sandbank island of Shamian and its foreign warehouses with the southern suburb of Canton. Despite these somewhat disorganized conflicts, in March high officials in Canton began making regular visits to John Morrison in the English factory there, arousing jealousy among the employees of the old co-hongs who were losing their roles as insiders in transactions with foreigners.

#### The Colony of Hong Kong in 1843

Queen Victoria gave Hong Kong status as a Colony of Great Britain under Governor Sir Henry Pottinger on 5 April 1843, to take effect as soon as the ratified Treaties were exchanged. In anticipation of this the British had been actively using the island for several years, constructing roads and buildings with many Chinese moving there to do this work. Court sessions were held on a British boat in the harbour in August 1839 to deal with five British sailors accused of housebreaking and assault on a Chinese family in Hong Kong. All were found guilty, fined, and sentenced to hard labour. Capt. Elliot posted a notice of the principles and conditions of land grants in Hong Kong in May 1841 according to the Chuenbi agreement, which later failed to be ratified.

Once the Treaty of Nanjing had been signed rapid developments followed on the island. On June 17, 1843 Sir Henry appointed 43 men as Justices of the Peace for the new colony, set up a simple system of justice under Orders in Council from Britain, and on June 26 he named the small town-site Victoria in honour of the Queen. Queen Victoria had married Prince Albert in 1840, had survived the first of many assassination attempts in the same year including three in 1842, and two weeks after giving Hong Kong status as a colony delivered her third of nine children. With the new treaty, Hong Kong suddenly became the new centre of British trading to China. The massive role that Macau had played as the trading base rapidly weakened as the British moved their offices, mansions, clubs, and warehouses to Hong Kong, equally as quickly followed by Chinese tradesmen, shippers, and merchants.

In the new colony, Governor Sir Henry quickly began to organize more land leases, with a request to all who were holding land in April to send the particulars to him to decide upon ownership. This upset all those who had obtained leases in Capt. Elliot's auction in June 1841, and they protested that Sir Henry could not bring their ownership into question. He ruled that no new buildings were to be constructed until land tenure decisions were made and more roads mapped out. As part of his attempt to bring order to the land run he granted an eastern hillside property to the Morrison Education Society for use in building a school, a location still named Morrison Hill, south of Wanchai Road in Wanchai district. Morrison Hill soon also became the site of the first LMS hospital, set up by Benjamin Hobson, and James and Mary were soon underway to join Benjamin.

#### Qiyong and Sir Henry meet and have a big party

During the gap months after Ilibu's death interrupted the trade talks, the small town of Victoria on Hong Kong had been tense with the delays. Traders feared more mob actions in Canton, and the lack of trade rules contributed to a lawless atmosphere that affected shipping, the life's blood of the new town, even though Sir Henry had offered to cooperate with Chinese officials in January to suppress pirate activity. In May pirates attacked Rev. Sam Brown's house, stabbing him then taking two hours to strip out everything of value over two trips. Finally Imperial Commissioner Qiyong arrived in Canton on June 4, 1843. He was the new Governor-General of Canton province and the Governor of Canton city. John Morrison accompanied two British officials to greet him there and prepare for the ratification visit to Hong Kong. The colony was very excited, and on June 22 Qiyong went to Hong Kong to exchange the ratified copies of the Treaty with Sir Henry Pottinger.



This was a fantastical event. The visit started with the arrival of five Chinese war junks bearing Qiyong and an assortment of mandarins, servants, soldiers and followers. A coach of four greys was ready to carry Qiyong in a grand procession through the town of Victoria, to be followed by days of ceremonies, a Royal Salute, and private and public social events between the two retinues. The mandarins who came with Qiyong included two who had visited earlier, Chinese Judicial Secretary Wang, and Heyling, the Manchu General for Canton. Qiyong asked to be carried in a sedan chair instead of the open carriage, which the other mandarins then occupied. A royal progress through the town followed. A gorgeous glowing painting now in the Hong Kong Museum of Art commemorated this arrival and greeting by Sir Henry. The official signing was set up as a grand occasion, and following the key ceremony Pottinger was officially appointed as Governor of the new colony.

At the main banquet in Victoria on 26 June, much liquor was consumed, and typical of celebrations that included many Scots, many songs were sung by all present, including Sir Henry. Commissioner Qiyong matched him by singing Manchu songs. British captain Henry Bruce of the 76-gun flagship *Agincourt* wrote his daughter about the Chinese officials at the banquet who “played a capital fork and knife, and carried off their liquor like regular toppers” (Bruce, 2000). By late evening everyone ended up playing Chinese drinking games. At a count, pairs of men would quickly throw out varied numbers of fingers to be guessed by each opponent; the loser had to drink a cup of wine. The result was complete hilarity and an expectation of hugely cordial relations even though many details about trade had yet to be negotiated. Qiyong became a great favourite of the Hong Kong community, regarded as having a very “elevated” character, and being a strong and watchful leader of the often fractious Chinese merchants of Canton.

As part of the Chinese entourage, officials Wang and Heyling were also greeted with great ceremony and taken to beautiful accommodations. They began taking daily carriage rides, and the most beautiful women in Hong Kong were invited to meet them at a final social gathering, where Wang quickly became their favourite. They were “in raptures at... his polished, bland, and truly gentlemanly behaviour”. The *Friend of China* newspaper raved that “His bright eyes, black moustaches, handsome intelligent face, graceful person, small and alabaster-white hands, would, irrespective of his high talents make him a Lion of the greatest magnitude in the first circles of London society, should the Emperor ever permit him to realize his wish of paying a visit to Great Britain”. The mandarins were also invited on board *HMS Cornwallis* to observe a ceremony in which Sir Henry invested Vice Admiral Sir William Parker with the insignia of the Grand Order

of the Bath, on behalf of the Queen. The only people alarmed by the mandarins' visit were the Chinese who had migrated to Hong Kong, for they feared major retributions against their Chinese families in China from these senior mandarins. In the meantime, Sir Henry's exquisite diplomacy was quickly casting the recent hostilities into history.

This huge public event had been preceded by less official visits. In one, two Qing officials visited Sir Henry then went up to the MES mission school to meet the Chinese students there and listen to them sing songs accompanied by Rev. Brown on the piano (Author, 1843a). Two weeks after the formal Treaty visit, James Legge would arrive to set up the LMS mission and the program of studies that would shape his life.

### The Qing dynasty considers the Barbarians

James and Mary reached Hong Kong at a time when the Qing and British empires were finally beginning to learn how to deal with each other. Each had a firm conviction of the superiority of its own culture, language, and traditions, although the British clearly had a more international perspective. The Qing Emperor still described all foreigners as "barbarians" (*yi*) in the official edicts and did not agree to drop this language for another 20 years. By 1844 even the missionaries had become so used to this term that they sometimes used it to describe themselves in routine comments on public affairs in their missionary journal, the *Chinese Repository*. Although a small war had ended, the two empires still had little understanding of each other. Further wars with each other and major internal rebellions erupted while James and Mary lived in Hong Kong, and well after Legge's final retirement and eventual death in 1897 just as the Boxers began their murderous rebellion in northern China.

The culture of the educated Qing elite was very different from the world in which James and Mary had been educated. In China members of the educated class were not allowed to discuss anything concerning the government, were not allowed to form associations relating to public policy, and were not educated or interested in anything resembling mathematics, science, or the world beyond China. Scholars and mandarins could not do the simplest arithmetic calculations even as late as the dying days of the Qing in 1911 (Johnstone, 1934), because only traders (a low class in the Confucian status hierarchy) were expected to know how to do calculations on the abacus<sup>19</sup>. The nation

---

<sup>19</sup> Reginald Johnstone, the British tutor of the last emperor of the Qing dynasty commented in his book about the demise of the dynasty, that it was a striking feature of the educational system of future scholars, that simple arithmetic was not taught. The consequence was that even the most elevated scholars and nobles had less conception of simple calculations than a seven-year -old English schoolboy. He went on to

suffered a degenerating criminal justice system distorted by bribes, a system that officially incorporated torture because confessions were required, employed horrendous punishments, and lacked any civil or commercial law to use in the case of disputes. About the only aspect of Chinese social behaviour that many Protestant missionaries found laudable was the absence of prostitutes in the streets (Lovett, 1899).

#### The five Treaty ports and missionaries

The Treaty of Nanking had opened five “treaty ports” for foreign trade, and the LMS and other missionaries quickly established themselves in each of the treaty ports. Protestant missions were typically sponsored by a society in a specific homeland including many American, and represented a specific religious denomination. The missionaries quickly set up schools, churches, hospitals, and printing presses. They began publishing works in Chinese for their intended congregations, and missionary journals to provide a forum for the exchange of literary, historical, religious, political, and other secular information. Shanghai in particular was a growing community. Prior to its opening, Shanghai had been a small fishing port on the south side of the mouth of the massive Yangzi river. With its new role as a trading port and with the official creation of a foreign settlement, the “Foreign Concession”, Chinese and foreign traders rushed in and created a large and thriving international trading port.

Although the missionaries all recognized that they shared more values than any small doctrinal matters that might separate them, over time each mission location evolved a unique style that led to problems when they tried to undertake joint projects. This led to nearly a decade of strife after they decided to do a new Chinese version of the Bible. They all realized that translating the Bible was a task too big for any one mission and planned to share the work, with each setting taking on a specific section of the book and sending its delegate to meetings when the work was done. The individual styles that had evolved in each setting became a growing problem that affected this plan from the mid-1840s and even after its publication and until after Legge’s death in 1897, over the question of the best Chinese term to use to translate the idea of God.

---

point out that while the abacus was used with great skill by those in commerce, this was considered too crass and petty for a true gentleman. In addition, the abacus suffers from the important failing that an error in calculation can never be investigated after the fact, for the act of doing the calculations demolishes the evidence of the processes en route.

### Hong Kong politics and trade

In July 1843 a small amount of normal trade began again at Canton. Foreign traders were urged by editorials to begin learning Chinese, as the former monopoly of the Canton hong was broken and traders would be dealing with a wide range of Chinese merchants without any English language skills. Qiying even recommended to the Emperor that foreigners working in Chinese cities longer than e.g. six months, be required to show some competence in the Chinese language (Author, 1844b), a huge reversal of thinking for the empire that had previously ruled teaching foreigners the language was a capital offence.

Some important things were still very unsettled however, in ways that eventually led to a renewal of open hostilities across the next decade. The Chinese merchants were worried about buying too much because they no longer held a monopoly on providing foreign goods to the north of China now that northern trading ports were officially opened. Some Chinese translators were charging the foreign merchants huge fees for translating simple accounts, basing their charges on a percentage of the value of the cargoes rather than for the actual translation task, and the merchants in Hong Kong were in a fury about these extortions. The hong were regaining monopolistic control of the trade in Canton by creating new rules, refusing to accept any translated document unless their own linguists had done it.

While the Canton government officials had agreed to reimburse the foreign traders for all the \$320,000 damage caused to their warehouses in the riots of December 1842, the Hong Kong merchants were agitated to learn that these officials had “squeezed” the hong merchants to pay this out of the Consoo fund, their own commercial trust fund. This was hong money to be used to pay ordinary commercial debts owing to individual British merchants. In this way the Canton officials avoided paying out of government funds as they had promised, and the hong were improperly being called upon to use their own commercial money for expenses caused by the inaction of the Canton police.

In Canton, the hong were writing petitions to the Emperor begging not to be required to pay the costs of the opium that Lin had destroyed, arguing they faced bankruptcy. The British traders were sympathetic to this, for the confiscation of the opium had not been done by the hong but by the Canton government. By September the hong were refusing to accept cargo from the foreign traders, who then suffered losses for failure to deliver at stipulated deadlines. The hong were doing this in order to squeeze the traders and also as pressure against their own government for still insisting that the hong pay the government reparations of four million dollars that the Canton authorities had promised to the British. The actual wealth of the hong was open to

question. Howqua, the chief merchant among the hong, had just died at the age of 75, leaving a fortune of 15 million dollars. His descendants and other hong merchants were fearful that Qing officials would seize all their ready assets as these trade quarrels staggered onward. Many emptied their warehouses to be free of the risk of confiscations.

#### Traders and missionaries: scepticism and mutual need

James Legge arrived on the edge of China when the British traders and government's views about missions were ambivalent but mostly negative, and this soon yielded a problem. The EIC had always considered the missionaries to China as a huge nuisance. In its early years in the China trade the EIC had been completely opposed to all missionary activity, and would not even take missionaries on its ships as paying passengers. An early trader ranted, "The sending out of missionaries into our Eastern possessions (is) the maddest most extravagant, most costly, most indefensible project which has ever been suggested by a moon struck fanatic! Such a scheme is pernicious, imprudent, useless, harmful, dangerous, profitless, fantastic" (Latourette, 1929/1966) p. 279. Others described missionaries as "fools, madmen, tinkers, Calvinists and schismatics", against which charge they were defended in a famous essay (Southey, 1809). Some traders within the company, however, were devout Christians, and individual captains of EIC ships would offer free passage to missionaries they favoured, including Abeel in 1830.

Despite their general scepticism, from early on the traders had to rely on missionaries as translators because they were almost the only Britons with enough dedicated interest to master written Chinese. Robert Morrison had been the earliest, and much of his translation work for the EIC also directly aided his mission plans. He received an excellent salary and had grants to support his creation of the first bilingual dictionary, and this help supported all his translations of Christian texts. Overall however, the traders were impatient about missionaries. Not only were the EIC and the later free traders in the legitimate and the opium trade opposed to missions, but so were the two first English newspapers in Canton. The editors of the *Chinese Courier*, and the *Canton Register* were both sceptical of religion and often printed attacks against missions.

The relationships between the British government, the big trading houses in Hong Kong, and the missionaries were complex and changed over time. Protestant missionaries in Africa and the Caribbean were actively anti-slavery, busy creating strident arguments for the abolition of slavery in Britain. In the Pacific, missionaries were against the opium trade, and by the time that Hong Kong was ceded to Britain in

1843, opium had become a vast source of trading profits to independent trading companies. The Pacific traders' early distaste for missionaries meant that Robert Morrison in 1807 had to get to his Canton mission via the United States rather than using the conventional sailing route on traders going south around the Cape of Good Hope and passing India and the Straits Settlements, with their complements of British traders in each location.

By the time that James and Mary arrived in Hong Kong the EIC no longer had a monopoly on trade with China, and the old Qing rules that had in effect prevented all foreign sales except opium, had been changed to allow free trade and Chinese purchases of many foreign products. In the capitalist flush that filled Hong Kong with both Chinese and British traders, a more mellow attitude was developing toward missionaries. By then both Robert Morrison and his son John had been very helpful for many years in translating for both the EIC and for various diplomatic missions. It was obvious that a bilingual educated populace was to the advantage of all elements of the community.

Mission men such as Legge regarded one major leg of their task to be educational, and this coincided with the secular needs of the traders. In time, relations between the Hong Kong trading companies, the government, and the missionaries became cordial, although the expatriate community preserved many of Britain's class distinctions against the working-class nonconformist mission men such as Legge, in favour of those from the established Church of England.

### Chapter 20 Life in Hong Kong: crime, scandal, and promise

Despite these developing improvements in the acceptance of missions in the community, the next two years were a fierce mixture of misery and achievement for Legge and his family. The miseries were mostly personal, with illness, death, and poverty, topped up by public crime and scandal, while the achievements were more public.

#### The Legges arrive in Hong Kong

James was 27 years old when he and his young family reached Macau in early July 1843 with Capt. Brewer on the sailing ship *Ellen* from Singapore. The vessel handled consignments for Jardine Matheson & Co., one of the new trading companies thriving since the expiry of the EIC trade monopoly. On July 6 Legge chartered a small cutter to take Mary, their children, their amah, students, printers, livestock, and printing press from Macau to Hong Kong to set up the new mission. They had missed all the imperial festivities celebrating the treaty, by only two weeks.

They arrived the same day they sailed, lucky in comparison with another vessel that left Macau about the same time carrying passengers including a man with \$3,000 dollars for land purchases in Hong Kong. Pirates raided that lorch, all were killed, the money was stolen, and the ship burned. On the same day, 6 July 1843, botanist Robert Fortune (1812-1880) landed at Hong Kong after four months at sea, to begin a vast enterprise of botanical collections in China that led to the introduction of more than 120 plants to western gardens across his fabled career of science and adventure.

James and Mary arrived in Hong Kong when the new colony was filled with excitement at the new arrangements. It had an atmosphere of great new beginnings, and Legge and his establishment were joining it from the very outset. He was delighted with the sights. Consistent with Scots' preferences for settling on rocks in other colonies (including Canada), he saw beauty in the steep rocky hills surrounding a tranquil bay; "I seemed to feel that I had found at last the home for which I had left Scotland" (J. Legge, 1872b).

#### Hong Kong in 1843: *feng shui* predicts it will fail

Paintings done at that time show Hong Kong as a mostly barren rocky island. There were a few small Chinese ports for about 3,000 inhabitants, in addition to a boat-living population of around 2,000 that combined the occupations of fishing and piracy. The town of Victoria consisted of one street along the waterfront with "hastily erected" houses scattered here and there up the hillside, but Legge was captivated. Many small trading companies had become established along the water on one main east-west

street, Queen's Road. A few main streets paralleled it southward up the mountains that pinned the town to a narrow four-mile strip. There was an Indian regiment from Madras, a parade ground, a prison, a dispensary, a small church, a post-office, the "Canton bazaar", and a district to the east of town occupied by troops.

The Governor ruled out of a small house probably just below today's Peak Tram station. On a hill farther east, the main buildings were MES School run by Sam Brown, and Benjamin Hobson's LMS hospital. On the north waterfront side of Queen's Road large lots had been sold for use as warehouses, and granite piers and granite foundations began to appear, supporting handsome new brick buildings. Other streets were quickly developing Chinese houses and large temporary constructions called mat-sheds, with straw matting covering a quickly built bamboo lattice. The Chinese merchants mostly traded in salt initially, while the British mostly traded in opium, but trade in both was quite limited. Letters, cash, and financial materials arrived from the United Kingdom only twice a year, through an irregular, complicated, and haphazard delivery system of "chit-books" (J. Legge, 1872b).

The *Canton Press* of 1842 predicted that Hong Kong would never thrive for the British because of its difficult climate and topography. In the winter it would be subjected to the fiercely cold north winds because the town faced north without any protection, while in the summer it would become sweltering because its southerly wall of mountains would prevent the cooling southwest breezes of the monsoon from bringing any relief. The newspaper noted that the summer of 1841 had already shown that Hong Kong would be devastated by fever each summer. Canton's *feng shui* masters had assured the Emperor that Hong Kong could never thrive because its *feng shui* was very inauspicious; it was full of 'malign breath' (Author, 1873-1874). In Canton the foreign factories had been deliberately placed on Shamian Island because the *feng shui* masters said this was the worst position and no foreign trade could flourish from there.

#### Legge creates the Hong Kong mission

Legge was faced with a number of urgent tasks, starting with his need for housing for his family, staff, and students. His longer-term tasks involved setting up an LMS mission house, the press, the ACC, and creating a school and finding students. He also needed to build a congregation for Chinese and English, provide regular worship services and pastoral care, and do street preaching in Chinese. He embarked on these tasks with his typical driven energy during the days, while from very early every morning he continued to study Chinese texts, working toward his great scholarly plan.



Within two days of the arrival of the Legges in Hong Kong the colony received the translation of an Imperial proclamation from Commissioner Qiying to the Chinese people of Canton. His proclamation outlined the new treaty and promised new trade regulations that would include all foreign nations. In addition it announced pardons for the Chinese who had worked for British or who had sold them supplies during the hostilities. The war and new treaty had not conferred any special trade benefits solely to the British, and the new regulations included American, French and other traders in a newly cosmopolitan arrangement. English editorials in the Macau press in August expressed the hope that these other traders would recognize mutually friendly feelings and the “meek and submissive nature” of the Chinese, and not attempt to abuse them in the new trading relationships.

On August 1 Sir Henry published an official proclamation in the Hong Kong *Gazette* stating that opium trading was illegal in China and that any traders thinking of moving their opium operations to the new northern treaty ports should understand that no British consul would come to their aid if they encountered any problems. Some traders had construed the new tariffs as allowing opium to be set at 5%, the rate for all articles not explicitly listed, and they were planning new ventures north. British opium smuggling vessels and one American smuggler were voluntarily leaving Whampoa, but other foreign smugglers were not. Some British hoped that the Chinese would re-arm the Bogue Forts and create an effective river police to stop the whole trade, which now used the island of Lintin as its headquarters. Lintin was located in the middle of the giant Pearl River estuary one-third of the way from Hong Kong up toward the traditional Whampoa anchorage outside Canton.

The summer of James and Mary’s arrival in 1843 in Hong Kong was hellish. It was fiercely hot, a typhoon threatened on August 8, and by mid-August “Hong Kong fever” was decimating the civilian and military population. Affluent Britons fled to Macau to try and recover because of a common belief that direct exposure to the sun was the main cause of the fever. Newspapers regularly reported on the vanishing of various ships that left one or another local port and were never seen again, universally assumed to have been captured by pirates. Both cholera and smallpox broke out in Xiamen.

In Canton, the Chinese traders returned to their old tricks and refused to do any trade unless they were provided with extra fees and taxes, to the fury of the foreign traders because these fees were explicitly forbidden in the new treaty. More positively, by the end of the summer, the first in a line of new regular mail packet ships began to arrive from London after a trip of only four months, and trade was developing with the four northern treaty ports even though the formal rules had not yet been settled.

### The LMS men convene in Hong Kong in August

Along the China coast the LMS men were on their way from Macau and Ningbo to Hong Kong for a meeting in August 1843 to review the LMS China mission assignments and administration. Drs. Benjamin Hobson (now 27) and Lockhart (32) sold the Macau hospital to American missionaries. Legge met Dyer and Stronach in Singapore in early June, where they were begged for favours by Mr. Young, a man who had taught Malay in Medhurst's Jakarta mission and had been dismissed when London closed it. They decided to let him work as an assistant to the Chinese mission in Singapore and explained themselves to London, then Young changed his mind. They ended up providing him with a Chinese teacher and free housing. Within weeks Dyer's wife gave birth to a son, "but another little flower has been transplanted from our garden below to the paradise of God above", as his 18-month old son died.

### William Milne's astonishing trip

Young Milne, 28, decided to get to the Hong Kong meeting from his location farther north in China in an entirely illegal way, taking a daring inland route through China, knowing that the Qing still prohibited all foreign travel within China. He had come out on the ship with Legge and Benjamin Hobson, splitting from Legge at Java to join Dr. Lockhart in Macau. After the hostilities ended in 1841 Milne headed north from Macau to Dinghai, recently occupied by the British fleet. A Chinese acquaintance soon invited Milne to visit him in the mainland city of Ningbo, where he lived as the sole Englishman for seven months untouched by any kind of harm while he practised speaking Chinese. When the Treaty of Nanking was signed in August 1842 the British were "in high glee" over it, and the local Chinese were also pleased; leading citizens visited him late that year to express their good will. In July 1843, he was summoned by the LMS men to attend the crucial meeting in Hong Kong in which they were going to plan out the entire LMS mission effort in China.

Milne, now fluent in Chinese, decided to do the journey using an inland route to travel from Ningbo to Canton, then on to Hong Kong. To disguise himself Milne dressed in summer Chinese clothing complete with a broad-brimmed straw hat, calico shoes, a fan, an umbrella, chopsticks, and an "extemporized tail of horsehair" hanging from his shaven head to mimic the required Manchu queue. He and his Chinese teacher Woo headed on a road along the river toward Shaoxing then embarked on a barge for their event-filled trip. Dr. Lockhart gave this foolish plan his blessing and in their heady youthful enthusiasm they believed the plan might work because the young man had become such a fluent speaker of the Ningbo dialect. Milne expected to arrive in Hong

Kong in about 30 days and met his target. By the time he safely arrived in Hong Kong on 14 August, he had travelled through 28 walled cities and 17 unwallied towns across three provinces and 16 counties, covering more than 1,300 miles. Young Milne had created history and a scandal, and the mission community in Canton was agog at his daring.

Starting on August 10, Legge, Sam Dyer, Benjamin Hobson, Walter Medhurst, and Alexander and John Stronach began meetings in Hong Kong to plan the LMS China mission. They established a committee chairman and secretary, and invited John Morrison as guest because of his interest in the mission and his unique position in the colony. William Milne joined them four days later, having survived his unique trip across China.

#### The LMS men plan for the China missions

All the LMS properties at Jakarta and Malacca had been sold and Penang was to be closed and Beighton placed on a pension. The committee decided to close down the Jakarta mission vacated by Medhurst, the Singapore Chinese mission run by Alexander Stronach, and to retain Mr. Young, an old assistant from Jakarta to finish his Malay work in Singapore. They also decided new placements for China. Legge and Hobson were to stay in Hong Kong, Legge in connection with the ACC, and Hobson in connection with the Medical Missionary Society of China, the MMSC. Both were to do mission work in addition to their professional work with these institutions. Alexander Stronach was to go to Xiamen, his brother John along with Sam Dyer was to go to Fuzhou, while the locations for Medhurst, Milne and Dr. Lockhart were not entirely decided between Ningbo or Shanghai, both of which would need additional LMS men. This plan immediately hit a roadblock.

#### A big setback when their application for a land grant fails

Despite all the construction in Hong Kong, Legge and the other LMS men faced a major real estate problem as soon as they tried to establish the mission. They sent a letter to Sir Henry asking for a land grant for the ACC on the basis of its educational functions. They wanted the land to be large enough to provide buildings including classrooms, dormitories, housing for 2-3 missionaries, and offices and workrooms for a printing press. They realized they had a significant handicap in the recent history of the ACC and its failure to provide government translators, so they justified their application by less direct evidence. They outlined key elements of the ACC history to show that its graduates were skilled linguists who had taken on important translation jobs in the Straits during periods when the ACC was running well with sufficient staff.

They proposed that “Dr. Legge” would be the Principal, assisted by a new science master, and local trustees would supervise the operation to ensure it was effective. John Morrison, well known to Sir Henry and widely respected for his talents and integrity, was to be one of the local trustees. The proposal included an ambitious plan to have the MES School and mission schools in all the treaty ports to serve as preparatory schools feeding graduates into the senior academy that the ACC was to represent. They also proposed that European adults wishing to learn Chinese could live in residence while they studied, as well as European children at a certain level of scholarship. John Morrison gave the men a cash advance of \$1,000 to develop their plans, in expectation that the old “government” grant of \$1,200 would be put back in place now that the ACC was in competent hands.

Within three days, on 18 August Legge was devastated by Sir Henry’s peremptory rejection of their request. He wrote that he had no authority to grant such free lands, that the ACC subsidy was now directed to the MES in place of the ACC, which was itself now open to question. All this was based on the history of the ACC under Evans’ leadership, in which it had been singularly unable to produce bilingual graduates of use to the government. Deeply dismayed by the government’s failure to provide the anticipated grant of land, the LMS men gradually shifted their thinking over days of meetings and decided the ACC would provide only theological education for ministers in training within the Protestant denominations, and would not provide secular education to the community if the community could not provide support for that public service.

Elaborate plans were created in which the ACC was reconfigured into its narrower focus as a seminary to be reflected in a new name: “The Theological Seminary of the London Missionary Society’s missions to China”. The men made 33 resolutions to cover all aspects of its operation including governance, with significant powers given to a local committee of trustees. Legge was to be the secretary to the committee and John Morrison and Dr. Hobson were to be joint treasurers. John missed all the meetings after Sir Henry’s refusal of the application for land, because he became increasingly ill with fever. Meanwhile the committee members decided that the LMS mission men in China had full authority as sole Trustees of the ACC, to make all plans for it and to manage the funds from its sale in Malacca. A plan was worked out to create preparatory schools to provide basic education to Chinese students who could attend the ACC if they passed examinations. The ACC’s spoken Chinese language was to be the northern dialect, mandarin.

The men made decisions about the locations of the LMS presses from the now-closed missions, with Hong Kong assigned a central role in future printing. They

planned a series of regular LMS meetings, assigned powers to local committees, outlined voting powers for new arrivals, and assigned authority for sudden health-care decisions if a mission man or his family needed urgent travel. All medical bills were to be paid for by the LMS, and mission families were urged to rent rather than build homes, all at the expense of the LMS. This frantic bout of decision-making went on for two sessions daily for two weeks, all summarized in a giant report to the Directors in London on August 26. The Directors had already launched a special drive to raise money to expand the missions to China, raising £5,424 in two months in 1842 (R. L. O'Sullivan, 1980).

Problem; London wants the Theological Seminary to go to Shanghai

Unknown to the Hong Kong LMS men, in London in early August an LMS committee had recommended that a Theological Seminary be created in Shanghai, on the speculative and flawed reasoning that Hong Kong was “not likely to become an important station of our society, inasmuch as its population will for a great length of time be limited”. In addition the London committee considered that students in Shanghai and Ningbo would “be of a better class” than those in Hong Kong, who represented new immigrants rather than children of established families. It wanted the ACC to teach in mandarin, which would not be native to the Cantonese Chinese of Hong Kong but was widely used in Shanghai, which meant the theological students could do practice preaching in nearby towns. The London plan was to use the interest on the funds generated by Legge’s sale of the ACC Malacca properties to build up a capital fund for eventual construction of this Shanghai ACC.

A minority report contested this plan, explaining that Hong Kong offered the safety and protection of British law, while in Shanghai the machinations of the Roman Catholic Church would yield many problems. This minority pointed out that Hong Kong had the funds and had access to students who could be trained safe from persecution. They argued that work in Shanghai would not be protected from Chinese persecution until there was some kind of new Imperial Edict of Toleration for Christianity and repudiation of the existing anti-Christian edicts. If a Shanghai seminary were destroyed in anti-Christian attacks the entire enterprise would be ruined, and they pleaded that such suffering would happen if the LMS did not pay attention to past history in China. In contrast, a seminary in Hong Kong would be under permanent protection of the rule of law.

The Hong Kong men were incensed when they learned that the LMS Directors in London contemplated taking over the money Legge had been able to generate from the ACC sale in Malacca, and without consulting Legge or the LMS men gathered in Hong

Kong, were planning to usurp it and pass it to Shanghai. The Hong Kong men wrote sternly about the need for a legal opinion for such a conversion of moneys they had husbanded, and its assignment to purposes they felt were unwise and unfair. Not only were they faced with threats from a coolly indifferent colonial government, their own mission society was undermining their plans.

#### Hong Kong deaths from fevers

When James and Mary arrived in July, Hong Kong was still in an extremely primitive state, and it soon became apparent that it was unhealthful to the point of being deadly. The city was turbulent with growth and suffering from epidemics that came with initial crowding, malarial swamps, and incomplete public works for water and drains. It was swept with periodic cholera plagues and epidemics of fevers. Rough huts for even officers were set up in swampy land, and there were open sewers everywhere giving off their stench. Over time there were major efforts to build a good water and sewer system and clever schemes to grow quick-growing vegetation to improve the climate. These led to major improvements in the health of the people, but in 1843 the situation was dangerous and mortality was high.

The fever deaths in Hong Kong that summer were massive and devastating. The local newspaper described “Hong Kong fever” as a combination of the jungle fever of India with the yellow fever of the West Indies. It was not identified as malaria although it probably was. From May to October that first year, malaria killed 24% of the troops and 10% of the civilians in Hong Kong. A barracks had been built in low land near a swamp, and although there was no knowledge then about the role of mosquitoes as a vector of malaria, even the most robust residents realized that swampy location was dangerous, believing the bad air was the source of infection.

Legge had already discovered in Sumatra that he barely reacted to mosquito bites, so the nuisance of mosquitoes did not deter him in his general movements the way it might others. This indifference was to cost him years of severe fever and liver attacks that were probably malaria, and eventually to near-blindness for a period from overdoses of quinine, which was by then used generally to reduce fevers. In Hong Kong in the summer of 1843 however, the terrible fever took an unexpected victim that devastated Legge and his mission mates.

#### John Morrison dies a sudden tragic death

Within six weeks of their arrival, Legge was horrified by the sudden death of his friend John Morrison on August 29. John died of the “Hong Kong fever” when he was only 28 years old, just one year older than Legge. He was young and healthy, yet the

fever killed him in six days. John was a remarkable young man, seen as precociously talented since his earliest years, and admired by government, businessmen, and mission men alike for his skills and good character. Son of pioneer LMS man Robert Morrison, John's peerless skills in written and oral Chinese had been recognized and admired by the entire trading and political communities in both languages. He was just beginning what everyone expected to be an outstanding career in government service in the colony.

John's death was devastating to the small town of Victoria, for in addition to his great talents and his goodwill, everyone in both the Chinese and British communities experienced his personal charm. John had been an incredibly talented, hard-working and responsible young man, essentially educating himself from about age 14 in Malacca and Canton. Born in Macau and soon sent home to England with his mother, he had returned to Macau at age 6 before being sent back to England two years later for schooling before returning to China to Malacca age 12 to study at the ACC. In his letters to his father from the ACC he often wrote in Chinese to clarify a point. At age 15 in 1830, his father sent him to Canton where the traders there immediately hired him as a translator for the substantial salary of \$1,200 per month (£300 per month), a fabulous salary at a time when the LMS men were getting that per year if they had a family to support. John also set up printing presses for his father's work. On his father's death in 1834 he was still a teenager, alone in Canton, attempting to operate the Press for business and mission purposes in its challenging and dangerous environment.

When his father Robert died suddenly in the midst of important Chinese-British negotiations in 1834, John, only 19, was immediately appointed to replace his father as the Chinese Secretary (translator) to the British government. He also took on the new job of Interpreter to the Superintendent of Trade at Canton just as all Lord Napier's negotiations and then the first open war between Britain and China developed.

In 1843 Hong Kong John had just been named the Colonial Secretary for the new government, and along with forty-one other gentlemen was appointed as a new Justice of the Peace. In addition, on August 21 Sir Henry appointed John as member of the Legislative and Executive Councils of the colony, entitled to the title of Honourable. Everyone realized that John's skills were going to be crucial in all the detailed trade negotiations.

But by August 24 John Morrison was so severely ill with Hong Kong fever that he was rushed from Canton to Macau. To the horror of everyone in civil and political life, he died there suddenly on August 29. He was not yet 30, yet the fate of the entire British trade with China had been vested in his skills. His stepmother had died a year earlier in Canton at 51, almost full-term in a pregnancy, when cholera killed her and her foetus

within 14 hours. At the time he died John was the support of nearly all his family in England including his sister and a brother, and his stepmother and her three children, not apparently well-cared for by the LMS despite its official protestations in 1834 of its intentions when his revered father had died prematurely.

John also seemed to have a talent for friendship and goodness, and the obituaries were lavish even by Victorian standards. A torrent of words in the local press praised his courtesy, his friendliness, his brilliance as a scholar of Chinese, and described him as “a Prince” and a brother to all. John was buried in the Protestant cemetery in Macau in a ceremony attended by virtually all the foreign residents, as well as many Portuguese and Chinese, with Legge’s friend young Milne helping<sup>20</sup>. Everyone in Hong Kong knew that John left no estate other than a wonderful Chinese library collected by him and his father.

Horrified by John’s death the LMS men had to struggle on, and in September tussled with Sir Henry over the possibility of a grant of land for the college and over their intention to place mission stations in the new treaty ports. They were also daunted by their recognition that a new translation of the Bible was needed to remedy serious problems with the decades-old Morrison version. They realized this was a massive task that they could not undertake alone. Then within weeks another sudden death struck another harsh blow against their small group.

#### Sam Dyer’s sudden death

Inventive printer Sam Dyer became feverish in late September and was sent to Dr. Parker in Canton. Partially recovering, he set out to return to the Straits Settlements on the standard medical reasoning that the sea air would help him. By the time he reached Macau he was so ill he was taken on shore to a house rented by American mission men Wells Williams and Lowrie. There he died on 24 October, delirious after four days of intense suffering; Dyer was 39 and left a widow and four orphans.

Dyer’s sudden death was also a major setback to the establishment of the LMS printing press in Hong Kong, for Dyer and Medhurst were the only LMS men who knew anything about printing, and Medhurst was going north. The men had decided to move all LMS printing presses from the former stations to Hong Kong after they were told

---

<sup>20</sup> The Chinese authorities had refused to let Mrs. Robert Morrison be buried in Canton where one of her previous children had been buried, and the Roman Catholics in Macau refused her burial there, and eventually English Christians in Canton bought land in Hong Kong to use as a cemetery for Protestant burials.



that the British government would limit mission activities in the treaty ports. Legge asked for a new LMS man, a printer familiar with type foundering, apparently intending to continue the innovative methods that Dyer had invented.

Legge wrote a warm tribute praising Dyer as a good man, an able missionary with mechanical talents that amounted to genius, complemented by a high level of mastery of the written Chinese language. Legge knew that Dyer's unique combination of talents was going to be very hard to replace. In later years Legge wrote that Dyer had probably invented the system of making steel punches used with copper matrices for making hot lead cast fonts for Chinese characters. In settings without access to this system, mission men continued to use xylography (woodcuts) to make books in Chinese, as Dr. Kerr did in creating medical texts in Canton as late as 1876, long after Dyer's system had created wonderful moveable metal Chinese fonts.

John Stronach also became ill with fever that summer in Hong Kong, and although he recovered he was debilitated enough that it was now unwise to send him alone to Fuzhou as had been planned. Instead he was to go with his brother to Xiamen. Medhurst's life also came under threat when his ship on the voyage back to Java to close up the Jakarta mission was blown off course and was forced to return to Hong Kong.

Dyer's death forced more changes in the LMS plans. His widow in Singapore understood she was expected to continue his mission work, and the Stronachs wrote London they expected that she should receive a typical single missionary salary of £200, plus £50 housing allowance ("instead of the £60 that Rev. Dyer drew"). Medhurst decided to take over all the Chinese printing press equipment that had been left at Singapore, for without Dyer, no one at Singapore had any printing experience. Legge hired the Singapore Chinese printers for use in Hong Kong, and the press machinery went to Shanghai. The LMS men urged a quick response from London for their plan, knowing that a London letter sent by ship in February would not arrive until April, and even an overland mail route would take two and one-half months, all risking the plans to move into China once the monsoon began.

#### Mary and James are ill and two sons die

These terrifying intrusions of illness and sudden death became intensely personal for James and Mary across the next two years. In late 1843 Mary had become ill with a troubled pregnancy just as they were moving into their first mission home in Hong Kong, and she remained very ill across October and November. When she delivered their first son prematurely on 2 December, he lived less than two hours. Mary continued to be ill for many months after that tragedy, again slow to recover from the delivery and

its preceding illness. To compound these problems, James's youngest daughter Mary, not yet two, was also so ill with "terrible attacks" of severe dysentery that she was close to death for two months in 1843 and still "in the Lord's hands" at the end of 1843. Her "very critical" illness continued across most of 1844, and James begged for God's help for "my poor suffering child". His wife Mary became pregnant again in 1844 and on February 15, 1845 "my wife was confined... with a dead son" after months of suffering. 1844 had been hell for her and the family, then severe illness hit James.

In late summer 1844 Legge developed a fever accompanied by liver disease possibly associated with malaria or hepatitis. By October 1844 he was so terribly ill with fever of a "violent and continued form" according to his friend Dr. Hobson, that James realized he had a close call "with eternity". After six weeks of struggle involving "prompt and vigorous measures, such as leeching bleeding etc., its violence soon gave way, but it brought me very low". For two days he was so debilitated he was expected to die. After he rallied a bit he was sent to Macau for a change of air. En route Legge again developed severe liver symptoms and was treated with "further depleting measures", but was still prostrated and so critically ill and delirious in Macau that he required constant observation and Dr. Hobson was called to help him. It was weeks before he was even able to speak. He finally recovered enough by mid-December to return to Hong Kong, having been basically incapacitated for three months.

By then Benjamin Hobson had come to recognize the powerful role that Legge was playing in the new community, and wrote the LMS that Legge's "... life and services are highly valuable" and the new mission would have greatly "suffered from the want of his experience and ability" if he had not been spared. Benjamin noted "Dr. Legge was not so careful of himself as we thought was necessary during the hot and trying months of summer, feeling strong he did not relax as other find absolutely necessary to do during the exhausting temperatures of this tropical climate".

Benjamin had now seen Legge at work preaching alongside Ho and Rev. William Gillespie newly arrived in July 1844, and reported that Legge was now an able preacher in Chinese. James was pensive and stoical about his personal suffering: "God has brought every member of our mission through the furnace during the first year of our labours in China, and I trust it will be seen that we have all been refined". By March 1845 he wrote "We have entered into our labours here through a gate of affliction, But all the sickness and death that has been in our family may be turned to the lack of proper accommodation". He hoped that once moved into the new mission house, all would become healthy.

### Sir Henry refuses to allow LMS schools in treaty ports

In early September 1843 Sir Henry's views and actions were increasingly intrusive into the LMS committee's work. He wrote on September 1 strongly objecting to the plans of the Protestant missions to build schools in the treaty ports, arguing that if he let British PMs do this then those of all the other trading countries would want to do the same thing. This would lead to probable objections from the Chinese that the British would not be able to answer. He threatened that if the LMS men encountered any problems in the treaty ports the British government would not have any basis on which to protect them. He sternly advised them to stay in Hong Kong until he received further instructions from London.

The LMS men in Hong Kong were outraged by Sir Henry's response and immediately wrote London, pointing out that the only problems that any missions had encountered were those created during "secret missions" by agents smuggled into China, all code for the Roman Catholics who were still secretly moving in the interior of the country. The LMS men also intimated a Church of England prejudice against the nonconformist LMS, hoping to rouse the Directors by urging them to remind the British government that any ruling against LMS schools in the treaty ports would also apply to a similar scheme being promoted by the Bishop of London for the Church of England. The prohibition would thus "upset a large body of pious persons in England, whether Churchmen or Dissenters". They ended by noting that "the Papists" would certainly be availing themselves of access to the treaty ports, warning that excessive scrupulousness on the part of Britain could end up with British Christians being the last to benefit from open ports. They argued that it would be best for the British government to help the Chinese to understand the concept of freedom of religion, rather than to serve as a lackey for restrictive Chinese decisions.

Although the treaty only specifically referred to opening the ports to merchants (the line that Sir Henry had used against them), the LMS men noted that such wording was not being used to automatically exclude mariners, chaplains, physicians, mechanics, naturalists, travellers, or students of the language. It was therefore not rational to believe that it uniquely excluded missionaries. The LMS men also responded directly to Sir Henry with the same arguments, and warned him they were sending a report back to London. Within a week Sir Henry redeemed himself to the mission by giving them permission to purchase land for the LMS at the next public auction of land leases, for any buildings that the LMS might wish to erect.

### Troubles establishing the Anglo-Chinese College in Hong Kong

By December Legge was also encountering vexing financial problems with the operation of the ACC. He managed the LMS funds for Hong Kong and for the ACC, and discovered that \$1,008 of the cash holdings of the ACC (out of a total of \$6,807) was actually owed to the estate of John Morrison for the advance John had given Legge, expecting that the ACC would soon receive a government grant and repay him. What neither of them knew was that Sir Henry had a poor opinion of the effectiveness of the ACC as it had been run by Evans, and had no intentions of continuing the grant. Morrison was never repaid that advance, and the ACC now owed this significant amount of money to his estate. Legge took this financial setback with equanimity, viewing the main problem as Sir Henry's failure to notify anyone of the suspension of the grant. What was more disturbing was the discovery that the poor reputation of the Malacca ACC was widespread among the community, which now viewed all mission colleges with such suspicion that it "tended to clog our operations here".

In Malacca, Robert Morrison had been able to ensure an annual grant of \$1,200 from the EIC to the ACC through his longstanding connections with the company. Legge and John Morrison had expected the British officials to continue this grant after the end of the EIC monopoly, to support the education of students in both Chinese and English. Evans had failed to provide even one interpreter from the ACC when asked, and the government was in no mood to continue the support. In 1842 when John was planning the move of the ACC to Hong Kong, he wrote the LMS to explain his concern about this, expressing his fear that he would not be able to get any more donations.

John had argued strongly in favour of the ACC move to Hong Kong even in early 1842, arguing that with the massive influx of money accompanying the Chinese and British merchants, and the operations of government, there would soon be a thriving educated community to support the college and even provide potential instructors. John warned the LMS that young Milne's more dissatisfied evaluation of Hong Kong as rocky and undeveloped, had failed to recognize its wonderful harbour as the basis of future prosperity. From London the LMS wrote that they thought that the population of Hong Kong would "for too long be very limited", and favoured establishing a theological college in a treaty port. This prediction seemed ill-judged, as even as early as May 1842 Hong Kong already had a new population of 10,000 migrants added onto the three small villages around its coast. John wrote with great prescience that even if Hong Kong were restored to China in some later political arrangement, its Chinese inhabitants were already so "long familiar with the English, that... English influence must always render it a seat of far greater freedom than ever can be enjoyed at Macau or Canton". He had an

invigorating list of plans for the college in its new setting, all stillborn with his sudden death.

Before John's death, John and James agreed that any mission man who became a full-time instructor in the College should no longer accept support from the LMS, and should be paid one full-time salary by the ACC instead of the corrupt arrangements with "triple-dipping" that Evans had established for himself in Malacca. But now it appeared the ACC could no operate under any circumstances.

### Creating a new Chinese Bible

In addition to their plans for building missions at Hong Kong and the treaty ports, every day starting on 22 August 1843 the LMS men met along with PMs from other missions to plan a new Chinese translation of the Bible, starting with a 15-man committee. This General Committee would start with the New Testament. Each local mission station would work on a section of the text then all would meet again in Shanghai to review the final text and vote on its acceptance.

The need for a better Chinese Bible was accepted by all those in the China mission although there were disagreements as to whether the new version should simply be a revision of Robert Morrison's original, or whether the translators should start entirely afresh from the New Testament Greek and Old Testament Hebrew originals. Alexander Stronach wrote the LMS to explain the urgent need for the new translation, noting that the 1812 first Chinese version by Robert Morrison and the elder Milne suffered two major failings. It did not convey the meaning of the text, and the style used was so uncouth that it elicited "disgust" from educated Chinese when they read it. It had been done using word-by-word translation in a very stiff and formal style that often completely failed to communicate the actual meaning of the original.

While the men still had the original wood blocks created to print Morrison's version decades earlier, they had a "strong repugnance" to using them because of these problems. All 15 Protestant Missionaries in China agreed on this, and all hoped that both the British and American Bible societies would pay for the eventual publication. In the 1830s Gutzlaff and Medhurst had made a revised version after Morrison's, but it included gross errors. In 1837 the BFBS had decided they would not support a new version even though Robert Morrison had argued for a totally new version rather than a revision of his original, explaining that he had written it when he had only five years experience with the language.

Now, with the opening of China there was renewed interest in creating a modern Chinese Bible. The translation group included the MES schoolmaster Sam Brown,

American Baptists Bridgman, Ball, Dean, and Roberts in Canton, and American Baptists Shuck and Macgowan in Shanghai, along with LMS men Medhurst, Stronach, and Legge from Shanghai and Hong Kong.

#### Conflicts over what Chinese term to use for God

By day four of their initial translation work in 1843 the men discovered some important translation problems, in that many Christian concepts seemed to have no equivalent in Chinese characters. The crucial disputes started with the choice of a Chinese character to use for the concept of baptism; when that could not be resolved the Baptist PMs withdrew from the project. Worse, by September 4 the men realized there might be a major problem about the Chinese term to use for God, the Greek *Theos* and Hebrew *Jehovah*, crucial throughout the Bible. To avoid becoming bogged down in dissension they created a subcommittee to deal with this vexing problem, immortalized for the next 60 years as the “Term Question”.

With this dispute quietly simmering in its subcommittee, the men divided up the translation work into blocks to be done by interdenominational local committees in each treaty port. Each team would send a delegate to regular meetings as the work became completed, then the delegates would decide any outstanding disagreements and submit the final version to all 14 PMs, identified as the “General Committee”. Each team could use whichever term for Jehovah that the local group desired while working on the texts.

#### Medhurst and Milne take dangerous trips

New troubles arose from forces of nature that now intruded into the LMS operation in Hong Kong. Despite the terrible summer of 1843, emerging official arrangements in Hong Kong were good enough to set the stage for rapid development. By early fall Medhurst planned to leave his wife and children in the care of Brown the MES schoolmaster, and to sail north without them to work in a treaty port, because he thought the winters in the north would be too severe for them. Dr. Lockhart had been so obsessed with heading north to new settings on the Chinese coast that he had left for Zhoushan in May, too eager to wait for LMS approval.

Medhurst left with Milne but their ship became caught in a vast storm in the South China Sea, sending it all the way to Manila in the Philippines, about 700 miles south-east of Hong Kong. Massive repairs were needed and the untrustworthy Mate was made Captain, so Medhurst came back to Macau on another ship. He was given free passage on a friendly Dutch man-of-war, though no room was made for Milne, who was left behind. Within hours of leaving the bay on 29 October Medhurst’s new ship was hit by another typhoon, struggling for nine days before reaching Macau and arriving back in

Hong Kong on 11 November. By the time he left again for the north by steamer at the end of November, his domestic plans had shifted, and his wife and most of his surviving children were planted in the home that James had established for his own family. One son accompanied Medhurst en route to joining the British consulate in Shanghai as an interpreter, showing again the fluid shifts between mission and government work in the bilingual missionary families.

#### Milne is desperate for a wife

Milne also faced new problems and possibilities after the typhoon. After it left him abandoned in Manila by Medhurst, Milne was not able to find a ship out until the monsoon ended in November. All of his English books had been sent north to Zhoushan but had been destroyed by a flood in the city of Dinghai, so he and Medhurst would need a fresh supply of books to support them in their isolated northern setting. Finally returned to Hong Kong, Milne now faced an enticing offer. Although Sir Henry had initially been furious when he had learned of Milne's illegal inland trip from Ningbo, once he met Milne he quickly appreciated his fantastic fluency in Chinese, soon forgave Milne, and ended up trying to hire him away from the LMS with an offer of £800 p.a. for a post as Interpreter at Ningbo. Milne refused with some indignation and "repugnance". His religious calling was secure but he had problems of another, more pressing nature.

By February 1844 Milne was writing to the LMS of his urgent need to return to Britain to get a wife. A rather sly letter in May from G. Tradescant Lay, a Christian merchant in Canton, in recommending Milne's work to the LMS hinted that Milne was more readily "ensnared" by the charms of young Chinese women than travellers have previously "thought proper to dream of". The problem was that poor Milne had been engaged to be married before he ever left for China on the outward voyage in 1839, but his fiancée had died just before their marriage. Milne recognized his weakness for women and even sent a secret document to the LMS explaining the urgency of his need for a wife, and his absolute need for a wife if he were to be an effective missionary in a culture that expected men to marry early. He explained that he would be able to work with "less distraction" if he were married, and quickly. Finally he fled back to the UK before even receiving LMS permission for the trip, bringing his Chinese teacher with him to keep expanding his mastery of the language. Once there he soon married then returned to China in 1846.

#### Stronach, Beighton, and widow Dyer problems after the Hong Kong meeting

Meanwhile Alexander Stronach had returned to Penang to close that station and discovered problems with Beighton, who must have had a cerebro-vascular accident. He could no longer feed himself or stand without the support of two men, but still refused to retire as ordered. The problem ended when Beighton died on 14 April after a stroke with loss of consciousness the previous day. His widow, daughter, and son waited for LMS money to pay for their passage to England, while Dyer's widow Maria Tarn was happy to stay in Penang and teach girls. She was so determined to stay that she offered to work for half the £200 per annum salary originally arranged.

She followed instructions in Dyer's will that all his printing press equipment be donated to the LMS, thus providing the surprising information to the LMS that Dyer had personally owned this machinery rather than the LMS on whose behalf he had spent so many years developing it. She wrote "my heart is well nigh broken" at her loss of Sam, and that the value of the entire household was less than £20, but she was determined to carry on teaching the 21 girls attending her boarding school. Apparently she did not realize that Dyer's books were very valuable and it is not clear if she ever obtained any value from them. By January 1845 she accepted a proposal of marriage from a German missionary John Bausum and resigned from her LMS work. Her new husband was a freelance missionary without the support of any mission society, "he has always lived by faith", so somehow they expected to support themselves and her son. Maria died a year later.

#### Legge is attacked, and crime is a major problem in early Hong Kong

Sudden death by illness was not the only danger in early Hong Kong, as crime had also become a huge problem. The colony had only the most rudimentary resources for family life, and was essentially operating like the excessively male wild west of America. There were thousands of Chinese migrants, buccaneer traders, drunken sailors, and a thin layer of government that was not yet able to provide the most elementary public services. The settlement lacked any effective policing and was quite lawless, with bandit gangs of migrant-labourers and boat-dwelling pirates becoming amazingly bold in their robberies and attacks on houses.

Chinese students in the MES school on Morrison Hill wrote essays describing Hong Kong life (Author, 1843a). One wrote that "Before the English began this colony, it was a dwelling place of a great number of pirates. Many Chinese towns and villages have been ravaged by them, but now they are becoming less and less". He complained about the Chinese police extorting bribes from the people, while another student wrote of the weapons the pirates used to attack houses in Hong Kong, including "long spears, swords, knives and axes". The students and teachers themselves were attacked in the



night, and their teacher Mr. Brown was stabbed in the neck after the pirates broke in through the windows, stealing as much as they could carry. A third student wrote of the drunken English soldiers in the street, who would rob the Chinese of their umbrellas and strike them; he was glad that the English government was becoming successful in reducing all kinds of crime there.

Legge took a robust Scots view of these attacks as observer, and a vigorous response when he became the intended victim, for his house on D'Aguillar Street was far from safe despite its high rent. He never succumbed to the colonials' tendency to attribute problem behaviour to race, and he described massed armed war between rival Chinese gangs in the daylight hours in a way that recognized their universal quality. "I once witnessed from my house in D'Aguillar Street an engagement between nearly a hundred Chinese coolies<sup>21</sup> on each side.... Bamboo on bamboo, and bamboo on skull, resounded pretty equally, until the parties were obliged to give up from exhaustion. I thought that nothing wilder or better-sustained had ever been seen at Donnybrook Fair" (J. Legge, 1872b).

Pirate-burglars were active at night against both households and institutions. In early January 1844 a large and extremely persistent band of robbers had broken into the home of Legge's neighbour Mrs. White. Her husband was away in Shanghai, and the robbers attacked while she and a young woman were alone in the house. As the burglars systematically looted the house without threatening the person of Mrs. White, the young woman managed to escape and run downhill to the headquarters of a Madras regiment. An officer and half a dozen armed sepoy (Indian soldiers) were sent up and fired one round from their muskets at the burglars in mid-loot. The firing awakened James with the racket so he went across to see what had happened. Some of the burglars had already made off with booty, taking it down to their waiting boat, while others stayed in the house grabbing the silver-plate. The burglars still boldly resisted after the first round of musket fire, until "the ramrods were ringing in the barrels for a second, one of their number being left bleeding to death" on Mrs. White's floor (J. Legge, 1872b).

A week later, in January 1844, a similar gang surrounded James and Mary's house, which was in an isolated location. The men threatened to break in and rob them if money was not immediately paid out, an extortion attempt typical of a traditional Cantonese "protection" racket. James first tried to scare them away with bluster, but

---

<sup>21</sup> Coolie, currently considered as repulsive slang, was actually a proper Malay word kuli meaning daily-paid labour. In this period many Chinese migrated to provide this kind of labour in the Malayan states.

they came back for more negotiations through a ground-floor bedroom window, demanding money or they would break it. James told them if they broke in, “that will cost at least two of you your lives”, and pushed the barrel of his Joe Manton rifle through the venetian blinds. For about half an hour the burglars walked round and round the house, trying every door and window. Unable to find an easy entrance, they finally went up a nearby hill, made a bonfire of every combustible they could collect, danced around it, then finally went away” (J. Legge, 1872b).

Official relief for these crimes was slowly getting organized. The first police chief finally arrived in Hong Kong in May 1844, a judge arrived, a Supreme Court was established, and an effective court system was developed, bringing some of these problems under control. Most of the violent burglars across this period were actually boat-based pirates who came onto land as a simple extension of their normal piracy. As the government’s measures made the town safer from burglars, these pirates were driven back onto their boats, and piracy evolved into a “terrible evil” as trade grew.

In Canton, Qiying was applying Chinese law against the Chinese murderers of a Mr. Sharpe and Dr. McKinlay, passengers on a boat captured by pirates. Qiying sentenced the leader of the gang to a “lingering and ignominious death (to be cut to pieces)”, a second man was to be stuck up on a pole as a warning to others, and the remaining gang members were flogged “in order to strike terror”, as Qiying’s announcement expressed it (Author, 1844a). In Hong Kong Superintendent of Trade Sir Henry Pottinger had formal authority to enforce British laws on all British subjects in Hong Kong, Macau and within 100 miles of the Chinese coast, and he set out these regulations on January 24, 1845.

Pirates often formed flotillas and fleets that held certain small harbours as their strongholds, emerging to attack en masse. Their targets included Chinese boats, small trading boats, brigs and barques all up the coast. The government sent out gunboats and men-of-war in many successful expeditions. Legge wrote, “The gallows found constant employment, and the most wretched experience of my life in Hong Kong was that of visiting pirates and other murderers under sentence of death in the gaol. With the exception of a few who were caught red-handed in the act, I knew only one case in which the criminal made confession of his guilt” (J. Legge, 1872b). In time, the Chinese Customs service added armed cruisers to their fight against smugglers in the inner harbour, and the Chinese government began to act to improve the safety of the mainland coast.

Legge struggles with poverty

If illness and crime were not enough, poverty began to make their lives miserable. It was not just the widows of LMS men who were having financial problems, as James and Mary were still very short of money for their young family. Their years in Malacca had been challenging because of poverty, and this continued in Hong Kong. They initially lived in quarters of Hobson's LMS hospital on Morrison Hill for a few months, then moved to a roomier rented house on D'Aguillar Street costing an expensive \$130 per month in "Spanish" dollars that traded at about five dollars equal to one British £. The inflation arising from the roaring economy in Hong Kong affected everyone, and in November 1843 James wrote, "I have not been able to save a farthing, nor do I see that I shall ever be able to do so. ... There were months together in Malacca, when we had only a little rice and some boiled or fried fish for dinner. I can only do what I can – make every effort to make ends meet – give my children a good education and leave them an unstained name. The missionary ... can save money only in very peculiar circumstances."

The family had had to sell all their furniture when they left Malacca and buy replacements in Hong Kong, and their rental expenses were high because of the rising Hong Kong property market. Legge was still being paid his initial salary of £300 per annum in two instalments, topped up by a request for the LMS child allowance of £10 for each for his two children.

#### The LMS denies Legge a child allowance, indifferent to medical and housing expenses

Legge did not know that the LMS itself was having serious financial problems that had become severe in the years 1836-1842, when expenses far outstripped donations (R. L. O'Sullivan, 1980). When the LMS received urgent requests from the field for more men and printing resources, it simply told the men to watch their expenses more closely. He was shocked and dispirited when he received a LMS letter in early 1844 denying him the modest child allowance he had granted himself. The decision "is a very hard one", and the issue turned into one of some bitterness years later when in 1866 he discovered that other mission men had been given the child allowance across all the decades it had been forbidden to him. The LMS had proposed a system of standard rates for wife, child, and widow allowances starting in 1818 that turned into practice in 1828, but there was little "standard" in what actually developed across time, with great variability in payments for such things as travel and moving expenses, furniture, housing costs and medical expenses for mission men and their families.

The original mission men across the first 24 years of the LMS were given no salaries and were chosen from among artisans with the expectation they would earn

their own living once settled in their new mission (Hiney, 2000). By Legge's time there was a system of salaries based on marital status, but the LMS exercised such tight control that it even tried to enforce permission for expenses that were being paid for privately. One man complained in 1840 that he had to seek the Directors' permission to send his sick wife home even though it was at his own expense, while the Directors required Sam Dyer had to seek permission to bring a governess with his children at his own expense. A mission man who resigned in 1841 had to pay back all the costs of his education, outfit, and passage, and any man who failed to master the language of his station had his status terminated. These variations in payments caused conflict among the mission men and the LMS beginning in the 1820s and across Legge's years of work.

With the illness of Legge's wife and daughter in late 1843, the extra expenses for the medical care for his family had been serious enough that he wrote to explain why he needed to draw an early advance of £50, two months' worth of his next year's salary. The LMS wrote him in March 1844 authorizing an extra £50 for the travelling expenses of his family and the mission presses, and "approved" of his renting a house as if this were a matter of choice. Although the house was expensive in the boomtown that Hong Kong was becoming, it was not adequate for all the domestic and mission tasks, for Medhurst's wife and children were still living with the Legge family. A land auction set for January 1844 promised relief and Legge intended to bid on a lease that would be able to include a number of substantial buildings. He needed a large mission building that would include room for classrooms, housing for his family and transient PMs who were beginning to use Hong Kong as a way-station, and store-rooms, along with separate buildings for a printing office and the press. Hong Kong had now reached a population of 20,000.

Milk for the children was another big problem. The goat and kid that Legge had bought for \$12 for the voyage from Singapore had died soon after their arrival in Hong Kong owing to a lack of proper shelter. Once he had a house to provide some shelter, he spent another \$30 for a Chinese cow and calf for milk, but the calf died soon after birth, and the cow stopped giving milk. James gloomily complained "They are not like the cows trained at home – ran dry immediately, and I changed her for another cow and calf, giving \$12 in addition. That calf died in the same way, and now a mutchkin of milk a day would cost nearly \$6 a month".

#### Hobson is impoverished and his son dies

Legge was not the only LMS man suffering poverty in the new station. Dr. Hobson sold the Macau hospital in February 1843 and moved to Hong Kong where he set up a

new LMS hospital on Morrison Hill beside the new MES school, but he too was suffering from personal poverty that began to interfere with his idealistic plans. He wrote a sombre letter to the LMS explaining why his salary of £300 p.a. was inadequate for a family in the heated economy of Hong Kong. He argued that salaries should differ depending on the location of the station, the need for household help, and whether or not the mission man had to support a family. He apologized rather abjectly for having charged the LMS £10 for the expenses of his Chinese teacher, explaining that “I misunderstood the policy”. This suggests that he had been scolded for this expense, and that the LMS now expected its men to pay for their language-learning out of their own salaries. Benjamin suggested that the LMS could at least help the men in Hong Kong by sending out dollars in cash rather than sending bills for pounds that then had to be converted to dollars at very unfavourable exchange rates.

He concluded by reminding the Directors that in his three years of service he had never accepted any fee for any of his medical services, “and I don’t expect to because I work for the LMS”, but he warned them he needed help. Benjamin had already encountered the entrepreneurial and status-oriented American medical missionary Dr. Peter Parker in Macau, who operated very differently. He had been enjoying life in the elite society there by running a lucrative private practice for both American and Chinese officials in addition to his mission service, and the contrast in circumstances was notable although Dr. Hobson was too humble and dedicated to write about it. Parker had made friendships with many Chinese officials including the Howqua during the conflicts with Britain in 1838, as they ignored their own embargo on dealing with foreigners or foreign doctors, and even Commissioner Lin was provided a truss for his hernia during this conflict (P. Parker, 1840). Hobson’s family was not immune to the intrusions of sudden death, and within a month of reporting his financial problems he suffered the death of his second son from dysentery.

Dr. Hobson knew that Sir Henry was granting some land free of lease-rents to benevolent institutions including the LMS hospital and MES school on a site that was extensive “and highly suitable and interesting”. When the other LMS men arrived he expected the ACC would also be given such a grant. He formally opened the new LMS hospital on June 1, heady with the freedom he found in the emerging community: “in Hong Kong we have perfect toleration and unrestricted intercourse with all classes” including soldiers and sailors. Meanwhile he was expanding his long 1840 essay on opium, and was very upset that the new treaty contained no provisions for stopping the trade. His biggest professional problem was the absence of important surgical

instruments lost in a shipwreck, for which he was going to apply for reimbursement from an insurance company.

Illness continued to create problems for Hobson, as his wife was now sick with Hong Kong fever. Despite this epidemic, there was still a massive Chinese migration into Hong Kong, adventurers seeking wealth, and worrywart Hobson moped that it would probably be some time before more respectable Chinese would make the move. He was mainly heartened that at least, “we need never fear that the settlement will be deserted”.

Meanwhile the Hong Kong fever was so widespread and its deaths on a such an extreme scale that Sir Henry removed the government to Macau, which was believed to have a more healthful climate. Medhurst’s youngest and oldest daughters and oldest son Walter were all seriously ill with the fever by late September, which killed hundreds, including 450 troops. The removal of the government created a panic in Hong Kong, and everyone who could, fled. The Macau press emphasized that the real problem in Hong Kong was the lack of decent housing, which had its worst effects during the rainy season. Many traders were so frustrated with the deadly climate, the lawlessness of the island, and the continued impediments to trade in Canton, that they regretted ever bringing their capital into the colony, where it was now trapped as property values collapsed.

#### Kidd’s widow is impoverished and LMS is stringent with a pension

The LMS continued to take a very tight position on providing financial help to its mission members, even in cases of significant hardship. The widow of Legge’s Chinese teacher Sam Kidd in London, suffered from this stringency. Kidd had been forced to retire because of persistent illness, and after he died of this in England in 1843 his widow discovered the memorial fund that had been solicited on her behalf could only generate £40 p.a. from its £840 capital. After she wrote a very polite letter explaining that she and her children could not survive on that income, the LMS Directors decided to top up the grant by 50% and finally officially recognized her as an LMS widow, thus making her eligible for future help as well. She did not tell the LMS that her husband Sam had been the only Malacca mission man living entirely on his LMS salary before the arrival of Legge. Both Humphreys and Collie had been moonlighting and earning extra money, and Evans had been paying himself three salaries and dealing in property, all unbeknown to the LMS and all strictly against its rules.

#### An embezzlement complaint against Keuh Agong

In addition to the problems with illness, crime and poverty, the LMS men were further upset by a problem within their Chinese congregation. Old Liang Fa (1789-1855), the trusted Christian printer had ensured that his son Liang Tsintih would be equally skilled in Chinese and English, to the point that Commissioner Lin had hired the lad as translator during the crises of 1839. In Hong Kong, Tsintih reported that another Christian printer from Malacca, Keuh Agong, had embezzled money from John Morrison, and this story was published in the EMMC. Keuh denied everything and became furious. The publication of the article was deeply embarrassing to the Hong Kong mission, and Dyer wrote the Directors all the details of their response to the situation. The mission men decided to reprimand Keuh for his un-Christian temper, suspend him from communion until he showed some remorse for it, and refuse to confirm his connection with the LMS until he was cleared of the charges. In time it seemed more probable that Tsintih was unreliable and trying to distract the attention of the mission away from discovering he was in debt to various American mission men in Canton.

#### The medical missions of Hobson and Lockhart

The medical mission was slowly making progress in Hong Kong where Legge was grateful for the presence of his friend Hobson. Hobson initially worked in a hospital in Macau, caring for more than 1,000 sick in its last three months, including 42 in-patients. His interests in medicine were both clinical and scholarly. In 1841 he had written a long essay on opium for the LMS, describing its cultivation, its medical characteristics, the trade, and the uses. It was a scholarly article rather than a moralistic rant, and still impresses as a reasoned and thoughtful essay. In 1843 after the peace treaty, Hobson moved to Hong Kong with his wife to set up a small LMS hospital and dispensary. There he and his wife shared a house with John Morrison and MES schoolmaster Sam Brown. Hobson supervised the construction of a hospital on Morrison Hill, which opened on June 1, 1843 as a hospital component of the recently created Medical Missionary Society of China.

Hobson reported that 3,900 patients had been cared for in 1842 in the Hong Kong hospital, 566 as inpatients in the 42 ward beds. His hospital attracted women as well as men, including many women with the bound feet denoting affluence. Newcomers gradually realized that many Chinese women did not have bound feet, including farmers, boat people, and women doing day labour in urban settings (Author, 1847a). Hobson reported to the supervising committee of the MMSC that the patients were orderly and respectful, and that he had had to discharge only two for the disobedience of

staying up late and smoking opium. He treated significant numbers of eye disorders and fractures, and did surgeries that included amputations. Six had died of their disorders over the course of the year, without any uproar that might have suggested any distrust of the doctor and treatments.

Hobson was so concerned to ensure that Chinese people knew of his free services that he wrote up a proclamation in Chinese explaining that they could come to him for relief of their disorders and that the costs were all covered by grants from foreigners. "... There is no tampering with the high to the neglecting of the poor, but all are treated alike as belonging to one family...". Diseases "... are cured gratuitously, without money or price". Hobson made a point of reminding the medical society that he intended to minister especially to the poor, following the example of Christ. This was undoubtedly a subtle criticism of American mission doctor Parker who was busy using some of his mission time to run a lucrative private practice as a society doctor to both Chinese and foreign officials in Canton. Hobson knew that Canton was still a volatile city in terms of foreigners, with the gentry there making only two distinctions about people: those in the Celestial Empire, "and those who do not belong". He blamed Dr. Parker for not making better use of his official connections in Canton, blaming him "for timidity and a culpable neglect in not improving the influence he has gained".

#### Smallpox vaccination in China

One of Hobson's especially valuable services was the provision of smallpox vaccinations to children. Briton Dr. Pearson had first introduced vaccination into Chinese populations in the spring of 1805. The Chinese had a tradition of doing a crude inoculation using pus from an active case introduced into a deliberate cut, often in a nostril. This was not a weakened version of the virus as used in the western cowpox-smallpox vaccination method, but instead was a much more dangerous and less effective procedure that involved inserting live, strong viral material from an active smallpox lesion. As a result, the Chinese inoculation method often led to such virulent infection over the face that many developed the full disease, and children often ended up blind or with gross facial deformities.

The Portuguese had introduced modern vaccination using the weaker cowpox virus into the Macau colony in 1805 for use among their own people, but it was the British who actively sought to vaccinate the Chinese, especially those living in the terribly crowded conditions of the boats. Years earlier Sir George Staunton had written a Chinese translation of Dr. Pearson's article explaining the method, and many Chinese employees of the British factories of the EIC were trained in it. The local Chinese doctors



who claimed to specialize in the treatment of smallpox were outraged that their work might become unnecessary but the EIC program was effective. The EIC paid for the costs of the project and at an early stage trained Hequa as a Chinese vaccinator. He became highly competent and respected, and practised and supervised the careful use of the procedure over the next 25 years. In Canton the smallpox season was each winter, and after spending most of the initial year vaccinating many thousands, the doctors were pleased to find that the normally expected seasonal epidemic did not develop. The hong merchants were so impressed with the vaccination results that they offered a small cash award for all families who brought in children for it, to great success.

Unfortunately, there was a significant problem in maintaining supplies of the vaccine material, which was (then and now) obtained from active lesions on cows with cowpox. In the early years of the vaccination project, twice the vaccine supply became extinct in the first few years, and fresh infected cows had to be brought again to Canton. In 1821 there were reports from England of failures of vaccination and some worry in Canton where a few cases appeared to fail. These were intensively investigated and discovered to have arisen from using improper vaccine or insufficient applications (four were recommended). The resulting mild fevers were more akin to chicken-pox with which the Chinese were very familiar, and overall public confidence was retained in the method. Hobson continued this tradition and vaccinated Hong Kong children against smallpox during the cool season when it was more possible to keep the vaccine in its lymph base. The first year of Benjamin Hobson's hospital had been very busy and unimaginably successful. He ended his report with a proposal to develop a medical school to train Chinese to become doctors.

#### Hobson creates Chinese texts for science and medical education

From his earliest arrival Hobson realized that he needed to educate his Chinese assistants in the ways of modern medicine, and he began writing a series of basic textbooks in Chinese to outline the sciences underlying medical practise. His first Chinese textbook was the first Chinese text of basic modern chemistry. He introduced the notion of the orderly table of basic chemical elements, and tackled the major problem of creating new words in Chinese for the elements in the periodic table. He had to create new words for different gases, including words for oxygen, hydrogen, and nitrogen that are still used today. Over the years the later medical texts that he created made a fantastic impression on the Chinese elite, who quickly realized that he truly understood much more about the human body than doctors of traditional Chinese medicine. Officials in Canton were particularly intrigued by his drawings depicting the

stages of fetal development and Chinese generals realized that Hobson's books could help to treat wounded soldiers. Hobson began studying and printing analyses of traditional Chinese medicine from the 1840s, starting with reports in the *Chinese Repository* (B. Hobson, 1848).

In Zhoushan then Shanghai, Dr. Lockhart was similarly creating a major hospital and medical service as part of the LMS – MMSC system. He described the terrible skin disorders that arose from poisoning from the lacquer that was widely used in Chinese culture. He noted that the ubiquitous problems with intermittent fevers were relieved by the use of quinine, correctly linking the occurrence of intermittent fevers with swamps. Lockhart reported on a number of cases of suicide attempts through taking either opium, a strong solution of salt water, or salt and tobacco water, nearly in every case arising from a desire to take revenge on someone with whom there had been conflict. Suicides in this tradition were used to bring public shame on the person targeted in the conflict.

Cataract surgery was a major activity, along with tumour removals. The need for these surgeries arose because the Confucian tradition of filial piety required individuals to retain their bodies intact for burial, thus Chinese medicine never developed any accurate notions of anatomy or effective surgery. Trachoma was the other frequently encountered eye disease, caused by a highly infectious agent that without treatment eventually destroyed the cornea and vision. Each in their isolated hospital stations, doctors Hobson and Lockhart had become administrators creating effective treatment programs that became used by Chinese élites and common people.

#### A new Governor in Hong Kong

By the time in summer of 1844 when Sir Henry's skills as a international diplomat had been used to their best effect, Legge wrote his brother John praising Sir Henry as being admirably suited to his job, "Familiar with all the wiles of Eastern Policy – reserved, cautious, determined – he was just the man to bring the war with China to fortunate issue". The British asked for far less than they were in a position to demand, and Sir Henry showed "moderation in the hour of victory", with "great honour to his character". Sir Henry, however, was not very good on commercial matters and had isolated himself from the merchants sufficiently to generate ill will whenever new trade problems arose, and he was recalled. His expected replacement was his brother Lt. Eldred Pottinger, a hero from the recent disastrous events in Afghanistan but this plan ended when he died suddenly, and Sir John Davis was appointed instead.

#### Chapter 21 Legge's Mission work

Despite all the drama of illness and death, and the trial of poverty, government suspicion, criminal attacks and emerging translation struggles with the American mission men in Shanghai, in the next two years Legge worked at an incredible pace that paralleled the development of Hong Kong. He obtained land in the January 1844 auction, built a large mission building, set up the ACC and taught in it, wrote textbooks in Chinese for his students, set up a place of worship, gathered both Chinese and English congregations, and set up the printing operation. He spent hours every week visiting Chinese merchants and families in their shops and houses. He made up two little booklets of two Bible stories in alphabetic phonetic texts in the colloquial Cantonese dialect that he then memorized in order to tell as stories in his pastoral visits, used by later translators (J. D. Ball, 1894). Throughout all he continued his practise of rising at 3 AM to work on the classic Chinese texts that so fascinated him.

#### Constructing mission buildings and services

Legge now fully understood that the civil government was no friend to the missions. Sir Henry “would have no hesitation in removing missionaries from all the Open Ports, if their presence shall be found to interfere at all with the easy working of the Treaty”. While Legge was still struggling to get land on which to build the main LMS station, he established a school in his home, and by the end of 1843 he was teaching 30 Chinese boys. In December 1843 Sir Henry was standing fast in his refusal to give an annual educational grant to the ACC, but by May 1844 he was leaving for England and had softened in his attitude to the LMS after receiving instructions from London. The LMS Directors had been lobbying about the usefulness of mission schools to the entire British enterprise in China. In response Sir Henry reduced the land lease fee to £30 for the two lots that Legge had obtained in the January auction, and even decided he would recommend to the Colonial Secretary in London that the land be given as an outright free grant, giving heart to Legge in his hopes for the mission.

In the January 1844 auction of land leases Legge succeeded in leasing two adjacent lots of 105 feet squared each for the Mission, comprising lots 10 and 11 on Hollywood Road at Staunton St. Buildings were to be constructed for teaching, for the ACC, for worship, for the printing press, and for housing his family, visiting mission families, and some printing staff. The lots were leased for 75-year terms, to cost £44 10s annually.

Legge organized the construction of two large brick buildings on two levels of the hillside, for a total cost of \$4,580, a price that soon increased. The upper building for the school and staff, would provide dormitory quarters to the boarding students and their expected new teacher William Gillespie, a classroom, a room for Ho and his wife,

for Legge's Chinese teacher, and for employees of the mission and press, along with a storage room for books, and a library. Legge also rented two houses in the "Chinese bazaar" (then centred on Lower Lascar road, now Lok Ku Road) to use as chapels for the Chinese congregations and as housing for type-cutter Liang Fa, who was working well as a preacher. Legge also had a plan to buy a Chinese chapel for the use of his three Chinese preachers from Malacca, and rented another house for his Malacca printer and font-cutter.

James hoped to move his own family and the main Library into the lower main building by July, saving the \$160 monthly rent they had been paying for a house. James and his family would have three rooms, there would be three additional bedrooms for an additional mission family, and a common dining room. That lower building would also house the printing office, the press and type cases, and two rooms to house the printers. Evangelist Keuh Agong lived with his wife in a small house on the LMS hospital grounds, near his preaching job with the patients. The LMS had approved Legge's plan to hire Ho and Liang as mission staff, Ho as an excellent teacher and translator working especially with the "three lads", students James had brought with his family from Malacca.

This was not the end of Legge's land problems, for he soon found himself fighting with the LMS Directors. He had bought the two large lots at a good price in 1844, and was upset when he received a letter in April 1845 written by the LMS in November 1844, "strongly" recommending that he not build the mission building, which was now well under construction as a substantial two-storey building of 55' by 95' costing \$8,000 Mexican. He convened an urgent meeting of the Hong Kong men, who agreed that the plans were not excessive for the needs of the station. Once again, the long delays in letters created problems when decisions had to be made, and not just in the arena of politics.

Building the Hong Kong mission was not a simple question of progress however, as Medhurst now criticized the design for the Hong Kong buildings as too grand and expensive, and tried to wrest money from Legge to use in the LMS Shanghai mission. Legge reduced his overall plan to cost \$8,000 rather than \$12,000, and pointed out that if Medhurst did not like it he should have objected when the plans were created by the committee in the summer of 1843. He concluded his January 1845 report by declaring that he would be building the LMS house and call it the "LMS Mission House", and "if anyone claims property in it the Directors should decide". The money was coming from the sale of the abandoned LMS properties in Jakarta, Malacca and Penang, which was enough for all the land levelling and the buildings. Legge explained that once the

buildings were complete later in 1845, the LMS would only have operating expenses for the teachers, books, and preachers. Later that year Legge's family moved into the lower building.

Legge was paying salaries to Keuh Agong (\$10.50 per month), to pastor Liang Fa (\$20 per month), and to a watchman to protect the Chinese chapel. For a while Keuh was behaving well, living at Hobson's hospital and holding religious classes with the patients as they waited for treatment. On Sundays Legge began holding Bible classes for Chinese in his home, and evening services in English in his drawing room. By early 1844 the LMS men decided that all the remaining Chinese printing press equipment should be moved from Singapore to Hong Kong. With Sam Dyer's death, Medhurst was now the only LMS man with any printing expertise and he did not want to take on the job of superintending a press in Shanghai while he tried to establish a full mission there.

Legge was encouraged to receive LMS approval for his special request for an extra £50 for all his family's medical expenses, and was vastly relieved when the Directors wrote him vindicating all his actions in sorting out the mess in Evans' accounts in Malacca. He confessed awareness of his impetuous indignation during those events. "I plainly see that there were many imperfections and errors, both in my private and public character, and when I consider the circumstances in which I was called to act, and how slippery my position was...", but now his gratitude "swells far beyond my powers of expression". He was now beginning to think that Hong Kong might work out, that the mission might "blossom under our hands, ... and speedily become a jewel in the crown of our Society".

In the following year Legge bought additional land for a chapel on Hollywood Road, and by the summer of 1845 the ACC was completed and the Press was in full operation. Legge was now active in many different benevolent societies created to improve conditions in the chaotic new town. He was showing himself capable of planning and executing major projects with little help.

### Legge's school

The MES school was operating on land granted by Sir Henry when Legge arrived in 1843, and in November American Protestant missionaries opened a boarding school with 11 students. Other missionaries were also building small schools in Hong Kong for Chinese students. These missions and their schools all ended for different reasons by 1877, and the sole remaining mission then still existing from its earliest period was the establishment set up in September 1843 by James Legge.

In his basic school for Chinese children he taught boys both English and in the Cantonese vernacular, or as he described it, “the colloquial”, setting the pattern for eventual reforms in public education. In the first year he had 18 boys in school, while his wife Mary taught girls. Enlisting Chinese girls into the schools was a problem because “to educate females and treat them as of equal worth with the other sex, is in the belief of this people, a subversion of the order of society”. As he became increasingly familiar with the Confucian canon Legge was able to identify the beliefs underlying Chinese popular attitudes.

#### The MES school is thriving

The MES school was thriving under Sam Brown, and Legge was a supporter of the school when it made its 6<sup>th</sup> annual report in December 1844. Several graduates were already working as interpreters in the British consulate in Shanghai and rated as superior to the uneducated linguists previously used. Brown described the differences between education in the Chinese system and the British, explaining that in the Chinese system memorization of the Confucian classics was the main activity, and that exploration of new ideas or facts was not allowed. He offered a thumbnail critique of these classics in order to make the argument that teaching the boys using traditional Chinese books would not be sufficient for a full education, and that it was going to be necessary to create textbooks in Chinese that included a modern curriculum, especially mathematics. He believed this task would require the creation of new Chinese characters because the language simply lacked terms for many important concepts and had a fixed set of characters. Finding someone who could create new character-symbols would be a problem. This was exactly the problem that Hobson had discovered in trying to write his chemistry textbook, where one generic Chinese word for “gas” could not differentiate between different gaseous chemical elements.

After reading a summary of the school’s activities for the year with its 30 students, the members did oral examinations of the pupils, now sorted into four classes. From these examinations they concluded that the students were making good progress at reading and understanding both languages, as well as developing skills in arithmetic and in their knowledge of history and geography. Their final question was moral: “what is our duty to each other?” Its answer was “to do good to each other”.

#### Problems with the ACC

In contrast to the success of the MES school, the higher-level ACC preparatory school (now the modern and excellent Ying Wa school) continued to have many problems. On August 12, 1844 Legge had again written to the new governor Sir John

Davis asking for the ACC grant that John Morrison had promised and had advanced to the LMS men. In response, Sir John refused to pay for any matters under the jurisdiction of a predecessor. Legge was persistent and stoutly returned the issue, stating that the whole design of the ACC would have been altered if he had known that no grant would be given for 1842. He pleaded with Sir John that under the circumstances, "please issue special orders to pay me the grant of \$1,200 for 1842".

In the absence of a government grant to support a general college, the LMS Directors in February decided that the ACC could be discontinued, and operated solely for theological training. The local men then began to plan it as a purely LMS venture as a Theological Seminary, with Legge as superintendent. In the meantime, however Sir John sent the ACC grant request to Lord Aberdeen in London for review by the government. When the LMS men in Hong Kong discovered this they were acutely embarrassed, because they knew that it was completely inappropriate for the British government to pay for a theological college anywhere. They were dumbfounded that Sir John was ignorant of the ACC's demise, revealing the isolation of both the government and the mission men. It also seemed that the LMS Directors had contributed to the problem, having used political pressure in London on behalf of the ACC in February that eventually reached Sir John, with all the time-lapses in these long-distance communications generating complete confusion. Now the Hong Kong men didn't know if they should revert to the original idea for the ACC (if a grant could be expected), or if they should stick with the new plan. They were embarrassed and sought help from the Directors.

The Directors approved a theological college for Chinese students preparing for the ministry, but this was soon recognized as a problem because there were not enough young men graduating from junior Christian schools to feed into the seminary. The LMS China men disagreed among themselves about the best plan. The Shanghai men wanted Legge's school to combine with the MES school, but he explained to the Directors in January 1845 that this could not be done because the MES refused, and they represented an independent agency. Legge thought that LMS bilingual schools in all the treaty ports should serve as preparatory schools, with graduates who were also Christians and seeking training as preachers then entering a seminary. Regardless of the system, the low numbers of potential students were the problem. Legge also wanted direction from the Directors as to whether they wanted him to work most on teaching or preaching.

The LMS finally decided that it did not want the ACC to accept any government grant, and the Hong Kong men learned this after they had finally received the grant

from Sir John. Embarrassed by all the missteps, they finally returned the grant to the Governor, thanking him for having restored it even though they were now not able to accept it.

### Hong Kong needed bilingual schools

Whether the government or the LMS liked Legge's schooling plans, there was an urgent need in the colony for literate bilingual men. Chinese were flooding from the mainland onto Hong Kong with all the commercial activity that followed the new trade agreement, and there was an explosion of need for people with fluency and literacy in Chinese and English. Legge wanted educated Chinese as the basis for his missionary plans in China, while the traders, diplomats, and local government offices also needed bilingual literate workers.

Competence in the Chinese language was becoming a problem for the colony because there were only two people able to communicate with the Chinese on behalf of the government, and conflicts between the two language groups needed attention. The only translators were Gutzlaff, the sometime missionary and translator, and one other. Arising from this poor capacity to discuss problems with the Chinese community, the government often seemed unaware of the effects of regulations it generated concerning the Chinese. New Governor Sir John Davis as of May 1844, had tried to enact a new regulation requiring the registration of all immigrants, along with some stiff rules about the legal responsibilities of English merchants for Chinese workers, and both the British traders and Chinese merchants were in a complete uproar over these new rules. The regulation also affected the mission, and Hobson worried that it would deter sick Chinese from coming to the hospital, which was attracting patients from a circuit of 50 miles.

Legge thought of education in its broad, Enlightenment sense, reflecting the wonderful Scottish education he had received, and his school curriculum reflected that breadth of training. He argued that new missionaries be educated in a broad way rather than as narrow religionists. Legge also realized that young Britons arriving to work as government officials would benefit from a basic education in the use of oral and written Chinese, and proposed an formal training system for educating these "cadets". A similar system was well known in the Foreign Office for training officials being sent to India, and Legge thought that the arrangement was also necessary for China. The *Chinese Repository* agreed that the single greatest problem facing the merchants and diplomats in China by 1844 was the lack of foreigners who could speak Chinese. It agreed with Qiying that the best thing the Qing Emperor could do to prevent future disturbances



would be to require all foreigners to achieve basic competence in Chinese within six months residence, or be required to leave. It was becoming clear that many of the problems between the two nations arose because of “ignorance of each other’s feelings and intentions”.

Although the funding and nature of the ACC was a problem, by the summer of 1845 the ACC had classrooms operating in the new mission buildings. Legge’s new assistant William Gillespie had arrived to teach. The ship had taken five months to get to Calcutta in a challenging trip that included many storms and a hurricane and Gillespie spent the “tedious voyage” practising Chinese with another mission man on board. It finally arrived after eight months that included a terrific episode of fever on the journey out of Calcutta. Once in Hong Kong the men agreed that Gillespie should move to Canton by summer 1845 to establish the LMS there, so Legge continued with Hobson in establishing schools for boys and girls and supervising the three Chinese pastors in developing Chinese chapels. Legge’s boarding school now had 32 students at the preparatory level, plus three senior students for whom he held great hopes.

#### The “three lads”

Two of Legge’s best students in Malacca had received their fathers’ approval to continue school with him in Hong Kong and they arrived in April 1844, planning to become evangelists. Ng Asow (Wu Wenxiu), and Li Kimlin (Le Kumlin), and then a third, Song Hootkiam (Sung Futkee), were soon doing so well that Legge accepted them as theological students, separating them from the junior students.

#### Family illnesses

In 1844 Hong Kong Hobson was working as hard as Legge and the hospital was thriving, but illness repeatedly interfered with work and family life. Dr. Bell’s wife died, then he and all his children became seriously ill with fever, just as Legge’s young daughter Mary was beginning to recover by the end of the summer from serious illness that lasted more than eight months.

#### Developing a Christian community

In addition to holding Sunday services, Legge had a vigorous program of visiting his Chinese parishioners in their homes and shops. In 1844 he wrote how hard this work was for him, requiring “an easy address which I sadly want, and much tact – much acquaintance with human nature, and consistency of Christian character”. These visits and his Chinese conversation became easier over time, and by April 1845 he was speaking fluently, “talking till my tongue is really tired”. He spent about two hours daily in the visits, handing out Christian pamphlets and preaching.

Legge's perambulations included not only Victoria, but also surrounding villages and even China. When he visited Canton in September 1844 he was struck by the beauties of a flower garden and immediately thought that it would provide a wonderful setting for some preaching. He raised the question with his host, a Chinese merchant, who immediately organized a spontaneous event there. Legge sat down in a small portico and handed out pamphlets to a long line of Chinese, then met with groups of 30-50 to discuss the texts. Within a few hours he had spoken to more than 500 and had no problems with the language, the people, or the authorities.

Despite his efforts he began to worry about the lack of converts, for it seemed that all mission work was judged in Britain mainly by convert counts, but the mission to China from 1807 had shown it to be resistant to yielding converts.

#### Ho becomes an effective evangelist and translator

In his religious work Legge was cheered by the arrival of his talented student and friend, Ho Tsunshin. Ho had been the first Chinese person ever to become Christian, baptized in Malacca by Robert Morrison decades earlier. Shortly after the treaty Ho moved his family to Hong Kong, and when Legge arrived there in 1843 Ho eagerly came to the new mission to help with printing and preaching. Legge hoped that it would be possible to ordain Ho so he could be pastor of a Chinese church. Ho soon became a spellbinding preacher to the Chinese community, even enrapturing Legge as he carried his audiences away into powerful metaphors. These sermons were preached three times a week, and Legge and Ho devised a system of writing and printing up one-page "hand-outs" of the text of the Scriptures and an outline of the topics in the sermon for the audience to read beforehand and follow during the sermon. Ho thrived in his work with Legge.

Eventually Ho did translations of religious texts into Chinese and Chinese texts into English. Legge praised Ho's Christian translations as "very superior to anything which has yet been produced in the Chinese Mission", admiring Ho's great skill in writing in a clear and idiomatic way. He recognized that it was much better than the many previous Christian tracts written in a formal Chinese based on a "foolish veneration for a classical style..." that was unintelligible to most readers. This was probably a subtle reprimand to other missionaries who chose to use the more formal classical style of written Chinese in order to present credible texts to impress the literati. The translation problem was to get the best balance between a respectful formal style and a more colloquial one that would be more effective for ordinary readers. Legge discovered that when missionaries tried to write in a more colloquial style they often

wrote Chinese that was not sufficiently correct “to command attention, or even fully to convey the meaning”.

Both the traders and the government recognized Ho’s intellectual gifts and competence in Chinese and English, and offered him lucrative jobs. His religious feeling was powerful however, and his eagerness to work with Legge was strong, and he turned down these tempting offers to work with Legge at a fraction of the salaries being offered. Legge began struggles with the LMS to convince them to allow him to ordain Ho as a Pastor.

Legge was also eager for his old friend Liang Fa to rejoin the mission in Hong Kong but Liang wrote to the LMS explaining that even though “Dr. Legge” had built a house for him, the Hong Kong climate was too dangerous. He visited Legge a number of times and preached on occasion, but John Morrison had already recognized that when Liang spoke in Chinese about Christianity his language was like baby-talk, and his real skills for the mission lay in printing. When Liang’s preference for life in his home village near Canton became clear, the much younger Ho took over as leader of the Chinese chapel services. Ho was now married, to a girl betrothed to him as an infant.

#### Legge founds the Union Chapel, which later becomes Union Church

Legge and Hobson began developing a long-term plan for their work in Hong Kong. Legge held Bible-study meetings in his drawing room on Sundays for the English-speaking population, and in January 1844 he opened a Chapel in the Chinese bazaar for Chinese preaching with the help of Liang. This congregation grew and built a 300-seat chapel for Chinese preaching. But Legge and Hobson decided that these operations needed more coherence, concluding they needed a church for an interdenominational united English and Chinese congregation, so Legge started public discussion of this in August 1844.

Legge set up a building committee, planned a church to be about 40’ by 65’, big enough to hold an English congregation of 280 and “a much larger Chinese congregation”. He began seeking donations for the \$4,000 that he thought would be needed and this generated a reprimand from the LMS because they had ordered LMS men to lead a fund drive to raise money for missions everywhere as support for its Jubilee. In January 1845 he apologized to the LMS, explained that he had been ill at the time, and that local money was more urgently needed to build a union chapel. In fact, within a few sentences he changed from being apologetic to assertive; he wrote that the fundraising he did for the union chapel was the Hong Kong contribution to the LMS Jubilee. He pointed out to the Directors that much of the money had been donated by

the poor in Hong Kong and was thus not LMS money. He added that reports of his illness were true, as he had been so ill with fever with liver disease that he was unable to work the final three months of 1844. He wrote it was a “close contact into which I was brought with eternity”.

Legge was canny in figuring out how to encourage donors for a good cause. When the money for the union chapel was slow to accumulate, he made a public donation of \$500 on behalf of the LMS, and his example unleashed a flood of contributions that soon topped \$3,000. He understood the power of social display and how to use it to benefit projects.

It is clear that he considered the union chapel as an enterprise separate from the LMS. In February 1845 Legge bought land for \$400 and by June 1845 the congregation had built and opened the first Union Chapel on Hollywood Road above Central district. The Union Chapel developed into a major church that is still active as Union Church, moved from its first location in the “Middle Bazaar”, to Hollywood Road, destroyed in WW II and revived, and finally in its current home at 22A Kennedy Road.

Legge held services at UC in English in the morning and in Chinese in the afternoon, enjoying the exercise of mental agility needed to do this. In addition to being a place of worship in English and Chinese in connection with the LMS, the UC was to be the home of an English-language congregation. The “mission statement” of UC was still the ecumenical outlook of the LMS as Legge explained in a circular. “The services in the proposed chapel will be conducted in conformity with the fundamental principle of the LMS with a view neither to advocate nor to apologize for the peculiar tenets of any party, but to expound and enforce those great doctrines which are held by Protestant churches in common” (Miller, 1990). Founding documents set out that if the LMS were ever unable to provide a minister, UC Trustees could decide what should be done on behalf of the Protestant foreign community. Over the years different members of the LMS mission took on the job of preaching and serving the congregation, and at times this rather loose arrangement caused problems. Neither Legge nor any other LMS man was ever formally identified as the minister of this independent congregation.

#### The Emperor's new Edict of Toleration leaves uncertainty over a new era

Good news affecting mission work came from an unlikely source in April 1845. Qiying, the foreigners' favourite Qing official in Canton, had written a long memorial to the Emperor in 1844 recommending toleration of Christianity. Qiying noted that it had been tolerated during the Ming era, then evil practises developed in which Chinese followers “proceeded to mislead and defile peoples' wives and daughters, and deceits to

take the eye-balls of sick persons”, so it had to be forbidden. He concluded that he had examined the beliefs of “the sect of the Lord of Heaven” (the Roman Catholics, who used the Lord of Heaven as the Chinese name for Jehovah), and concluded that the doctrines were intended to “exhort to virtue and repress vice”, and punishments would only be necessary for wrong practises. Qiying recommended an Edict of Toleration in which Christians would be allowed to live at the treaty ports and to build chapels there (Author, 1845). The Emperor responded with his vermilion seal signifying “Respect this” on 28 December 1844. In 1819 Legge’s assistant Liang Fa had to flee for his life from his home village when mandarins beat him with 30 blows from large bamboo rods, seeking to kill him for his Christian beliefs (Lovett, 1899). With the new Edict Christian preachers would no longer be in danger from the civil powers.

Legge was excited at this new clarity because it allowed entry of mission work into Canton, the port that had been the location of most of the trouble against PMs. He had visited Canton in September 1844 for ten days and had no problems when distributing pamphlets or talking to the public, so he believed that extension of the mission into Canton was now feasible. There he had met Rev. Issachar Roberts (1802 -1871), a somewhat excitable mission man from Tennessee who had been cut off by his American Baptist church after disputes, and who had since been living unsupported outside the foreign factories in the Chinese community in Canton for some time without any problems.

Legge immediately sent Liang to establish a mission presence in Canton away from the foreign factories, soon to be joined by Gillespie. Legge joined Liang there in May 1845, trying to find a building to rent for the mission. They quickly understood that landlords would willingly offer a building at a good rent, then immediately would disown the transaction on the grounds that the mob could not be trusted. This was probably accurate, as a “lawless mob” in Canton was always available if spurred on by the jealousies of the gentry often in direct contradiction of the wishes of the traders and officials. Legge revisited the Buddhist temple where he had preached in the previous September and had discussions with the priests who seemed somewhat familiar with the Christian ideas compared to the earlier visit. Other missions were also heading to Canton in the wake of the new Edict, including Dr Bridgman, editor of the *Chinese Repository*, in July.

Other PMs were getting into trouble with the authorities. American Baptist Jehu Shuck (1814-1863) wrote an intemperate annual report about his mission in which he criticized the government, quit his job, went back to the United States, and laid down trouble for his successors. Shuck’s wife had died suddenly in Hong Kong in 1844 after

giving birth to their fifth child. Macgowan at Ningbo used strong language against the opium traffickers in a letter home that was published in a magazine in America and then read in China. He impugned the traders' motives, creating outrage in the trading community.

Then the question arose as to whether the new Edict of Toleration concerned only the Roman Catholic Church, as some of the language described the religion as one in which images and crucifixes were worshipped. This was unsettling and the LMS men worried that their position was again under threat, because from the outset of the Treaty of Nanking the British authorities only wanted commercial settlers in the trading ports and had threatened to deport any mission men who caused any trouble with the Chinese. On 22 October 1845 Chinese officials eventually clarified that this new edict of toleration of Christianity included Protestants.

#### Strife in the medical Mission Society of China

Dr. Hobson, a rather anxious and mournful man, knew that nothing good could come from any of the rather rambunctious mission mood, and the fledgling Medical Mission Society of China (MMSC) was full of internal strife. It had originally been established by Canton mission doctors including Peter Parker, then expanded to include new Hong Kong mission doctors. When some of the Canton doctors moved to Hong Kong to practise they held a meeting in their new location and decided to move the Society to Hong Kong because most of the members now lived there. Parker in Canton was furious and called an urgent meeting in late March 1845, revoking the move to Hong Kong and claiming all the Society's funds belonged with him in Canton until a full review could be done.

Legge was not a direct party to this conflict but Parker's nationalistic determination to monopolize control in Canton and his aggressiveness about the medical society funds disturbed the genial feelings Dr. Hobson knew were necessary among the small group of doctors all working cooperatively under difficult conditions. Hobson identified strong anti-British feelings among the Americans in Canton as one of the root causes of this dissension, and expected the only way to resolve the crisis was for the British Hong Kong doctors and the American Canton doctors to set up independent medical mission societies.

A meeting of the MMSC in Hong Kong in April 1845 made reference to these divisions, with Legge acting as secretary to the meeting chaired by the Hon. Frederick Bruce, the younger brother of Lord Elgin. The society was in some disarray. Dr. Parker withdrew in cash all the funds in the Canton accounts of the MMSC, more than \$5,000,

even although most of the MMSC doctors now lived and worked in Hong Kong. When the Hong Kong members asked for an equitable division of the Society's funds to the operations in the two cities in August 1845 Dr. Parker refused to consider this and all the Hong Kong members of the Society, furious, resigned their positions as officers of the Society.

#### A new China Medico-Chirurgical Society with Hobson and Hong Kong doctors

In May 1845 Hobson and the Hong Kong doctors created a new somewhat scholarly medical association, the China Medico-Chirurgical Society (CMCS). Its meetings discussed diseases particular to China, the problems of the swampy areas, the lack of safe water and public baths, and the diseases arising from the Chinese custom of saving human waste. These doctors were clearly oriented to public health rather than the lucrative private practise on which Parker spent much of his time. They argued for the creation of a department of public health, a botanical garden for medicinal herbs, and for a medical school to capitalize on training students especially in light of the expertise in eye surgery that they were developing because of the high prevalence of eye disorders in China.

From Canton Dr. Parker reported on the surgeries done in his hospital, including the first kidney stone removal ever done in China, and a dramatic case in which a giant facial tumour measuring two feet was removed without anaesthetic. Within 4 minutes the tumour landed on the floor and after 40 minutes the patient was bandaged and resting easily. The Canton hospital had originally been intended for eye diseases, which were widespread in China, but it quickly turned into a general hospital because of the great array of presenting disorders. From Confucian tradition forbidding removal of body parts, many patients presented to the new mission hospitals with massive tumours that had often turned them into beggars unable to work. Parker did not attempt any reconciliation with the Hong Kong doctors until December 1848.

#### Fairbrother's disastrous trip to China

Travel was still dangerous and staffing the new missions, fraught. A new LMS man headed to Hong Kong en route to Shanghai had a trip filled with catastrophe. William Fairbrother and his wife had been seasick most of their 20 weeks to Calcutta because of two major gales. After struggling to find a ship out of Singapore that was not "full of Romish priests", Fairbrother's ship left Singapore in late June 1845 and soon fire broke out in the hold. Smoke and flames "issuing from about every place where they could find vent", the Captain ordered the hatches closed to deprive the fire of oxygen, and with desperation the casks of gunpowder were thrown overboard while the lifeboats were

being lowered. Although another vessel was seen at a distance it did not see their distress flares, and the crew finally abandoned ship when it was clear the fire was going to destroy it. Only a small quantity of fresh water was saved from the ship, which was consumed by fire within 25 minutes. Fairbrother managed to save an umbrella to provide shelter from the sun, and a few pieces of clothing for him and his wife. Finally their signals were seen and another ship arrived to save them from days of exposure in the open boats.

In late June the Fairbrothers arrived in Hong Kong where Legge met them. He found them remarkably calm “amid the horror of their situation”. Fairbrother’s main worry was about how his goods had been insured, for his losses were complete and he had shipped £120 worth of his own goods out from Calcutta. When he submitted his insurance bill to the LMS, he asked that a friend in England be given the proceeds to be used in replacing the books he needed for his work. As usual, the LMS required its mission men to handle all such financial disasters from their own resources. In late July Mrs. Fairbrother became severely ill with dysentery, this brought on premature labour and she died on Sept 18, and by September Fairbrother had become so ill he was sent back to Britain the next year to save his life. Staffing the mission was turning out to be challenging.

#### Struggles with the new Chinese Bible over the God term

The mission men in Hong Kong and Shanghai were working on a new Chinese Bible, different sections being done by different missions, and began holding meetings to make translation decisions. They continued to disagree over which characters to use for Jehovah/Theos, a problem that first appeared in 1843. Medhurst in Shanghai was the most respected and senior scholar of Chinese, and he had decided that *Shangdi* was the only acceptable term. His opponents on the question consisted mainly of Boone, the American lawyer-missionary to whom he had taught Chinese in Jakarta, and Boone’s American PM colleagues.

As they worked on this huge task the PMs were also becoming frustrated by decisions being made in Britain about their project. In January 1845 Legge was outraged to discover that the BFBS was seeking testimonials as to the translators’ piety, and that it was going to reprint the long-discredited version of the New Testament created by Robert Morrison decades earlier, rather than adopt a more recent one done by Medhurst and others that the PMs found more helpful. Worse, they learned that the Bible society would not promise to publish the version the delegates were now creating. Legge was furious that the society did not trust either the translators’ faith or skills in



Chinese, and he wrote them outlining the problems with their decisions. It was especially galling that people without knowledge of the Chinese language were making decisions about the quality of the old Morrison translation.

#### Hong Kong's trade with China flourishes

China and Hong Kong were getting used to working together. A massive influx of Chinese migrants meant many were living in all kinds of temporary structures in Hong Kong. By August 1844 the British had built nearly 100 houses, following successful auctions of leased land, in addition to the buildings constructed for the military, government, and trading operations. Sir John Davis made a voyage up the north coast and was please to report that trade was proceeding without problems in the new treaty ports. Despite this the opium trade continued to expand, and there was still major conflict about whether it was better to make it illegal or to regulate it, similar to disagreements in our own time about the regulation of alcohol, marijuana, and other non-medical drug use.

#### LMS battles for the natives of Tahiti

While Legge was suffering poverty and illness, and creating new institutions in Hong Kong, the LMS in London was dealing with new problems in Southeast Asia. The Directors were trying to meet the visiting and increasingly reactionary King Louis-Philippe of France to reproach him over the way the French empire was treating Tahitians. When the LMS sent its first mission ship out to Tahiti in 1796 it found beautiful islands ruled by despotic and cruel chiefs, and a bloody religion that included infanticide and human sacrifice so severe it was threatening extinction of the Tahitian people. Christianity was established over a 3-year period that became associated with good government, a simple and fair justice system, and general education.

Trouble had started in 1836 when two Roman Catholic missionaries from France tried to establish missions there without asking permission from the Queen of Tahiti as required. Two years later, a visiting French captain fined the Queen \$2,000 for enforcing her nation's laws, and a year later another visiting French Captain formally exempted all French from Tahitian laws. More Catholic missionaries arrived, then in 1842 France declared that Tahiti was a French Protectorate, coerced the Queen into signing an agreement, and forcibly occupied the island in a series of bloody battles. Villages and Protestant mission schools were destroyed, and the people were scattered in misery.

The LMS wanted to meet with the King Louis-Philippe to plead with him to restore the Queen and her people to their freedom, and to allow Tahitian laws to govern all

foreigners equally. It wrote up an elaborate document petitioning the King as to the facts, pointing out that it had no special interests in Tahiti and had no government money, that it was not acting on behalf of any of its spiritual or economic or geopolitical interests, but only in the interests of stopping violence against the Tahitians. The language of the December 13 petition was very submissive and humble, but it did not achieve its goal because the King refused to meet with the LMS. His own situation became increasingly perilous in the fractious politics of France, and the LMS learned it did not have as much influence with foreign officials as it had earned with the British.

### Chapter 22 Defeated by illness, abandoning Hong Kong

Legge was mastering the Cantonese dialect, and now spoke it better than any foreigner according to Dr. Hobson. Hobson recognized Legge's tremendous energy and drive, "he has a very active mind and cannot but employ it", and he hoped that James would live a long life after surviving his grave illnesses of the previous year. Severe illnesses had also affected Mary and their children, and health problems soon became a crisis for the family and the mission.

Across their five years together in Malacca and Hong Kong they found the hot climate of Hong Kong a challenge, suffering increasingly severe illnesses including dysentery and high fevers. In addition, Mary's pregnancies had been perilous. By 1845 James and Mary had generated four children, two of whom they lost to premature death. Mary also suffered with each pregnancy, first becoming seriously ill while pregnant with her third child in the fall of 1843, shortly after their Hong Kong arrival. That son was born in early December and died within an hour, and Mary was ill for months after. After another pregnancy with illness complications, Mary delivered a second son 15 February 1845 and this one was stillborn (as was a third son in 1852). It is probable that she suffered pre-eclampsia, a metabolic disorder of pregnancy with a sudden rise in blood pressure that creates a cascade of often-fatal organ problems damaging mother and foetus. In addition their daughter Mary had been sick for months across the summer of 1845, nursed tenderly back to health by her Chinese amah, Chang Ache.

Legge was severely ill across May-June 1844, and became so incapacitated he was unable to work the last three months of 1844, starting with a high fever that expanded to include liver disease, suggesting malaria. Although he recovered with the more "bracing air of the season" in January 1845, by late July 1845 he was again seriously ill, confined to bed for two weeks with severe dysentery, his second attack of the summer. Across August his fever continued, then kidney and liver disease returned and his doctor ruled he must leave the climate and stop working for some months or he would not survive the next summer.

Legge was treated with "severe bleeding", but in late September he was dangerously ill again, and by October his attack of "Hong Kong fever", "ulceration of the intestines" and "inflammation of the kidneys" was so extreme he expected to die. "For two days it seemed that my work in time was done. I was bid to look more directly in the face of eternity than I had done before..." Dr. Anderson of Macau told James he would need one to two years to recover from his severe fevers, and Colonial Surgeon Dr. Dill was equally worried about Legge's severe chronic dysentery and liver disease. He

described the “shattered state of your constitution” and ordered Legge’s return to the safer climate of Britain.

Legge was not the only mission man suffering: “God has brought every member of our mission through the furnace during the first year of our labours in China”. Hobson and Gillespie had both been seriously ill with fever in the summer of 1844, and Fairbrother was devastated when his wife died in September 1845, ten weeks after their arrival in China, dying in premature labour brought on by prolonged severe dysentery she developed within their first month in Hong Kong. He was also soon so ill he had to return to Britain.

The young couple realized James’ survival was at stake, and knew they had to return to England in order to have any chance of saving his life. Gillespie was brought back from Canton to take over the Hong Kong mission even though James considered he was too young to handle all the work alone. During his absence Gillespie’s Canton house was wrecked by mobs in an uprising and he was unable to return there.

James was so ill his friends believed he would die, or at best, that he could never return. On November 19, prostrate, James Legge was carried on board the six-year old *Duke of Portland* barque bound homeward via the Cape. The kindly captain invited James and Mary, their daughters, their Chinese amah Chang Ache, and the “three lads” to his vessel for a total fare of £200, the price that had been charged to Dr. Hobson and his wife, giving the three lads free passage. In addition to his own household, Legge was also responsible for the care of four children of LMS man John Stronach, and the ailing wife of another missionary, who died on board three weeks before they reached the UK in late March 1846.

The young couple with their two young girls, had to admit defeat after years of suffering and effort. James was only 29, and although he feared his life was over he left all the family furniture, silver, and books in Hong Kong in the thin hope of returning. He explained to the LMS that they were valued at more than £100, which was the cost of the travel funds he was taking as an advance. The implication was clear that if he died with his travel expenses as an outstanding debt to the LMS, it could recover its costs by selling his household possessions.

With his devastating illness Legge’s great vision of service and scholarship seemed destroyed. His main scholarly work for the past six years had been mastering reading Chinese during his early-morning studies, and practicing speaking Chinese while doing mission tasks during the day. He had been spending two hours every day visiting Chinese homes and practicing “the colloquial”, but he had not yet completed any part of his grand plan to create English works from the great historical texts of China.

The substantial family group boarded the ship and James looked forward to the tranquillity of the voyage. After “six years of unusual tension. I have had no repose - no rest since I left home.” He believed that his missionary work was finished forever, and that his great plan for the Chinese classics was doomed. “It is with much reluctance that I quit this post. Just as the machinery requisite to effective operations in our work has been completed through my labours, and a course of action has been commenced which bids fair to be crowned with no ordinary success, I am called to put off my armour and retire”. He reflected that the years of great adversities that he had suffered were a means of reminding him not to become too proud. He wrote that Providence, “however afflictive and mysterious” was correcting him and “repressing” any tendency to “self-exaltation” or self-confidence (H. E. Legge, 1905), p. 52. He usually considered Providence as a generating force for the universe, but not one intervening actively into human affairs.

James Legge and Benjamin Hobson had studied Chinese together in London, come out to China together, and worked together across their years in Hong Kong and Canton, and now both were forced to retreat to Britain because of illness. James and Mary had been preceded in their defeated return to Britain by their friends Benjamin Hobson and his wife Jane. The Hobsons left Hong Kong in late July because of Jane’s sustained illness, described by her doctor as “extreme emaciation” with a condition so fragile that she would need the most skilful and delicate care, as too extreme a remedy might kill her. Hobson was told he must set aside his “natural inclinations to public duty” and must provide his wife’s care himself. Hobson had become quite depressed in the spring of 1845, finding himself with “languishing zeal” after the death of his child. While James and Mary were still on the high seas returning to Britain, Benjamin’s wife died of persistent fever and diarrhoea on board on December 22, 1845 just off Dover in the English Channel before they had reached landfall, after a journey of 17,000 miles.

The death rate for sick Europeans in Hong Kong was being calculated as 32%, with 315 deaths per 1000 treated by the hospital; most were from fevers and dysentery. In striking contrast, among the Chinese in prison in Hong Kong, the death rate was only 1.5%, nearly all from ulcers. Anglo-Saxons were having a hard time thriving in the challenging heat, the swampy landscape, and the crude sanitation.

### Part 5 Rejuvenation in Britain

Legge survived the trip back to Britain and as his health returned he was plunged into an increasingly pressing round of speeches throughout England as the LMS used him to enlist support for the missions in China. While he seemed destined to return to Hong Kong, the mission there was continuing his work.

#### Chapter 23 The LMS in Hong Kong

Although the LMS mission families in Hong Kong and Canton suffered sorrow, grief, and fear arising from their personal misfortunes and mission setbacks, they were also making progress. The LMS had finally approved the new mission building, it was determined to operate a station in Canton, and the girls' school in Hong Kong was running well. Union Church was raising money to be able to hire its own minister, was collecting donations to pay for a handsome new church and was doing well, with \$3,500 raised by November for total costs estimated at \$4700. The *Chinese Repository* praised it as "among the best specimens" of the new buildings, grumbling that in contrast "the Colonial Chaplain is still obliged to officiate in a mat shed". The MES School being run by Sam Brown was thriving with 30 children whose parents were becoming used to the idea that the foreigners really were willing to teach their children for no fees. The school was bilingual and the children learned "maps, arithmetic, mechanics, reading, writing, composition, and vocal music".

A new threat to the LMS mission arose from events in Scotland where a huge religious schism had again developed within the Scottish National Kirk, after an incredibly foolish judgment in the Scottish courts concerning the power of the church's General Assembly to enact its own rules. The "Great Disruption" of 1843 led to 1/3 of all its members leaving to create a separate Free Church, meaning a church free from the power of a local patron "heritor", principal landowner of the parish, to appoint the minister to a congregation and free of all government connection.

James and his family had long been outside the established church of Scotland, but this quarrel between the domains of church and state in Scotland was complicating the affairs in the Union Church in Hong Kong, when some men in the congregation in 1845 decided they wanted a pastor from the new Free Church. This plan left Legge aghast because the deepest founding idea of the LMS was that it would not be party to specific church doctrine. The Free Church was a fundamentalist kind of Scots church with views more narrow than those set out in the LMS framework.

China and Britain struggle with each other

In June 1844 there had been riots against the Americans in Canton because the gentry were again agitating against more foreign treaties, but 1845 brought some political events the missions thought would be helpful. In December Gillespie reported that the recent Qing Edict of Toleration was going to apply to both Roman Catholic and Protestant churches, not just “to those Chinese Christians who honoured the religion of the West by worshipping the crucifix”, thus it was now clear that mission work in the five treaty ports would be allowed. In December the United States also signed a treaty with China allowing trade in the five ports, extraterritoriality, and the establishment of the two nations as equals. Qiying signed the agreement but was ill, and Canton was unsettled even for Americans.

The optimism was premature and further hostilities developed between the British and Chinese just as James and Mary began their defeated trip back to England in late 1845. Within days of Legge’s departure Qiying visited the colony and put on a huge entertainment for the colony’s leaders in a mansion renamed Qiying House in recognition of this visit. He was ostensibly celebrating an agreement to have the British remove their troops from Zhoushan, to be matched by the Chinese agreeing to open Canton to trade. The British did leave Zhoushan as agreed, but Qiying and the Canton gentry had no intention of opening Canton to trade.

### Chapter 24 Three Chinese lads in Britain, family challenges, and Queen Victoria

The health problems that had forced James and Mary to leave Hong Kong were still troublesome for many months after their return to Scotland in late March 1846. The trip had taken five months and James was still very ill by June, often unable to move around after getting up “late”, which for him was around 6 or 7 AM. His notebook entries are laconic: “got up at 7 o’clock – Bad.” Mary was similarly in very poor health and often confined to bed since her difficult pregnancy and tragic delivery. James used his convalescence to memorize large sections of the Bible and to think about the theology underlying them.

#### “The Three Lads”, Ng Asow, Song Hootkiam, and Li Kimlin

The “three lads” Song Hootkiam, Ng Asow, and Li Kimlin <sup>22</sup>, had originally studied with Legge in Malacca where his educational work with a few senior Chinese students had been quite successful in both educational and personal terms. Legge received two of the lads in Hong Kong in March 1845, followed by the third, and soon all were thriving. By the time of the desperate departure of Legge and his family for the UK, he had decided to take these students with him for schooling in Scotland to ensure they would learn “the English, so as to be able to read it with intelligence and to speak it.” He planned to take the three lads to Huntly to be educated at the Duchess of Gordon’s school, and to be under the religious care of Legge’s own old minister John Hill. Legge hoped to provide them with the best education possible in preparation for their return to Hong Kong for training as evangelists. Legge sought LMS permission for this plan, arguing that the lads could live with his friends and not cost the society anything; in the event they lived in his father’s home in the centre of town.

#### Recovery and problems in Britain

The family had a series of new deadly threats shortly after their return to Britain, en route to Huntly. They were horrified when their Chinese amah Chang Ache broke her leg when she threw herself in under the wheel of a runaway coach in order to save the life of their young daughter Eliza. The dreadful accident left terrible injuries from complex fractures that kept the amah unable to walk for months, and her suffering devastated James and the family. He wrote “Little did our poor nurse think that in

---

<sup>22</sup> For the Romanization of these names I have chosen rather arbitrarily one of the most frequently-used versions for each. In the literature their Cantonese names are spelled with wide variations, almost never including pinyin, thus I have decided against pinyin.



following us to England she was going to a couch on which she should lie for months in agony and from which she would return a cripple to her own people”.

Mary was also seriously injured in that accident and was pregnant again, thus once more her health was under severe threat. James addressed God out of his anxieties, with the memories of the accident etched into memory but grateful that in the end, God in wrath remembered mercy: “He said to the wheel and to the disease, but no farther”. Legge took the accident as an admonition not to boast of tomorrow, and “be not high-minded, but fear”. Mary’s parents were also suffering because her beloved brother had returned ill and visibly dying after disastrous events involving bankruptcy in Tasmania.

Gradually the cool climate and healthful setting of Huntly restored them. They established their household in a farm just outside Huntly while the three lads stayed with Legge’s parents in town so they would be near their school and under the care of Legge’s friend Rev. Hill. More than 150 years later the little street in Huntly running off the main square where the three lads stayed is still called Chinatown.

As Legge began to recover he started again to show his vast reserves of energy and impressive resilience. By late 1846 Legge was active in mission work under the direction of the LMS as they used his skills in speaking to large audiences about China and Hong Kong. Quickly his schedule became astonishing, revealing his new energy and focus. In November 1846 he described three sermons on one Sunday in Stirling, a public meeting on Monday, a long walk around Stirling Castle on Tuesday, then a sail down the Forth and a public meeting on the coast the same day, with a crowd “as good as could be expected on a tempestuous night in Scotland”. The next few days included more travels and meetings every day, interspersed with tourist tramping to see local ruins, antiquities, political sites, and intriguing bits of nature. Across the first part of 1847 the LMS set an incredibly energetic schedule for him. In March he recorded 24 engagements, and some of these were huge events. In one meeting more than 2,500 people attended: “every hole and corner was crammed, stairs, passages and all”. His life became a massive preaching and lecturing program to churches throughout Scotland and England. People were fascinated by his accounts of Chinese customs and beliefs.

### Travel rigours in Britain

Travel in Britain in 1846 was still a very challenging matter, and Legge’s approach to it reveals his energy, powers of endurance, and initiative. He described a gruelling trip in the cold winter of December 1846 that started out from his home village of Huntly. He aimed to have Christmas dinner with a friend in London. The scheduled steamer for Newcastle had failed to show up for its trip out of Aberdeen for more than a

week, so he went to the mail packet office. He found that a mail coach left at 3 but it was too expensive, so he dashed down to the sea and got onto a cheaper schooner sailing for Leith (near Edinburgh) at the same hour. After settling down awaiting his 3 PM departure he heard rumours that the sea was too rough and the schooner could not safely be towed across the harbour's bar. He asked the master if this could be true and had the rumour confirmed, so jumped onto the tug that was due to do the job and had the tug-master take it out so they could study the bar. They found that the trip was truly impossible so Legge jumped off the tug, abandoned the schooner plan and dashed back in time to get onto the mail coach, which he had to ride on the outside. He had hoped to stay on it until Edinburgh but it was freezing cold, with deep snow throughout the country, and "...by the time we reached Montrose (about 1/3 of the distance down the coast) I had no more life in me than a huge icicle".

Legge eventually managed to get inside the coach, which then arrived at Edinburgh an hour too late for him to catch the 5 AM train. He was able to leave by 8 AM and got onto his next coach at Berwick by 10, expecting to arrive in Newcastle for a train by 6 PM. He began "luxuriating in the anticipation of a good dinner and a warm bath", but became stuck for 11 hours in a huge snowstorm, eventually missing his train out of Newcastle by 40 minutes. A special train was added at 11 that night for all the delayed travellers, and James eventually reached London many hours later. He reported this wildly erratic and troublesome trip with a kind of exhilarated gusto.

A cold trip by coach in July the next year that took 12 hours to cover 105 miles similarly revealed his endurance, but also gives a glimpse of both impatience and his memorable capacity to recover quickly. James confessed that he finally arrived "not like "patience on a monument smiling at grief," but impatience impersonate on the top of a coach, wan and weary, with head half sunk between the shoulder, hands pushed to the very extremity of greatcoat pockets, knees crunched together, and teeth firmly compressed to prevent their chattering. All's well, however, that ends well. I have slept and breakfasted, and am ready for action".

Whatever fears for his physical survival had been raised in the pessimistic LMS medical exam ten years earlier had been long since proved unreliable. He had lost two children to premature deaths in Hong Kong but he had survived not just the routine health challenges of tropical fevers, but prolonged bouts of malaria so severe it caused significant liver damage, along with serious attacks of dysentery and kidney problems. Despite all these challenges he was quickly revived by his return to a more healthful climate and to the stimulation of talking and planning for more work in China.

James Legge with his family

James loved the time he was able to spend in Scotland with his father and brothers, and in England with Mary's parents. In Huntly he was refreshed by the "holy calm, that solemn hush, which broods over on the Sabbath", and in England was energized by exciting talks with his older brother George, the very intellectual minister of a congregation. George's son Alexander had committed some kind of indiscretion involving money and George's congregation had shrunk in disapproval of this. James regarded this congregational "punishment" as severe, writing in awe of George's dazzling imagination and profound reasoning abilities. James moved with Mary to a house just south of Hyde Park in London, where Mary's parents lived. He sent his daughters Eliza and Mary to Dollar Academy near Stirling in Scotland, and left the three lads in Huntly living with his father and attending the Duchess of Gordon's school.

The Dollar Academy was the first co-educational boarding school in the United Kingdom, including girls from its opening in 1818. It had been founded by a bequest from John McNabb, a prosperous ship-owner, merchant, and former slave-trader. Its large handsome buildings lie on a south-facing slope of the Ochils Mountains along the mile-wide valley of the Devon River heading south. It was renowned for the splendour of its buildings and gardens, as well as for its very philanthropic operation as a superior school that used fees from wealthy students to support the education of poor students. It was created to serve the poor of the parish, to provide free education for local children unable to pay fees, with fees on a sliding scale for others. The Dollar Academy continues to be proud of its egalitarian traditions, although it became a private school in 1979 affected by various changes in government education policy

In 1847 serious family problems disrupted Legge's work in London. Under relentless pressures to take on writing tasks for a mission journal and more public talks, pressing domestic problems developed. His eldest daughter Eliza was alarmingly sick, the family's amah had been permanently crippled by the accident months earlier, his wife was in fragile condition with her next pregnancy, and James was becoming overwhelmed with anxiety about his family. "I m so harassed in my own mind by (this) business that I can scarcely keep consistent throughout a short note". He drew back on commitments for more writing and advised the LMS he should be cut off their list for August lectures in case the doctor required him to move the whole family to the countryside for better health. Most of Legge's lecture tours were done without Mary, who rallied enough to give birth to a daughter Anne Murray in late 1847 in London. Both Mary and babe Annie, "the child of so many anxieties and prayers", were very ill for months after the delivery.

Legge was now well enough that he increasingly focused on returning to Hong Kong, and worked to collect books and science equipment to take back to the ACC. He decided that basic laboratory demonstrations in physics and chemistry could also be of great interest to the Chinese community and this would help publicity about the college. He planned to invite Dr. Hobson and some of the military and civil engineers to take part in these.

This restorative period again led to a revival of the lecture tours set up for him by the LMS. In the UK across 1847 Legge was giving lectures around the country and attracting attention in the press, the more so when he included the three lads in his talks to large congregations. They had become great favourites in Huntly, and Legge visited them there in October 1847 when they were baptized at the Missioner Kirk by Rev. Hill in front of a large and thrilled congregation.

Under their careful Scots tutors the three young Chinese men learned to write beautiful copperplate roman script as they developed the fluency in spoken and written English that Legge had hoped for them. They also received a broad education that included science and history. Song had exchanged a number of letters with his father in Singapore, who had approved of the great adventure for his son. When their school term ended in December 1847, to Legge's surprise Song and Li pressed him to be allowed to come with him on his lecture tours. As a result he brought all three to London and eventually they were included in his speaking program, charming audiences as they spoke with a pronounced Scottish accent.

Legge was told that an ordination meeting he addressed in January 1848 in Manchester was "the best public meeting" the church had ever had. The congregation refused to disperse until all had shaken hands with the three lads, and the lecture earned the LMS £62 for use in the Hong Kong mission. In early February 1848 they spoke to a huge congregation of more than 3,000 at Craven Chapel in London, and a further 1,000 had to be turned away for an assembly that lasted until 10 at night. Sometimes Legge addressed a thousand children in the afternoon then preached to adults in the evening, moving from city to city. On one occasion he took the three lads to visit a factory and a home in Leicester with hundreds milling around outside in such turbulence they had to escape by cab. The lads' first trips by rail "startled them ... at first into a good many exclamations of surprise", but they soon became imperturbable travellers, and Song even developed a show of "philosophic indifference". Legge earned another £100 that he used to buy books for the Hong Kong school.

James and the lads eventually became tired of these travels and the endless speaking engagements. "The fatigue and excitement have been too much for them, and

for myself also". His yearnings to return to China became more urgent, and he felt a poignant stab of opportunity unfulfilled whenever he caught sight of his Chinese books. He advised the LMS that he would need additional scholarship money to support more students in the preparatory school leading up to the ACC, and outlined the training in type-casting and lithography that a new LMS printer, Rev, Thomas Gilfillan would need before leaving for Hong Kong.

#### Henry Room paints Legge and Cochrane makes an engraving

The three lads so captivated British congregations and the LMS that members proposed a commemorative painting before they left for Hong Kong with Legge. Late in 1847 James wrote his father that some of the friends of the LMS wanted a painting done commemorating the baptism of the three Chinese students, showing them being taught by James. Established artist Henry Room (1802-1850) knew James and the boys, and he offered to do the work for 30 guineas. Another supporter promised to pay for an engraving of the painting to be done by Cochrane, this to be printed in the EMMC, the mission journal published by Mary's father. The original painting could hang in the LMS Mission House. Enough funds were donated that by December Li Kimlin gave his first sitting to Room.

The engraving based on Room's painting was published in the mission magazine. It was a delicately conceived scene and rather touching in its effects, identifying the young men individually as "Le Kimlin; Sung Fuh-Kew; Wooman-sew, Students". It shows Legge sitting with the three young men standing, discussing some point in open texts while he looks on. The young men wear the long Chinese gowns of scholars and the obligatory Manchu queue down the backs of their shaven heads. Legge wears the high-necked white shirt and plain dark jacket of a solid citizen, looking at his students with a calm and fatherly attitude. The images have a somewhat flowery romantic aspect, with a curly Victorian flavour rather different from George Richmond's drawing of Legge done in the same period. Richmond was an artist in the court of Queen Victoria who within a year did a similar drawing of Thomas Babington Macaulay and later, of Charles Darwin. Richmond's portrait of Legge shows him as a lean, fresh, bony, intense, and handsome young man.

#### The three lads are invited to meet Queen Victoria

The celebrity of the three lads led to an unexpected invitation. Without Legge's knowledge Mary's mother pressed her husband Dr. Morison to write the Queen's secretary to request a meeting with Queen Victoria for Legge and the three lads, and Legge was surprised to receive such a letter. They first met Prince Albert, then the

Queen in a private meeting on February 9, 1848. Prince Albert was an energetic intellectual eagerly enmeshed in all the wonderful discoveries and inventions of the industrial revolution. He had succeeded in modernizing the curriculum at Cambridge to include such subjects as history, economics, chemistry, geography, biology and modern languages for the first time, and was already dreaming of the massive and fabulous Great Exhibition of 1851.

Legge was impressed by Prince Albert's handsome appearance, but was more completely captivated by the Queen, who was then 28, three years younger than James. She had already been Queen for 11 years, married for 8 years, was mother of five children and soon to give birth to her sixth in March. She had survived three assassination attempts since her 1840 marriage.

Legge had some trepidation about the invitation, and "The lads looked more flushed than they did on the morning of their baptism". It was a private meeting so "there was no kneeling and kissing of hands". In the event, the lads and Legge were all quite pleased with the Queen:

"...She is a sweet, quiet little body. She was dressed simply and unpretendingly. Her eye is fine and rolling, and a frequent smile, showing her two front teeth, makes you half forget you are before Majesty, though there is a very powerful dignity about all her bearing. Our conversation was all about China and the lads... The boys were much taken by surprise, having been expecting to see a person gorgeously dressed, with a crown and all the other paraphernalia of royalty".

The Queen and Prince asked the lads many questions about China, and Legge left a document describing the mission with the Prince.

Within five years the Queen would become the first woman to take advantage of the newly discovered inhalable anaesthetic, ether, to help her in her eighth childbirth in April 1853, even although religious fundamentalists thundered that such a use was against Biblical requirements for childbirth to be painful. Her doctor was the famous John Snow who would shortly identify the Broad street pump in London as a major source of cholera deaths. Experiments in the Massachusetts General Hospital in October 1846 and by John Snow in London that year opened a wonderful new era in human well-being that was soon adopted by Dr. Hobson for his medical work in Hong Kong. This was the use of ether to provide anaesthesia to eliminate pain during surgery. News of American dentist Dr. Morton's public demonstration of its use in October 1846

during removal of a major facial tumour spread around the world, even though its use had been demonstrated four years earlier by a Georgian surgeon Dr. C. Long. By the time Legge and Dr. Hobson returned to their work in Hong Kong in 1848, Benjamin was able to use anaesthesia for the endless tumour operations that were a major part of medical practice in China.

#### Planning the return but family illness and problems

In Britain Legge's return to Hong Kong was celebrated in several ways. The handsome, newly finished Union Chapel in Hong Kong was pictured on the front cover of the January 1848 EMMC, the mission magazine edited by Legge's father-in-law Dr. Morison. This was the truly "union" chapel envisioned by Legge in 1844 for use by both English and Chinese-language congregations; it had cost more than £1,000. In the UK on February 8 Legge and fifteen other men and women who were headed to stations of the China LMS mission were feted in a huge service in Craven Chapel. In their willingness to "sacrifice English comforts, health, and even life", they were encouraged to win "bloodless battles", to help "achieve victories over ignorance and vice" and "to scatter love, peace, salvation, friendship, and joy, wherever you are located among the millions of China".

By the late spring of 1848 Legge was desperately eager to return to Hong Kong. His health had recovered, and his interest in both his studies of Chinese and the LMS mission had fully returned with the recovery of his health. Dr. Morison's London congregation at Trevor Chapel, Brompton held a large meeting in early 1848 to give the Legge family best wishes for their return trip. They presented a gold watch and chain to Legge, and a hearty donation of £55 to take back for the work in the Hong Kong station. The speakers spoke with such warm sentiments that "the majority of the assembly were dissolved in tears" by the end of the evening. But the family was in distress and their plans in jeopardy because baby Annie was ill.

Mary's pregnancy with Annie and her delivery in late 1847 had again been complicated by a severe illness that brought her close to death, and little Annie also struggled for life. Mary finally began to rally after a terrible crisis and James hoped for steady recovery, but again "frightful disease intervened, and (more) months of languishing upon her bed were her portion". Just as she began to recover a second time and when their departure from Huntly to London for the return journey to Hong Kong was imminent, Annie again became gravely ill.

Many arrangements had already been made that could not easily be changed, and James was frantic with worry as he feared the journey would kill Annie. She rallied

somewhat, and “when danger became not so imminent, it was necessary to take a long journey to embark on our ships – a journey whose consequences were almost sure to be fatal to the infant. What could we do? Our way was hedged up.” They went to London to await their ship, then “a most merciful answer was given. The same hand that afflicted the babe was laid upon the winds”. Contrary winds delayed for two weeks the docking of the ship they were booked to take, so they were able to rest in Mary’s parents home while Annie regained her strength.

Legge took a lesson from these terrifying events: “live loose from the world”. He noted that St. Paul had told Christians that “time is short”, and wrote “I might have been traversing this ocean solitary and desolate, she who is my blessing and my joy, mingling in the dust and our children under other guardianships, But it is not so”; the Lord had pitied them.



Chapter 25 Rev. George Smith disapproves of Hong Kong, Ho is ordained

While Legge was recovering in Scotland in 1846, in Hong Kong a visiting Church of England minister George Smith was preparing a book reporting on the colony (G. Smith, 1847). Although he admired the broad road winding along the waterfront, the great view from the MES School on the hill, and the handsome granite used to build new buildings, he declared that Hong Kong was still clearly inferior to the more northerly treaty port of Zhoushan in terms of climate, situation, and access to natural resources. Zhoushan was not going to be available however, as it was being returned to Chinese authority as the last compensation payments for the destroyed opium and other trade costs were finally being received by the British. Smith also disapproved of mission work being established in Hong Kong, writing, “not one more iota of resources should be sent to Hong Kong mission work”, and instead mission support should all go to the treaty ports. Hong Kong was of “an unpromising and uninviting Missionary character”. Smith apparently shared the opinions of his Prime Minister, the Emperor, and the *feng shui* masters of Canton.

Smith complained that mission workers in Hong Kong met only the ‘lowest’ type of Chinese, as the “lowest dregs of native society flock to the British settlement in hope of gain or plunder”. Most were servants, coolies, and masons, and one-third lived on boats, which were homes to pirates and thieves working in secret societies protecting each other from the police. He claimed that the respectable Chinese of Canton wanted no association with the Hong Kong Chinese, and any wealthy Chinese merchants who moved to Hong Kong left their families and properties behind as pledges and hostages for the Chinese authorities, so were all still under the control of the mandarins. The poor working Chinese tended to save up their earnings in Hong Kong then return to Canton, and most of them were illiterate so they were inaccessible to all the missionary work based on distributing written leaflets.

Smith also complained about the too-numerous spoken Chinese languages of Hong Kong, listing Hakka and three different dialects of “Punti” (Cantonese) related to natives coming from Macau, Whampoa and Fujian. He declared it would be impossible for a foreign student “of ordinary talent, ... ever to attain a fluent or correct pronunciation of any dialect in Hong Kong”. The original population of 5,500 Chinese in 1841 had grown to 19,000 by 1844, and despite elaborate regulation of Chinese behaviour including curfews, Chinese workers were suffering from protection rackets run by wealthy Chinese in collusion with local Chinese police. The place was made worse by the brash worldly and irreligious European adventurers who lived there, ignoring the Sabbath and roistering in the rough mostly-male settlement.

About the only signs of productive mission work that Smith could find were three institutions closely associated with the work of James Legge and the LMS, including the MES school of 30 students run by Sam Brown and his wife, Dr. Hobson's hospital, to which he was expected to return, and the ACC and girls school set up by James and Mary Legge. Smith declared that there would be no need for printing presses because no European texts were needed for mission work, and Chinese printers using wood blocks could easily make several thousand Chinese copies at a time. In sum, Rev. Smith viewed the entire Hong Kong mission enterprise as misplaced and hopeless. Despite these strong views, within a few years he returned as the Bishop of a newly created Diocese of Victoria for the Church of England, to spend many years there in the outpost that he so scorned in his book.

While Legge was in Britain his hopes for the mission were boosted when his old friend Ho Tsunshin was celebrated in a momentous LMS ceremony in Hong Kong in October 1846 in which he was ordained as a minister in a large ceremony in Chinese and English in the Union Chapel. The Revs. Gillespie, Cleland, and Milne guided the ceremony, which included a short Chinese sermon, a Chinese hymn, and a public examination in English of Ho's understanding of Christian ideas. Ho responded in "remarkably good English". This was the first ordination of a Chinese minister in China.

#### New unrest in Canton

In Canton, Qiying was struggling with the gentry and scholars to try and get them to accept the Treaty. He issued a special proclamation ordering everyone to treat foreigners with respect in the city, as they were already being treated in the other four treaty ports, but in January 1846 there were both anti-government and anti-foreign riots in Canton. Anti-government conflict started when the overzealous guards of the city's prefect badly whipped a poor man who had snatched a towel from the prefect's entourage. News of the excessive beating spread rapidly through the city and mobs rushed to destroy the prefect's house and set it on fire, with riots lasting two days.

The Qing army was mobilized to protect the final compensation payment of two million dollars to the British, and Qiying tried to appease the people with more proclamations that essentially failed. Finally he wrote "We, the governor-general and governor, are ashamed and covered with perspiration while we think of our inability, on the one hand, to make the foreigners yield, and on the other, to secure the confidence of our Chinese... That we have a mind to treat foreigners generously and our own people harshly is to us utterly incredible. Would we could cut out our hearts and show them to you!" (Author, 1846). To try and restore order Qiying issued a proclamation delaying the

opening of Canton to foreign traders, but it was clear to the traders and the governor of Hong Kong that the Qing officials in Canton did not have good control over the local people.

On two occasions in early July the crowd was roused to anti-foreigner actions by the bullying actions of a British trader against a fruit-seller. Qiying reported to the British consul that on 4 July Mr. Compton attacked a Canton fruit-seller with his cane, smashed the man's stall and beat the Qing military official who came to investigate. The Canton crowd was outraged and began attacking the foreign factories. Qiying alleged that a few days later Compton again attacked the fruit vendor, then grabbed and dragged another man into a hong where he tied and beat him. These assaults aroused the Chinese market men, and in response they attacked a foreigner's house and the factories in a three-hour siege during which the armed defence of the factories eventually led to the death of three Chinese men. Later that July a group of Americans on a boating jaunt through the creeks to nearby Honan were assaulted by mobs throwing chunks of granite as large as 85 lbs. down onto the boat. The seven boatmen were all injured and the boat wrecked. The tourists had not even entered the village, so it appeared that the trigger for the attack was simply that they were not Chinese.

Francis Macgregor, the British Consul in Canton, passed judgement on Mr Compton's actions in September, sentenced him to two months in jail and fined him \$200 Spanish for violent acts that threatened the well-being of all traders in the hong. In October Mr. Compton demanded the evidence against him, paid the fine under protest, and appealed to governor Sir John Davis in Hong Kong. Davis wrote Compton confirming Macgregor's verdict and sentence, and his right to make them. Compton and the traders were furious, considered the verdict had not taken account of provocations suffered by Compton, and claimed the sentence to be excessive and inappropriate to the various ordinances. Compton wrote a letter to Lord Palmerston the Foreign Secretary via Consul Macgregor, who refused to forward it to either Palmerston or Governor Davis on the grounds of its intemperate language.

The British traders argued that the Chinese fruit-seller had set up his stall directly in a walkway where it was prohibited, and when he refused to move and Compton was unable to get the passing military man to get the man to move, he took action to remove the nuisance. They argued that the events on July 4 had nothing at all to do with the much larger conflicts four days later and which appeared to be all blamed upon Compton. They complained that Macgregor had allowed Chinese allegations full rein without seeking evidence or Compton's own report, and begged for a reversal of the sentence. The British consul heard conflicting reports of Compton's drunkenness, and

eventually Palmerston wrote that the fine had been given under an improper ordinance but no further action should be taken. Mail to the UK still took four months each way and Macgregor had to make decisions in the moment to settle disputes even if his decisions were later criticized in London.

The British traders were highly alarmed at these events and the actions of the crowd, and minimizing Mr. Compton's role in triggering the July conflicts they urged the British consul in Canton to bring a warship to anchor off the Canton factories as a visible symbol of protection for them in light of the inability of the Qing officials to provide help. On the question of the warship, in August consul Macgregor agreed to refer the question to Governor Sir John Davis in Hong Kong, and the *Nemesis* was placed at anchor near the factories, finally withdrawn in December. At the same time Qiying decided to place a small police operation by the factories to intervene in conflicts before they became major incidents.

Officials on both sides wanted to reduce local conflicts that might explode into major disturbances. The British diplomats conferred with Lord Palmerston, both understanding that an important root of the problems came from rich British traders who got drunk then would bully the Chinese, inciting resentment and reaction. The traders in Canton were furious with the Hong Kong and UK governments for their failure to provide armed protection to the Canton factories, and by October had organized themselves into a small armed body to protect their lives and property from popular outbreaks. The British consul was in turn furious with them, warning them that any death arising from their activities would be liable to trial before the Supreme Court of Hong Kong for manslaughter or murder. The traders were indignant and argued that the consul had privately agreed with their plans for self-defence against assault and fire, promising to keep their activities low-key. The basic problem lay in the inability of the Qing officials in Canton to enforce the open port provisions of the Treaty within the fractious Cantonese community, generating frustrations in the traders that led to impulsive acts of aggression over minor issues.

The conflicts continued, and by the time the triennial Provincial Civil Service military examinations were due to take place in Canton in late October, the local magistrate issued a proclamation forbidding all foreigners from leaving their hong to watch the infantry and cavalry archery competitions that were part of the exams, always a wonderful spectacle. "Let everyone tremblingly obey". The traders must have complained about this prohibition in which treaty rights were being constrained, and by late November Qiying responded. The magistrate proved that the proclamations were identical to those issued in earlier years but Qiying realized they were now incorrect in

light of the treaty, so the prohibitions would no longer appear on future announcements about the examinations. A certain ambiguity was left in his note suggesting that prohibitions could still be created by the magistrate next time, but not using the stock language of earlier placards, so the traders were still upset at the return of “the rule of man” rather than rules consistent with the treaty. In December Rear Admiral Sir Thomas Cochrane wrote to Sir John outlining why it would be inappropriate to send a warship to protect the British traders at Canton as they requested but the complaints of the traders persisted across 1847.

Not all Chinese protests were against foreigners, as there was considerable unrest in nearby parts of China. In Fukien province just to the north of Canton, the *Beijing Gazette* reported that civil unrest in the summer of 1846 led to the deaths of 130,000 people and the beheading of 1,200 Cantonese criminals. There were battles over land rights between the Cantonese-speaking Chinese and ethnic Hakkas, and many Hakkas began to join a visionary leader Hong Xiuquan who led a spreading rebellion north. Within a few years increasing anti-Qing sentiment in Canton turned into a surge of adherents for the Taiping rebellion. Farther north the British finally withdrew (late) from Zhoushan once the final war reparations payments from the Qing had been received, and Zhoushan slipped from east-west history. Ningbo, one of the new treaty ports, suffered that summer from heavy spring rains followed by a drought then by a cholera outbreak that the Chinese ascribed to poisoners. Traditional medicine recommended human excrement as the cure (Author, 1846), p. 476, a remedy guaranteed to exacerbate the epidemic. Fearful citizens began buying red cloth to use as a charm to protect themselves from 3,000 evil *yin* spirits they believed had come from other cities to shout and cause havoc at night, and *yang* brass gongs were pounded all night to frighten them away.

#### Hong Kong political decline and unrest in 1846

While Legge was in Britain in 1846-7 Hong Kong was declining despite the new treaty, because of restrictive trade rules and the persistent problems of unfettered crime. The town was unsafe beyond a small area, piracy was so invasive in the Pearl delta that passage by fast boats was at serious risk, and the traders complained that the governor and military “sits by in listless indolence or indifference, week after week without even an effort to put a stop to the pirates and robbers that hem us in.” The Hong Kong traders were now furious against their government for another reason. Britain was going to require them to pay taxes. They wrote to the government arguing that most of the costs in the colony were for the military and naval establishments, so these should be

paid for by Britain as colonial expenses. In spring 1846 Prime Minister Gladstone wrote in reply to Governor Davis, that “As a naval or military station, except for the security of commerce, Hong Kong is unnecessary”, thus of course the traders would have to pay taxes for the operation of the colony.

#### The LMS in Hong Kong thrives despite the political unrest

In contrast to the political and trade problems affecting Hong Kong, the LMS was thriving there. Gillespie was pleased to report in 1846 that the new and larger Union Church had been completed on land just beside the mission house, still providing both English and Chinese services. Additional Chinese services were held in Wangmaching, in the LMS hospital, and in the Chinese Bazaar, and the Chinese LMS preachers Ho Tsunshin, Keuh Agong, and Liang were all active in these sites as well as in visiting junkmen in the harbour. In addition 30 boys and 9 girls were attending LMS schools. Two elderly Chinese men eager for baptism were examined for their Christian knowledge and beliefs, then baptized and taken into the fellowship of the church. Mission men Stronach and Young in Xiamen reported that female infanticide was still a huge feature of life in the local villages, and that “It is most melancholy to mark the indifference with which mothers, when questioned on the subject, give utterance to the statement, that they do not want female children, and that they can make no use of them”.

Gillespie was working so hard at mastering Chinese that Stronach took over the English services at Union Church for the summer of 1846 and became a great success, with good attendance in the new handsome building. Gillespie reported that the communion service was shared by a rich mixture of people: two men from India, seven Chinese and “a dozen different Europeans and Americans – all colours and tongues”, “...all forgetting national prejudices and denominational distinctions and uniting as brethren in this one thing... Truly it was good and pleasant to see”.

The heat, humidity and storms in Hong Kong was hard on buildings, and the mission had to repair a huge stone retaining wall below the LMS house after storms destroyed it. Ho Tsunshin cared for the Chinese congregation in the chapel in the Chinese bazaar, which was now becoming too small and shabby for the growing group and would soon be replaced by a handsome new building. Near Canton, Legge’s old mission friend Liang had opened a chapel beside his house, at his own expense. Nearly 60 years old, this vigorous minister was enthralled his congregation with his colourful preaching, explaining to his audience that the human soul was like a ship tossed about

with passions, raging appetites, and restless fears, for which the Christian message brought hope of relief.

### Chapter 26 The Delegates Version of the Bible: translation conflict continues

The British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) finally decided that the project to create a new translation of a Chinese Bible should go forward at a good pace, and in 1846 urged the LMS to consider this new translation as the primary work of its PMs. The BFBS was willing to pay a large share of the costs including PM salaries while they worked on it, and would accept the judgements of the mission men in China on translation questions and the approval of the final version. By mid-summer 1846 the delegates from different treaty ports were working hard on their sections for this new Chinese Bible. Legge was not a delegate but had translated his section, Acts, before he had left Hong Kong, and other sections were reaching completion. Delegates planned to meet in Shanghai to settle any final translation problems and begin printing.

#### Preparing the fonts for the new bible

In Shanghai Medhurst began to prepare for printing, eager for the LMS to send a fresh supply of small Chinese type. Alex Stronach had moved cast metal Chinese type from his old station in Singapore, where his press had cast more than 2000 matrices for individual characters, adding to the several thousand that Dyer had prepared for the Baptists in Bangkok. Stronach made sure that he cast at least two “logotypes” from each matrix so that all the labour that went into their manufacture would yield multiple sets of Chinese character types. He also began creating a new set in a larger size. Working with Medhurst to supervise the printers, Stronach unpacked the Singapore punches, matrices, and types to set up the new LMS Printing Press in Shanghai. The actual press was coming from the closed Malacca station, and all the printers lived in the new mission house with Stronach and Medhurst. Medhurst’s daughter married Mr. Hillier the acting Chief Magistrate in Hong Kong in June 1846.

#### Translation work on the New Testament

The translators of the new Chinese Bible first worked on the New Testament Greek. Visiting British Anglican George Smith observed some of the translation meetings at Xiamen in 1847, which routinely included three ministers and their Chinese teachers. After opening with a prayer seeking help with the task, they read the original Greek, then made a literal translation into Chinese, then read out Medhurst’s old Chinese version because it was regarded as the best of the previous translations. If there were significant differences, translators might consult the old versions by Gutzlaff or Morrison. The mission men then explained the meaning of the text to their Chinese teachers and were guided to an idiomatic written Chinese version of the meaning. Smith wrote “on such occasions it was sometimes painful to me to witness the mirth and levity with which Morrison’s renderings were criticized by the Chinese, the most ridiculous



misconceptions being conveyed to their minds by the literal and unidiomatic character of that version” (G. Smith, 1847), pp. 471-2. Gutzlaff’s more literal version, intended as an improvement on Medhurst’s, was discovered to be clearly inferior. In this painstaking way the group could complete about 12 verses in a two-hour period.

Term question conflicts become more intrusive

The choice of Chinese characters to use for God had now become a major problem. Translators and onlookers began publishing articles in the Chinese mission journal the *Chinese Repository* and in local newspapers, sometimes anonymously, arguing for different “terms” or characters, in a conflict that became known as the term question. Before working on the new Bible translation the key members in the project had used a variety of terms and had often changed their usages, but as the work proceeded the translators became more fixed in their preferences and a decision was necessary. The BFBS had agreed to pay the costs of publication and much money was at stake in getting the conflict settled.

At first the arguments ranged across many terms including those originally used by the Jesuits, then gradually the arguments narrowed down to two main contenders, *Shangdi* or Supreme lord, vs. *shin*, spirit. By 1848 Medhurst, the Shanghai LMS men, and Legge settled on *Shangdi*, while an opposing camp of American PMs in Shanghai led by lawyer Boone began an active campaign favouring *shin*. Feelings ran high within the group trying to create a unified text, with anger and suspicion added when skulduggery was discovered.

### Chapter 27 LMS problems in Hong Kong and Canton

While Legge recovered his health in Britain and began raising awareness of the missions in China among British congregations, problems were developing in the Hong Kong LMS mission in his absence. Gillespie, on loan from the Canton mission, wrote letters and reports that represented a deep theme of resentment against Legge that related to Legge's easy and egalitarian relationship with Pastor Ho. The letters revealed Gillespie's racial bias in a completely open manner, and he only ever referred to Ho as "a native". Ho was the one ordained Chinese minister in the LMS, and Gillespie was in a power struggle with Ho ostensibly over money assigned to the care of Chinese schoolgirls.

The conflict was really about race and status. Mary Legge had left the schoolgirls in the care of Ho and Legge had given money to Ho for their schooling and boarding costs. When the money ran out and Ho could not support them as students, he still did not want them removed from the school. Rev. John Cleland had arrived in 1846 and his wife began to teach Ho's students in order to keep them in school, and eventually the LMS sent money to be used for the girls. Ho wanted again to receive this money and return to managing the expenses for the care of the girls. Gillespie argued that arrangement would send a bad message to the Chinese, that the LMS men could not be trusted to administer the money. He was especially offended at the idea that Mrs. Cleland would have "to apply to a native" for the money she needed to run the school, "however estimable and trustworthy as (Ho) is". Gillespie wrote to the LMS Foreign Secretary Tidman, giving a frank account of his views knowing that Tidman had already approved of the arrangement Legge had created, but which Gillespie had "always regarded as indefensible". He threatened that if Tidman insisted that Ho be given the money, Gillespie would refuse to apply to Ho for use of it; "the money can lie in his hands... until Dr. Legge returns to claim (the girls)".

Gillespie made a somewhat better argument in concluding that all LMS activities and monies in a given station should be under the supervision of the LMS Local Committee for full management and accounting, rather than being assigned from afar to one specific individual or another. This apparent recourse to a general principle however, actually arose out of another grievance against Legge. Gillespie complained that Legge had sold boxes before leaving Hong Kong and had sent the proceeds to the LMS, rather than giving them to the Local Committee. Gillespie argued that no individual should be able to "divert" funds from the local station back to London, but in fact Gillespie was angry with Legge for having used money to provide education for the three Chinese lads in Britain, money that Gillespie wanted to use in Hong Kong.

In May 1847 Gillespie begged for more mission staff, faltering at running an operation that included two schools, several chapels, the printing press and type foundry, as well as direct missionary work in the Chinese districts. He informed London he needed at least two men. He and Cleland had baptized one Chinese man who had been noted for his eccentric “singular appearance and accoutrements” when Legge had first met him in the bazaar; his garb showed him to be a Daoist, a member of the “sect of reason” founded by Laozi. The mission men were convinced the man fully understood the Christian message and were relieved that he had now set aside his fantastical presentation.

Gillespie hoped to return to England as soon as Hobson and a new mission doctor Julius Hirschberg arrived in Hong Kong, writing at length of his need to go to Britain to find a wife. He would “not consent” to be stationed again in Canton without a wife, arguing that the Chinese distrusted unmarried mission men thus they were not helpful to the missions. Gillespie and another unmarried mission man Issachar Roberts had been ejected by violence from their home in Canton by a mob in September 1846, while nearby Dr. Ball with his wife and children were entirely unmolested.

#### LMS Newcomers to Hong Kong include Dr. Hirschberg

The LMS medical mission work was given a boost when Dr. Hobson returned to Hong Kong in late July 1847 with a new wife, Mary Rebecca (daughter of the pioneer PM Robert Morrison), and a new mission doctor. Dr. Julius Henry Hirschberg (1814-1874) was a German-speaking widower and convert from Judaism who was struggling to master English during the trip. Benjamin found that Hirschberg could not express “himself so intelligently as we could sometimes desire...”, but was making progress, and had a kind and amiable nature.

The voyage was challenging. Although the new Mrs. Hobson was a veteran of six Chinese voyages she became very seasick in the fierce storms that drove the sailing ship west to the coast of Ireland for two weeks. All the livestock on the ship was lost and many people were injured, although on other ships human lives were also lost in those storms. In the vessel’s struggle to go south on the Atlantic, contrary winds pushed it west all the way to the coast of Rio de Janeiro before the captain was able to head east and reach the Cape of Good Hope after another 24 days. In the Strait of Sunda off Java they and ten other European ships were becalmed for a week, in an echo of the experience James and Mary had 8 years earlier. Hobson marvelled at an even more arduous journey by another ship that took 145 days from Liverpool, although their own trip took much longer than the three months their captain had predicted.

En route the mission men made the acquaintance of another voyager, Horatio Nelson Lay (1832 – 1898), soon to play a role in the life of Legge and his family, as well as a highly controversial public role in China. The little group spent much of its time studying spoken Cantonese. They arrived at the end of July, passing through a large mess of wrecked junks and tea chests near Hong Kong, reminders of a typhoon there a few days earlier. Hobson was full of mixed emotions about his return to Hong Kong because one of his children had previously died in Hong Kong and his first wife had become fatally ill there. His anxieties were justified, for within six weeks of his return, Dr. Hobson, his new wife, and new child had all become ill with “extreme debility” from the infamous Hong Kong fever.

Dr. Hirschberg was welcomed into the first meeting of the local committee of the LMS, where Gillespie wrote “he is endeared to us by the reflection that he is by birth a descendent from God’s ancient people, the Jews, and now by profession a disciple of Jesus of Nazareth”. Hobson had brought donations from England for the creation of a medical school in Hong Kong but was reluctant to begin the demanding and secular project without approval from the LMS because his main concern was his mission work.

In general Hobson and the LMS men were very concerned that the Chinese not get the idea that baptism would be rewarded with jobs, “secular pecuniary advantages”, so were stringent in their examination of those who applied for it. Two men were accepted and five were rejected that September. The result of this high-minded policy was a very low rate of baptisms but relative certainty about the authenticity of the Christian knowledge and beliefs of those who were accepted. They wanted “not nominal but real Christian men”.

#### Canton December 1847: harassments in Canton, and British force up the Bogue

Qiyong was promoted to the title of Governor-General for Guangdong in December 1846 after the previous governor Huang had been fired. Huang had tried to convince the Emperor to give a military office to an aged military exam candidate who had failed the examinations and who had even been older than the age limit (60) for participating in the exams. The Emperor was furious at the inappropriateness of this “deceptive practice”, and ordered the governor-general to be turned over for punishment with severity, “as a warning to those who traffic in favour and hunt for fame”. Although Huang lost his job, Qiyong kept Huang employed to help in Canton as conflicts with the British unfolded.

Across 1847 there were episodes of unrest in Canton. Thousands were starving, and large bodies were organizing and drilling militias independently of the Qing

officials, who seemed helpless against sudden “popular tumults”. It was easy for this tumult to be turned against the English, and small encounters sometimes turned fatal. In one serious incident six young European men took a pleasure-boat up one of the numerous creeks near Canton and were murdered by villagers. When their bodies were eventually recovered days later, the autopsy showed some had survived for three days, eliciting horror among the Europeans. In March a boating party of foreigners went touring to see the city of Foshan, 12 miles west of Canton, and aroused the interest of a huge crowd initially inclined to throw a few stones. The visitors went to pay their respects to the local magistrate, then needed to call upon his help as the crowd became large and unruly. Only with the courageous help of the local magistrate and officers he ordered to help them, were they able to get back safely to their small boat and down the canal to their fast boat – all on board being pelted by major stone and other missiles the entire journey. The foreigners wrote with gratitude of the courage of the Chinese officers who received injuries in the course of protecting the tourists in their retreat, but it was clear that the aroused mood of the Cantonese crowd was very different from the polite and helpful attitudes of the Qing officials.

Sir John Davis was convinced that much of the Cantonese unrest was triggered by the “overbearing disposition and intemperate conduct of the English” there, and agreed with Admiral Cochrane that stationing a British war-ship off the Canton factories would be a mistake that would only encourage “their aggressive propensities”. He knew that the original treaty authorizing the placement of warships was only for the use of enforcing order within the British troops, and that London did not want war.

After many delays and unfulfilled promises that it would finally open Canton to trade, on 31 March 1847 the British turned from diplomacy to force. Sir John Davis, the new Governor of Hong Kong had major reservations about the use of force, but the combination of these troublesome incidents, the failure of Qing authorities to manage conflicts, and the continued frustration with failures to allow traders access to buying land for warehouses in Canton as required by the treaty, led Sir John to lead a military venture up the Pearl River in April 1847 with a raid on Canton. Sir John came with three armed steamers to Canton. En route they stopped at the forts in the Bogue narrows and landed and spiked more than 800 Qing cannon there and in the forts along the remaining route. Sir John, with Irish and Indian troops then landed at the Canton factories in an operation completed in 36 hours with no loss of life on either side.

With the arrival of British gunboats Qiying was reported to be sleepless and too worried to eat over the risks of more serious warfare. Soon most of the British troops left Canton, and the Canton gentry put up complaining notices, threatening to remove all

Chinese employees from British service. The British responded with a notice to the Cantonese telling them that if they would keep calm no harm would come to them, that it was the “wretched and perverse (local) officials” who were the targets of the British actions. The Qing officials put up notices telling the people not to stand and stare at the barbarians and not to mount placards because this would lead to disturbances. Officials on both sides tried to calm the Chinese but the British merchants remained agitated about their restrictions in Canton.

Sir John and Qiying met in a long conference to discuss how to restore stability. They needed a plan to reduce the risks to the factory merchants, which to some extent concerned Hog Lane near the factories, a site notorious for shops selling drink to British sailors who would get drunk and create trouble. The British traders were still being frustrated in their attempts to exercise their treaty rights to rent, buy, and build warehouses of their own in Canton, and to trade directly with city merchants rather than being forced to deal with a small group of Cantonese middlemen from whom the true prices of Chinese goods could never be determined. Sir John demanded that Qiying order adherence to the treaty and allow merchants to buy property in Canton, and allow British military protection for the traders there, with a deadline of late January 1848. Qiying agreed to allow open entry into Canton within two years, as previously agreed in a Convention signed at the fall of Zhoushan but never enforced. No one expected Qiying would agree to the terms and everyone expected the British consul in Canton would then be withdrawn, which would represent close to a declaration of war. Troop-ships were being sought from India.

Within five days Qiying agreed to a new date two years hence for the re-opening of Canton for trade. Legge viewed this long extension as a serious error in judgment by Sir John because it immediately led the minor officials in China to believe that the foreigners were all weak. Increasingly foreigners came under attack in Canton, with a succession of outrages that earned no rebuke from the Qing government and no response from the British authorities.

The open display of force that Sir John supervised in this April 1847 expedition was roundly criticized by most of the local Hong Kong and Cantonese British newspapers as being undertaken for no specific end and completely unjustified. The *Overland Supplement*, and the *Friend of China and Hong Kong Gazette* criticized Sir John as being petulant, impetuous, and unfit to be the head of government for Hong Kong. One journalist argued that Sir John had never earned the respect of Qiying, who treated Sir John like a child, and Sir John then responded like a child.

While the Chinese had offered little resistance and there had been no loss of life, there was great concern that such a rash military adventure could have easily led to a major armed conflict with the empire. In contrast the *China Mail* approved of the project on the grounds that it was only in aid of getting existing treaties enforced rather than demanding additional rights. Sir John later wrote that he sent the expedition chiefly “to procure the punishment of malicious Chinese who had ill-treated British subjects”, in a letter he sent to the elders of nearby Honan who were upset at being required to rent land to British merchants. In late May the British traders pressed Sir John for “immediate enforcement’ of their rights to land in Honan, but this time Sir John refused to take action, pointing out that there was nothing urgent at stake.

He repeatedly had to balance his responses to the small conflicts that erupted, to ensure fair treatment yet not create more problems. Mostly he tried to calm the traders and the local military, at the same time trying to get them to improve their behaviour with the Cantonese.

Qiyong also tried to pacify both the local people and the British, first publishing documents arguing that the Qing government was not able to control the violent population, then executing four alleged murderers in a public ceremony with the British in attendance. The British were sure the executed men were simply men taken from the nearest jails and that the actual murderers were still at large. Then in December a party of Europeans took a boat trip to a small village 3 miles from Canton and were mutilated and murdered. Aroused and fearful again the British traders insisted on British military response while the consul in Canton ordered calm while he pursued Qing official action consistent with the treaty. Within two days Sir John Davis set out from Hong Kong on the *Daedalus*, a 20 gun sailing frigate, but it became becalmed and took four days to arrive. He held a meeting in Canton with the traders to learn their views and told them he had made demands “which Qiyong might not be able to accede to”, demands beyond execution of 6 of the murderers and the razing of the village.

### European events and religion

Other dramatic events were taking place in Europe, with another overthrow of the monarchy in France in favour of a republic. The mission magazine applauded the separation of church and state that the new French republic promised, and hoped that the new government would abandon all patronage of religion, both Protestant and Catholic, and abandon the brutal colonial operations in Tahiti. While recognizing that some monarchies were despotic as in the case of the French monarch, they considered

that their own British monarchy had worked very well and contributed to the “peace and happiness of the human race”.

### LMS plans to return to Canton

As the conflicts diminished in Canton, Hobson and Gillespie made a two-week visit there in October 1847. They learned that the American PMs would welcome an LMS presence, and the Qing officials were agreeable. Hobson and Gillespie walked within the city, spoke to people in Cantonese, handed out leaflets, and found that initial suspicion easily turned into friendliness and great kindness. Nevertheless they knew that the “Canton mob” was still volatile against foreigners, especially the British, even though east-west relations in the northern treaty ports were cordial. They decided to set up an LMS station in Canton with more than one man, and they identified possible housing at a reasonable price. By November however the prospects became more troublesome when Hobson learned that both renting and buying premises would be a problem. Despite this the local committee decided that Hobson should move there and create a hospital, leaving the Hong Kong hospital work to Dr. Hirschberg assisted by local Dr. A.H.Balfour.

Hobson would leave his wife and children in Hong Kong for a few months until he had established a home for them in Canton. His dream of creating a medical school in Hong Kong had faded as most of the medical men interested in helping in it had either died or left, and Hobson was not interested in the purely secular tasks of medical teaching. The £300 he had raised in England toward the project would be used to open the Canton hospital, and he would bring Chinese assistants with him. Hobson was desperate for the return of Legge to the Hong Kong mission. Although Hobson was somewhat isolated from the struggles in the Union Chapel by his physically distant location at the hospital, he knew of the conflicts that Gillespie and Cleland were facing with the fractious Scots congregation, and felt guilty about not helping out more.

Gillespie summed up his care of the mission as he prepared to return to the UK in late 1847. He apologized for having gone over the budget, explaining that the mission had to provide hospitality to other PMs en route to their postings in the treaty ports, and he was not always able to control the way the servants spent money. Eventually he had arranged with the other missions to share in these expenses, but the failure of the LMS to provide for this persistent hospitality service soon caused Legge financial problems. Gillespie’s personal expenses were also a problem. A mission man’s mission salary stopped the minute he boarded ship for his return journey, and Gillespie apologized for



drawing “a few more weeks salary than entitled to”, promising to repay it in England if he made it safely home.

By the end of 1847 Gillespie was en route home to the UK to search for a desperately-wanted wife, as the LMS had now established a furlough system for the mission men and allowed a journey “home” after three years in the field. This was a huge change from the relatively recent time of Legge’s 1839 departure, when a mission placement was expected to last a lifetime. It suggests that the LMS had to accommodate in a more realistic way to the requirements of families. With Gillespie’s departure, Hobson and his wife moved into the mission house, but all his plans for Canton were interrupted, first by a number of severe attacks of fever with ague, then by new political turmoil in Canton.

#### Trouble brewing in the Union Chapel over the Free Church movement

Although Gillespie’s report to the LMS about 1846 talked about successful projects, trouble was brewing in the Union Chapel that was first reported in early 1847. Conflicts arose partly from events taking place in Scotland but there may have been specific dissatisfaction in the Union Church with the ministries of Gillespie and John Cleland, in the absence of Legge. Cleland had arrived from Britain in 1846 to help Gillespie in Hong Kong, taking over the preaching at Union Church.

In Scotland the established Church of Scotland had just suffered a major schism in which more than 500 ministers left the church, along with their congregations of more than one million, in the “Great Secession”. The new “free” churches were more rigid and fundamentalist than their establishment parent. In Hong Kong, Scots were the major British group, and early in 1847 some Union Chapel men “invited” Legge’s replacement preacher Cleland to give up his pulpit to minister William Burns of the Presbyterian Free Church of England and turn the Union Church into a “Free Church” linked with the newly created Scottish denomination. They decided they wanted to hire a minister whose entire work would be with the congregation, rather than using LMS men who had additional responsibilities. Their plan was to raise enough money (amounting to \$1800/£400 p. a.) to hire their own minister for a two-year term. They wrote to seek clarification from the LMS in support of their view that the LMS could only control the use of the chapel but could not control their selection of minister.

This change of the chapel’s use into a narrow denomination would have violated the founding LMS ordinance and the chapel that Legge had created, which was truly non-denominational. Worse, the Union Chapel men argued that they wanted the church building to become a Free Church in perpetuity. Cleland wrote in alarm to the LMS in

January 1947. He emphasized that Union Chapel was the property of the LMS, and the LMS was not responsible to the foreign community in Hong Kong for decisions about which minister would work with the congregation. This meant that if the congregation brought forward a different minister, the LMS had the right to review his suitability and to deny him access to the church its mission had built, if the proposed minister was found to be opposed to LMS principles.

In London April 1847 Legge was very disturbed by the news of this project. He accepted the need of the congregation for a dedicated pastor for the English congregation and urged the LMS to send one as soon as possible, but stoutly defended the LMS ownership and management of the church. The Free Church men could make use of the Union Chapel until they built their own building, but Legge worried about the “sectarian agitation” reflected in the resolutions the churchmen sent to London.

As Dr. Hobson merged back into the work of the station in Hong Kong in 1848 he discovered that his old friend the passionate preacher Keuh Agong, now over 60, had become “cold and apathetic” without Legge to encourage him. With the return and encouragement of Hobson, Agong began preaching again with his former “forcible and attractive” style, but new conflicts arose over the Union Chapel from its Chinese congregation. It complained about the location of the beautiful new Union Church under construction, which was too far from the Chinese homes. Hobson was upset about this because he had solicited donations for its use as a chapel for Chinese and never intended it to be primarily an English church.

In addition to this practical problem the theological conflict in the Union Chapel continued. Some of the Scots men were determined to place a Free Church minister in Union Church, and some of the chapel’s major donors were now denying they ever had any idea that the Union Chapel was built under the direction of the LMS. For a temporary period the men were successful in hiring Rev. Burns for some services; he was a mission man intended for Fuzhou. The Free Church faction “invited” Cleland to turn the pulpit over to Burns, and the LMS men were upset. Cleland wrote that Burns would be allowed occasional preaching as a courtesy, but LMS would retain control over the ministry.

Although the men of the Union Chapel now learned they were still under the LMS, their discontent continued. After the LMS asserted its right to choose the minister of Union Chapel, key proponents of the Free Church plan withdrew their salary guarantees for an LMS minister, and a general feeling of indignation developed against the Chapel. Many donors claimed that when they had made donations to its operation they had not

understood it was an LMS chapel even though that information was prominent in all the donation circulars. Some were even trying to get their donations “refunded”.

Burns soon set up his own independent congregation, and by early 1848 the Union Chapel congregation had dwindled to a low of three men attending Sabbath under Cleland’s ministry because all but one Presbyterian family had left to attend services offered by Burns. But Burns refused to perform congregational services such as the Lord’s Supper and baptisms for them, and eventually the congregation realized they did not have the resources or organization to set up a sustained Free Church.

Hobson thought that if the congregation showed resolution to take over the chapel the LMS should be willing to sell it to them for the moneys spent by the LMS. This would probably amount to \$1,500, which some of the wealthy Free Church advocates were willing to pay. Hobson argued that the LMS could use these proceeds to build a bigger new chapel in the Chinese bazaar for the Chinese congregation, and the mission would be free of its “unpleasant connection with a dissatisfied congregation”. Freed of the need to pay for a minister to the English-speaking congregation of Union Chapel, this plan would also save the LMS money it could use for the mission. Hobson was eager to hear Legge’s view about this, as neither Gillespie nor Cleland shared Hobson’s view. In Legge’s absence there was now dissension within the congregation and within the LMS committee.

#### The question of Gutzlaff’s “converts”

Another vexation developed affecting the LMS mission more directly. In late 1847 Cleland was disturbed to read a report in a mission journal from England about the European lecture tour of controversial missionary Charles Gutzlaff. He was long known on the China coast for his aggressive proselytizing while travelling on opium ships, and in his current job as government translator for the colony. He had gone to Europe in 1847 to lecture about missions to China and raise money, and was claiming that he had created “an extensive organization of Chinese converts” in Hong Kong to be used as missionaries in China. Gutzlaff described this as a “Chinese Native Missionary Association”, and as the “Christian Union”, and by 1850 set up a Chinese Evangelization Society in Europe to raise funds for it through a colleague-agent Rev. Wilhelm Lobscheid then travelling in Europe. In preparation for his own trip to Britain Gutzlaff sent a series of grandiose letters to the UK to prepare his money-raising tour, in time collected and published as a series of tracts (R. Ball, 1850).

The LMS men in Hong Kong knew Gutzlaff’s claims of a large organization of converts were completely untrue. Gutzlaff gave a long list of the workers in his Hong

Kong mission using Romanized Chinese names implying they were Chinese. These names were a complete mystery to the mission men in Hong Kong until they figured out that he was giving his European staff fictitious Chinese names to increase the apparent numbers of Chinese Christians in the mission, and these “Chinese” missionaries included Gutzlaff’s own name in Chinese. Gutzlaff named himself Gaehan (“improver of Chinese”), and named another PM, Issachar Roberts of Canton, Lohaw. Roberts was the middle-aged Tennessee Baptist who had been cut off support by the American Baptists in 1845. Roberts was a fervent but credulous man soon to be caught up in the Taiping rebellion. Gutzlaff claimed he had 50 such “Chinese” preachers in his new Chinese “Christian Union”.

Gutzlaff listed many other Chinese names as his mission helpers, bragging that they were much cheaper than European PMs, but Cleland recognized many of the names as local riff-raff “unworthy of the name of Christian”. Not only were these men ignorant of the religion and unfit for preaching, but they were also well known locally as scoundrels “guilty of flagrant violations of Christian duty”. Gutzlaff had apparently baptized them in his ardour to report high convert counts as a means of soliciting donations for his work, baptized long before they even understood the most basic features of Christian ideas and behaviour.

All the missions in Hong Kong tried to find out more information about the activities from individuals supposed to be in this “Christian Union”, and all were equally frustrated at the “obscurity” and “veiled” nature of its operations. What they did learn only increased their suspicions, and the LMS men felt it was crucial to ensure the public understood that the LMS mission had no connection at all to this murky “Christian Union” and its discreditable membership.

#### Lowrie is murdered by pirates, after the Shanghai translation meeting

While these organizational struggles ebbed and flowed in the mission, the most alarming China mission news in the late summer of 1847 was of the murder of American Presbyterian minister Walter Lowrie, whom Hobson had known in Canton since 1842. Lowrie was murdered when pirates attacked the ship when he was returning in mid-August from a June meeting in Shanghai with the delegates group translating the New Testament. He was returning to his mission in Ningbo where he was struggling to deal with case of a mentally unbalanced printer.

During the ship’s robbery Lowrie turned over all his possessions but vowed to report the pirates, and in response three threw him overboard, drowning him. By October Qiying reported that the Chinese officials had tracked down six of the

murderers out of a pirate gang of 19, and confessions and punishment were in hand. Three were to be decapitated and their heads hung in a cage on a pole for public view, while six others were banished to the far northwest province of Xinjiang where they were to be slaves to the military officers. Lowrie's death was horrifying to all the mission men, but especially to those delegates who had been working closely with him on the translations.

#### Medhurst, Lockhart and Muirhead are attacked near Shanghai, and win friends

Just two days after James and Mary left Scotland to begin their return trip to Hong Kong, Legge's LMS friends Medhurst, Dr. Lockhart, and Muirhead were attacked by rogue grain-boat handlers when they were on a trip to the city of Qingpu up the Huangpu River 30 miles west of Shanghai in March 1848. After running more than a mile they were caught and beaten badly by the ringleaders using heavy chains and iron hoes, despite their attempts to reason with the gang. The gang robbed them then started escorting them back to the city walls.

As they got closer to civilization and learned that Dr. Lockhart had done surgeries to help Chinese people, their mood became less belligerent, then gradually townspeople joined the mass and further moderated the conflict. By the time they reached the city the robbers vanished into the crowd and officials took the injured men into care. They were escorted back to their boat and made a safe exit back to Shanghai. When the Qing officials were slow to chase down the attackers, the British brought two warships close to Shanghai, embargoed grain deliveries, and withheld all customs payments. After three weeks of official tussles the Qing officials arrested ten ringleaders, convicted them in a public ceremony and placed them in a cangue (wooden halter) for one month each, exposed to the public.

The Chinese judge who presided over this trial was then taken to Medhurst's LMS Printing Press in Shanghai for a demonstration of the press. It used a bullock to power the press, was able to print text at a very fast rate, and the judge was thrilled both with the press and with the European ladies, including Medhurst's daughter.

#### Legge hires contentious Printer Cole

While Legge was away the LMS mission in Hong Kong had a problem in getting its printing done. It urgently needed help in operating the press after Dyer's sudden death four years earlier, when American printer Richard Cole applied to Cleland for a job in 1848. He had just resigned from the American Presbyterian mission in Ningbo after having earlier created a press in Macau for American missions. Cole even hoped to become a missionary. Cole's skills as a printer were recognized but Cleland wanted to

make sure that Cole's reasons for leaving the other mission were satisfactory. It is possible that he was the "mentally unbalanced printer" who Lowrie was returning to manage when he was murdered. Investigations suggested that Cole's problems in Ningbo arose from not from an unbalanced mind but from personal conflicts within his mission, as other men in other missions there reported very favourably on his work. In the meantime Cole was hired on a temporary basis until London decided on a permanent connection with the LMS.

By the end of 1851 Cole was working effectively as superintendent of the whole press operation. He discovered that many of the Penang Chinese fonts created by Dyer for the press were incorrect because of the ignorance of the original type-makers, and had to be discarded. Cole gradually backed away from his plan of becoming a missionary and settled into printing, eventually creating sets of 4,700 characters in two sizes of Chinese fonts that became known as the Hong Kong fonts, used for many decades in religious, secular and official publications in Hong Kong and Beijing (Reed, 2004).

### Part 6 Progress, struggles, and tragedy in Hong Kong

On March 6, 1848 James and Mary left Huntly to begin their long trip to Hong Kong. James was 32 years old and was now responsible for a household that included his wife, their daughters Eliza, Mary, and baby Annie, their crippled Chinese amah Chang Ache, the three lads, and helper Asha. In London they joined a major contingent of LMS mission families, including Rev. William Young and his wife, Rev. B. Kay and his wife, Rev. Gilfillan, Rev. Joseph Edkins, medical missionary Dr. James Hyslop and his wife, three single women missionaries, and some mission children. Kay had been selected by the LMS to become minister at the Union Church in Hong Kong with the expectation the congregation would pay his salary and allow him time to learn Chinese. Their return journey from Huntly to Hong Kong took five months, four at sea.

### Chapter 28 The journey back to Hong Kong

James and his family sailed from Portsmouth on 6 April on the schooner *Ferozepore* under Capt. Masterton, but spent nearly three weeks stuck in the English Channel battered by huge gales. In the first week their ship suffered so much damage it had to return to port for repairs. Embarked a second time on 19 April they spent another stormy week trapped in the Channel before reaching the “line” that marked their entry on 30 April into the always difficult massive Bay of Biscay.

Legge wrote during the voyage, reviewing his past work and his future in Hong Kong. He regretted that he had not spent his entire time in Britain studying Chinese, but he now realized more clearly exactly the speaking skills he needed, and planned a daily program of speaking informally with Chinese people. He would take notes from these daily informal discussions, review the notes at home with his Chinese teacher, and enter the vocabulary into a large volume so as to create a giant dictionary of the Cantonese dialect over time. To improve his sermons in Cantonese he resolved to write out simple and striking texts in Romanized colloquial Chinese and memorize them so that he could give a more coherent and powerful talk. He decided to spend more of his mission time doing Chinese preaching even though he still thought the ACC would yield the best long-term results for the mission through creating a pool of Chinese ministers. He noted the risks associated with this, in that a Chinese person might become a sincere believer yet might not be an effective teacher or preacher.

Legge had raised donations for the support of the three lads to return to studies at the ACC theological seminary, £25 p. a. for each boy. A Sunday school at Maberly Chapel in London supported one, a minister in Stratford-upon-Avon another, and a

group of three men in Yorkshire the third. Legge calculated this money would cover the costs of the students' board, clothes, textbooks, and the teacher's salary. Additional supporters promised money for other students once Legge was able to identify those with the talent and interests.

Musing about the relations between the men from different missions in China, he hoped that they could work with less conflict, but considered that very fundamental differences in church organization caused problems between the men. He was used to the freedom and independence of congregations in the Scottish tradition and supported by the LMS model, and was frustrated that mission men from the Church of England and from the Presbyterians in Scotland and the United States were under strong control from their more centralized church hierarchies because this undermined many cooperative efforts. Local mission men would all agree on a course of action with cordiality, then later the agreement would be broken when instructions from the distant church hierarchy in Britain or the US interfered. In this way, everyday goodwill was no guarantee of effective working partnerships on specific projects. As a freethinking 'independent' he chafed at these institutional intrusions. He argued that "the New Testament recognizes no Hierarchical Power and no Ecclesiastical power", and regarded the freedom of his own pastoral work as its great glory because there was only one "Master". All were equally brothers even though some tried to push themselves forward as "first" among the others.

#### Legge and Chinese language en route Hong Kong

Mastering Chinese text still required continuing effort and Legge planned to write practice compositions in the classical style. He disagreed with scholars who tried to describe the Chinese language as being completely different from other languages in having different forms of the written language for different purposes. Legge agreed these variations were present, but knew that they were also present in other languages, including English. He noted that in both languages, the language of poetry was quite different in style and idiom from the languages used by "men of mark and power" in speeches, essays, and histories. Chinese language was not alien and peculiar in this.

Legge began to recognize a particular classical writing style in Chinese in which the numbers of characters used went through almost ritualized variations in numbers, now three, then four, then five and six, in "almost" regular patterns that were very striking. He recognized the genius involved in writing such regular irregularities, the freshness of the variations arousing new attention. He planned which texts he would study to master this style of elegant composition, and decided that after he translated them into English



he would re-translate them back into Chinese to see if he could develop this style. This back-translation method had been his habit as a young Latin scholar. Contrasting writing style in Hebrew with Chinese he concluded that the Hebrew focused more directly on content, while in Chinese both the content and the style created by the number of characters played an equally important role in contributing to the quality of the text. Although he never had much of a musical ear, Legge clearly appreciated the complex rhythms of classical Chinese text.

In his notebook Legge accepted the French Sinologue Prémare as the master interpreter of Chinese grammar, quoting a luscious argument:

“Nothing is to be more attended in Chinese composition, than that the piece by, as it were, a solid body, full of juice, whose member shall so aptly correspond to one another that nothing may appear distorted or limping, but each member luminously occupies its own place”... “It will thus often happen that the same character will be repeated, or joined to a cognate one, or that some particle will support... the cadence of the sentence which would otherwise be flat”.

Legge was now permanently entranced with Chinese language, history, literature, and with its moral and social ideas. He shared with other European scholars of his time deep questions about the origins of the Chinese people and language. Others were trying to link emerging sciences of archaeology and philology with material in the Bible. They were determined to see if science would confirm Biblical accounts of an original group whose dispersion across the world could be detected in root words common across many languages. Legge understood that the religions and philosophies in China represented an ancient history and he wanted to know more.

He was also interested in knowing modern information about the country, which had shielded itself in such great secrecy for so long. He wanted to know the size of the population, the system of government, of justice, the relations between the provinces and the court, and between the ruling “Tartars” (Manchus) of the Qing dynasty, and their Chinese subjects. He recognized Confucianism as a great moral system and wondered how it affected daily life, and was curious about the role of idols in Chinese religions. He planned to keep copious notes so that as he learned everything, his translations and notes would be “accumulating in my desk in heaps!” Index cards had not yet been invented, and he was still using hand-prepared quill pens.

At the same time Legge reflected that all the time that he had spent on lectures in the UK had helped the mission in a different way, by creating public interest and support for it and the work of the LMS. He now knew the kinds of information that the British congregations found interesting about China, and understood more clearly the way that the LMS was in the middle of conflicting interests of the home churches and the mission men. He realized that this led to “peculiarities” and decided he would write his reports back home in a way that would more clearly help the missions.

Legge mused on the family problems that struggles over money caused, both in Mary’s family over her brother’s disastrous financial affairs in Tasmania, and in the family of James’ brother George over his son Alexander’s financial missteps. These left a deep impression on James, and as they sailed east he wrote notes to himself about the necessity of living within one’s means. Better to be considered stingy by friends than to run into debt, even if it meant they could not have wine or beer. “Every bottle of the one, and every glass of the other is a fraud” when you cannot afford it.

More musings took him to the education of children; he criticized those who prized children who knew nothing of the world, who were unworldly and “innocent”. On the contrary he argued, good parents should ensure their children learn as much as possible about the world. He quoted a Chinese proverb, writing in Chinese, explaining that all the affairs of the world embody deeper principles, and these are necessary for good character. Thinking about the futures of his daughters he argued strongly that the life of labour is the most honourable, whether it was the “toil of the brain or the sweat of the brow”. He would ensure that his daughters would be educated so they would be able to teach if they were called to it, even though he recognized that many people considered teaching and governess work to be “pitiable”. Legge disagreed and intended that his daughters should understand this was honourable work.

Looking back on his daring in taking the three lads to Scotland, he was humbled by the casual way in which he had taken on such a big responsibility. In retrospect Legge realized he should have been full of “fear and trembling” in taking them half-way around the world for years, but understood that at the time he made the plans he had been so distracted by illness and the problems of the mission he had not fully realized what he was taking upon himself. In hindsight he realized that they could have become sick, they might have become lazy, or developed immoral interests. Instead, through “Providence”, they remained healthy, made wonderful progress in their studies, kept to chaste habits, and had even become baptized in the Christian church in which Legge himself had been baptized, in a ceremony in front of more than a thousand. He hoped that the three would decide to train to become ministers for the church’s mission in China, even

though he knew this was still unpredictable. He knew they would be vulnerable to offers from commercial firms that could offer excellent salaries to the talented bilingual graduates of mission schools.

Legge realized that some of his problems in running the ACC derived from a lack of decent schoolbooks, so he was bringing a considerable number back with him, soon to be translated into Chinese for the students. He reviewed his teaching style, determined to avoid the traditional Chinese style of rote memorization, instead through “invigorating the mental powers” at the same time that knowledge is increased. He knew that moral education was best accomplished by example, a theme well-established in Confucian texts, and promised himself to try and control his temper.

#### LMS men during the journey east

In his eulogy in Shanghai upon Legge’s death nearly half a century later, Edkins still had a striking memory of this voyage. He had been dazzled by Legge’s “magnificent” capacity to learn and remember long texts in English, and realized that James was able to use his remarkable learning capacity to master the huge volume of Chinese characters in his eventual work. They would walk the deck together, reciting from memory all the books of the New Testament. Legge “was able to prompt me. I was unable to prompt him. His power of committing the Bible to memory was remarkable... in this power Dr. Legge shone. It was a great aid in the study of Chinese words, which consist of many thousands. He could store in his mind with ease the singular and complicated characters formed by the Chinese pencil in enormous variety. These same characters frighten many persons by their difficulty. To him they were attractive, because he could so readily remember them”.

The other new mission men in this party were struggling to learn Chinese, to learn how to work with each other, and were beginning to identify their tasks in China. In the long months of discussions Legge’s knowledge of Chinese culture led him to vigorous advocacy for his views on religion and the Chinese with these newcomers to the job. Later Kay described these discussions as being contentious, and it seems that one potent source of disputes was the activities of Gutzlaff, the former missionary now working as translator for the Hong Kong government but raising money in Europe for his mission work. Legge’s scepticism about Gutzlaff was well-founded as events were to show.

#### The Chinese junk Qiying in London, April 1848

Just as James Legge and his household sailed out of Portsmouth, an amazing Chinese junk was arriving in London from an exotic trip. A group of enterprising British men had purchased the very large 160-foot junk in Canton in August 1846, strictly

illegally because selling a junk to foreigners was a capital crime. With cooperation from the seller and officials, this large and beautiful ship was named *Qiyong* after the Governor of Canton, still a favourite with the British community. The massive mainsail weighed nine tons and took the whole crew two hours to hoist. Under Capt. Keller this three-masted teak vessel sailed from Hong Kong headed for London in early December 1846 with a crew of 30 Chinese, 12 English, and a mandarin. The entire community came out to salute her departure, including Governor Sir John Davis and dashing and heroic Admiral Sir Thomas Cochrane. The Royal Navy ships gave a salute and the *Qiyong* headed off for an amazing trip.

After passing the Cape of Good Hope she encountered a severe hurricane, then such adverse winds and currents out of St. Helena that she ended up in New York instead of London. There she was treated with great ceremony and public interest as a fabulous visitor. Crowds of more than 7,000 visited her daily, then she eventually left via Boston in mid-February 1848 and arrived in London in early April just as James and family sailed away. The *Illustrated London News* printed a handsome drawing of her surrounded by throngs of small boats, flags flying in a festive mood. The nations of the North Atlantic were becoming fascinated with China.

#### Family tragedy: Amah Chang Ache dies at Anjer 4 July 1848

A new family tragedy struck when James and Mary's ship again used the watering stop at Anjer in Java, the stop where they had first encountered Asia. Crippled and still frail after her terrible accident in Britain, their faithful amah Chang Ache died on July 4, one day after their arrival in port. She was buried at sea in a coffin donated by the ship's captain, and Legge gave a memorial address. He praised her as a friend from the first day she had joined his little family soon after their arrival in Hong Kong five years earlier. He admired her natural amiability, great integrity, skills, and her willing care of the children, but stressed she was far more than this simple list of virtues: she was capable of the most heroic actions. She had risked her life to save that of his daughter, at the cost of permanent pain and crippling. James had hoped to make her much more comfortable in their Hong Kong home, and he knew that "She longed to embrace again her mother and children and her grandchildren", but now all he could bring her family was sadness. God had "terminated her earthly course, ...and we are dumb".

#### Singapore ship fire 1848

Another threat to their family arose after their ship left Anjer, when it caught fire shortly after leaving Singapore. Smoke poured from the hold and "the cry of "fire" rang through the ship". Men quickly manned the pumps to get water into the hold, the ladies were told to get out cloaks and blankets, and Legge was put in charge of the male

passengers, setting them up as a bucket brigade. The fire had started when a steward went into the storage area for spirits, positioning a candle so that he could see. The candle fell over and the straw caught on fire. The steward became so engrossed in trying to stamp out the fire that he forgot to turn off the tap from the cask of spirits, so the flames exploded. With the pumps and the buckets of water the fire was eventually brought under control and the ship was saved with only limited damage. The main effect on most was fright and anxiety, but Legge's six-year old daughter Mary was largely unperturbed, asking in a phlegmatic way, "Mamma, how long will it be before we are all burned?"

The ship finally reached Hong Kong on July 22, 1848, one month later than expected. James and Mary were both in good health and recovered spirits, bringing back baby Annie and their older daughters. In London, an epidemic of Asiatic cholera was again sweeping through Britain. James and Mary and their children had been spared in the typhus epidemic there of 1846-7 although 30,000 had died, and another 13,000 died in a simultaneous influenza epidemic. Life in this era was almost as perilous for Britons as for Chinese, and social class was no protection; within four years James lost Mary and three more children, and by 1861 Prince Albert had died of typhoid.

The Hong Kong to which the Legges were returning that summer of 1848 was suffering from deteriorating economic and political conditions. Both British and Chinese were in turmoil and it seemed that new hostilities might break out. Foreigners were still refused access to Canton and successive Canton governors resisted opening freer trade because of pressures from the local gentry. Governors in Hong Kong were unable to get the 1842 treaty honoured to allow merchant entry into Canton, yet were under orders from London to keep the peace with the Qing at almost any cost rather than to enforce the treaty with military action.

This stalemate led to a general decline in Hong Kong, which Legge described as being in a "dead-alive" state. The harbour contained only 28 square-rigged sailing ships one day in 1849, with not a steamer in view. Many of the Chinese adventurers who had eagerly migrated to Hong Kong to seek their fortunes when the colony was first set up, began to leave for the railroads and gold fields of Australia and California, where gold

was first discovered in 1848. Thousands of others were solicited to “coolie<sup>23</sup>” labour in South America.

### Chapter 29 LMS in Hong Kong and Canton

The next few years included some successes for James Legge but also great trials that ended with a personal tragedy. His health had completely returned to its original robust nature and he now had “double zest”, perhaps embellished by all the vigorous arguments he had with the new young mission men during the trip. He had been able to use his time in Scotland to make major gains in competence in written Chinese and was eager to continue his massive project. Once James and his family settled into their quarters in mission house Legge resumed work with the institutions he had helped found, including a small school now called the Victoria Free School, the LMS printing press, his own LMS boarding and day school and ACC seminary, the Union Church, the Chinese congregations, and his 3 AM translations by oil-lamp.

Legge seems to have changed his goals in a subtle way when he wrote that the Christian message was a better medium for opening China to the rest of the world than “could be done by the thunder of all the cannon in the British armies”. This suggests a focus more on general improvements for the Chinese, rather than just on gaining converts. Consistent with this he was even more determined to ensure that mission workers should learn the philosophy and literature of the Chinese, rather than just teaching them about Christianity and assuming that everything Western was superior.

There was good news at the Hong Kong mission. The beautiful new Union Church building attracted a larger congregation, and after the Chinese congregation complained about its distant location, a new chapel for the Chinese congregation was opened in the Lower Bazaar in May 1848. It was also a large and handsome building, and Cleland wrote that its opening service attracted 500 including 20 Chinese women, a great rarity. In Ho’s initial sermon he explained to the curious that churches did not have idols, statues, or shrines because Christianity was a matter of the spirit. Dr. Hirschberg went there on Wednesdays to operate an outpatient clinic, and by August 1848 Hobson was reporting success in finding quarters for his family and his new hospital in Canton, in a northwest suburb along the West River outside the city walls, at Guangli (Kumlifu).

### Struggles at Union Church

---

<sup>23</sup> The word “coolie”, now pejorative, specifically means day labourer, and was found in various languages of south and east Asia, including ‘kuli’ in Tamil and Malay, quli in Hindi and Bengali. In its Chinese adaptation as guli, the characters chosen for it meant “bitter labour”.

Unfortunately there were still problems at Union Church, struggling to hold its own under the care of Gillespie and Cleland during the two years of Legge's absence. A huge uproar erupted in March 1848 around the activities of Gutzlaff and his claims in Europe. In April Dr. Hirschberg was dissatisfied with his hospital work and proposed to adopt Chinese dress and walk into the interior of China on mission work. By Legge's return in July, the UC had only partially navigated the crisis arising out of the Free Church movement of 1847 when a group tried to turn Union Church into a denominational church, probably out of disaffection with John Cleland's preaching. That plan faltered but left the congregation divided.

Rather than solving Union Church problems, Kay's arrival as the new minister soon generated more problems. By now the dissenter's "chapel" had changed title, becoming the more major institution, Union Church. Soon after his arrival in July 1848 Kay began preaching there, but the faltering congregation was not heartened and Legge was disheartened to realize Kay was a poor preacher. Legge wrote confidentially to the mission secretary in London that Kay "does not appear to make a favourable impression on the Public by his preaching", and castigated himself for not having heard Kay preaching in England. In addition, "it would have been well had Mrs. Kay been a dozen years younger, and of better education". They were good people however, and he tried to be optimistic: "God may have better things in store for us than we are hoping for at present". The mission men all hoped that Kay's preaching would improve over time, but instead the congregation's dissatisfaction increased, creating a crisis in November.

Three men from the congregation came to Legge with a letter outlining their complaints against Kay. Legge read it and tactfully returned it to them, realizing that its angry contents were volatile and would not help the situation. He asked them to re-write it in a different manner so that he could take it to the committee including Kay, for all to consider. The three men wrote individual more diplomatic letters to Legge, and before the meeting he showed them to Kay along with his own written comments, so that Kay would have a chance to understand the problems and compose himself. Legge realized how upsetting the situation was and he hoped to help Kay in a "brotherly" way, rather than keeping the letters for sudden viewing by Kay with the committee, a more formal and official way that would be aggressively cold and shocking.

Legge realized Kay was not an effective preacher or pastor and urged him to give up the Union Church ministry and work in other tasks while waiting for the London Directors to decide the matter. The local committee agreed with these proposals and agreed that there was no LMS benefit in forcing a minister on an unwilling congregation because that would risk destroying the church, but Kay was furious and refused to

accept this solution. Under pressure he finally agreed to alternate preaching with Gilfillan and Legge as a temporary measure, but insisted on waiting for a ruling from London. The committee tried to convince Kay that his appointment was not independent of the wishes of the congregation and the LMS mission, and he was not being asked to resign but simply to change the nature of his work. He was still furious but finally disclaimed all interest in the committee's decision.

Legge reported "We feel sympathy for Mr. Kay", and the Minutes of this painful meeting recorded "He came to a cause far from prosperous... It was a pity Mr. Kay ever received the appointment but such regrets are vain. We are truly sorry for the mortification the thing has caused him. Some of us, at least, have deeply shared in it". The committee was unable to give any advice to the Union Church. Finally by late November Kay recognized the inevitable and began agitating to move his mission work across Victoria Harbour to Kowloon. He blamed the Union Church congregation for everything, complaining that it never covered any of his salary, it owed rent to the LMS for the church, and had "no ardent wish to pay anyone". He sought LMS permission to devote all his time to Chinese studies and mission work.

By the end of 1848 Kay had been forced out of the Union Church ministry, was spending much of his time with Dr. Hirschberg in outpatient clinics in Kowloon, and was even joining Gutzlaff there in preaching on occasion. Hirschberg had abandoned the Hong Kong hospital to which he had been assigned. Kay wrote Tidman rather triumphantly that the Union Church congregation was smaller than ever, and that several had congratulated him for "escaping from an impossible situation", while those "who wanted me out now act guilty". In February 1849 he had become quite chirpy after the Free Church advocate Rev. Burns left town and the English congregation returned to Union Church, raising Kay's hopes that he could return to that work, hopes that could not be fulfilled.

The rescue of the Union Church ministry left the problem of what to do with Mr. Kay, now without a job. Kay responded to a kindly letter from the LMS Directors with a tirade of complaints about everything, but most circling around Legge at first indirectly, then very directly. Kay claimed that the voyage out with Legge and the others had been so full of arguments that at times the men refused to share Communion services. The main conflict seems to have been over Gutzlaff. After leaving Union Church Kay had become allied with Gutzlaff in the course of their work together in Kowloon. Kay regarded Legge's criticisms of such "men in public station" as "calumniating". Kay alleged the collapse of the MES school came about because of skulduggery by Presbyterian trustees trying to usurp votes from Episcopalian school trustees to ensure



both the school's demise and the transfer of students to Legge's LMS school, which took in the few remaining students, charges that seem unfounded.

Kay ranted against those who spent time "feeding themselves to satiety with the trashy – not to say filthy – novels and Romances of the country" (apparently an oblique attack on Legge's work on the Classics), claimed that Legge's spoken Cantonese was incomprehensible, and reported that the Hong Kong Governor was so upset about Legge's "disputatious observations on the Chinese Secretary" (Gutzlaff) that he was going to ask the LMS to remove Legge from the mission. Kay was convinced that Legge was manipulating opinion so that he would again be made minister of Union Church, and forwarded a letter supporting his claims from Mr. Tarrant, a member of the congregation. Tarrant wrote about the "persecution" of Kay and hinted darkly that the LMS forces now running the Union Church were no longer liberal, but were intolerant dissenters who would destroy the unity of the church by setting Episcopalians and Presbyterians against each other. In April 1849 Kay wrote the LMS asking for a transfer out of the Hong Kong station. He offered to work for the society in Polynesia, Africa, or China.

In a May letter Legge reported to his brother John that Kay was still a "miserable preacher, the worst I ever heard", and was making no progress in his Chinese studies. London had assumed Kay was at least doing well in Chinese, but the local mission men thought otherwise and insisted that his Chinese skills should be examined before any new Chinese assignment could be made. Within the mission Kay had little support. Legge sent a "private" letter to Tidman in late June, reporting about Kay, "I am sorry to say he is worse than useless here". Even after the failure of his preaching in Union Church Kay could have helped Legge in the school, but his pride was wounded, and "against all truth and reason he has persisted in saying that I made the people dissatisfied with him. My best endeavours were used for the opposite object". Legge explained that his own "character was involved in some measure in (Kay's) success", pointing out that his own work for the mission depended on his not having duties at Union Church and in having Kay function effectively there, but "Kay has abused me and blackguarded me even. That is not too strong a term. Intellectually and morally he is unfit for missionary duties".

In the summer of 1849 Kay became quite ill, then his wife became gravely ill with liver disease, and he wrote with sarcasm, telling the Directors that he hoped he would not be "quite useless" and "totally ineffective" in work for the LMS elsewhere. The local LMS committee recommended Kay and his wife leave for Sydney Australia to recover their health after receiving medical certificates documenting their problems. Legge

wrote privately to Tidman “It will be a great relief to every member of the mission when he is out of China. You should recall him, or if he go to Sidney or anywhere else and will remain there, sever his connection with the Society”.

Although Kay had offered to use his unexpended rental allowance for the rest of the year for the costs of his voyage, to be repaid from next year’s salary, the local committee recommended that the mission should pay for the voyage and the Kay family medical bills without the LMS seeking any repayment. They were clearly eager to see him leave without any complications. By July he was gone, having cost nearly a year of turmoil in the Union Church and in the LMS station from his poor performance and his resistance to acknowledging it. “All the members of our mission drew a freer breath when Mr. Kay had embarked for Manila. His connection with us has been the source of much sorrow and discomfort”.

In a letter in September 1850 Legge provided the Directors with an update about Mr. and Mrs. Kay. Mrs. Kay soon left Sydney for Britain because of ill health but Mr. Kay was now reported to be living in Sydney “in a disgraceful connection with a cousin of his own... a woman of bad character”. To make matters worse he has written to a pastor there “pompously, impudently, and scurrilously”. Legge reported that this was consistent with the character he showed while he was in Hong Kong, although at the time of the Union Church problems with Kay, Legge had been discreet about any misgivings about Kay’s character. This source of problems was now history for the mission.

#### Dr. Hyslop problems in Hong Kong, 1849

Apart from his ill health, Dr. James Hyslop was also becoming a problem in the Hong Kong mission because of his behaviour. Again Legge criticized himself further by not having paid more attention in England to LMS Mr. Freeman’s report that he had been dissatisfied with Hyslop in the LMS interviews in Manchester. Apparently Tidman and Freeman had serious doubts about Hyslop’s suitability for mission work, and they only sent him out because of the pressing need for another medical man in the mission. On the voyage out Legge had noticed that Hyslop was much more interested in matters of the flesh than of the spirit, and regretted the LMS had accepted his offer of his services for the mission. “He is unfitted by his tastes and tone of mind for (mission) duties”.

Legge’s analysis was quickly supported by events. In late September Dr. Hyslop wrote disputing his assignment to Hong Kong, arguing that Dr. Hirschberg was well able to handle all the medical tasks. Hyslop’s wife and young son were both sick and in late August his wife had “violent mania” which left her “at death’s door”. She recovered for a

while then again relapsed, prostrated with fever. He complained there were noxious “exhalations” in Hong Kong that “readily find their way through the floors”, the miasma theory of Hong Kong fever that was the prevailing idea. Hyslop’s wife’s sister Miss James, part of the LMS group on the voyage, also had health problems but they were now improving. Hyslop wanted to move north to Xiamen, and wanted more money to match the salaries older mission men were getting. He wanted an early reply, and preemptively complained that there was no mission house for him to move into in Xiamen even though he was not yet there.

#### 1848 – James Legge family problems; typhoon, Annie death

The economic, political, and mission problems in Hong Kong provided a backdrop for new more personal family tribulations affecting James and Mary. The first was a huge typhoon. On August 30, 1848 Legge, Cleland, and Gilfillan left on a voyage heading on a small barque up the massive Pearl River estuary to Canton, when a day later a massive typhoon hit Hong Kong and the region including Canton. These severe tropical cyclones are the Pacific Ocean equivalent to Atlantic hurricanes, and this one was the worst in many decades.

The typhoon was especially terrifying to Mary because she knew James was out on the open water when the storm hit. The men had boarded Wednesday evening and Mary was left alone with the children. The typhoon’s devastation was vast in Hong Kong and all up the Pearl River estuary, and across the next five days Mary had every reason to believe she had become a widow responsible for her surviving children.

In fact, their family had been preserved by the calm before the storm. The wind was so poor after James set out that his boat was not making much progress when the boatmen realized the storm was coming. They had covered 25 miles, about 1/3 of the trip, and were able to get to a small cove for safety by the time the full force hit them. “The fury of the tempest was inconceivable”, but over the next two days they were able to wait out the storm in their hurricane hole. If they had been making normal progress from the outset they would have found themselves far out in the vast delta heading north to Canton and out of reach of any harbour, so the cleverness of his sailors saved Legge’s life. Mary and Mrs. Cleland had no way of knowing this, and the news that James and the others were safe only reached Mary after five days, the following Monday evening.

By the time the typhoon ended more than 120 boats were destroyed through being driven ashore, de-masted, and lost, thousands were drowned, and vast amounts of cargo including \$500,000 worth of opium were lost. Legge estimated that more than a thousand Chinese had died just in the river at Canton. Hundreds of buildings in Hong

Kong had their roofs ripped off, the Governor was forced to evacuate his own house, hundreds of vessels were sunk by the frenzy of the storm, and there were many serious injuries and deaths. A boat carrying an excursion group of 28 invalided Hong Kong policemen went down with only six survivors, including a fine inspector known to Legge, along with the man's son. This was only one of six typhoons that Legge experienced across his years living in Hong Kong (Pfister, 1988). The LMS house had its northeast corner damaged to the point of being uninhabitable, requiring emergency expenditures.

With relief that lasted only days, the Legges next suffered when their fourth and youngest child, baby daughter Anne Murray aged seven months, became seriously ill with dysentery and died suddenly on 10 September 1848. "Under the stroke we are dumb with silence. I thought that our Heavenly Father was intending that this child should be spared to us... but His ways are not our ways. He has done it and blessed be His name". Her grave can be seen in the Happy Valley cemetery. By now James and Mary had paid a huge personal price for their dedication to mission life in remote climates, with the deaths of three of their five children. Legge himself became ill again with fever in October, yet there were pressing problems in the mission that needed his attention.

On October 5 Dr. Hyslop and his wife sailed for Xiamen after he made more complaints about his salary. A violent storm hit them two days out and blasted them for four days. One man was lost overboard and the ship lost all its sails, drifting for two days under bare poles while a strong current forced it down the South China Sea ending up 150 miles leeward of Hong Kong. Eventually they were able to pick up enough wind to get back to Hong Kong, eleven days after having left it. They had tried to rescue some Chinese sailors clinging to their wrecked junks but the men refused to leave their boats. Hyslop's boat was the only one of five that left Hong Kong that day that did not become de-masted.

Within a few days of returning to Hong Kong a third typhoon hit the colony but that was not Hyslop's main problem, as his wife was ill and his young child had become ill close to death during the voyage. Both began to recover in Hong Kong but the nature of the winds meant that the family would probably have to stay there for some months before trying to sail north again. Hyslop hoped to spend the time studying Chinese, especially words related to medicine and religion. The captain refunded the costs of the voyage, so Hyslop's costs for the disastrous trip only amounted to £4, and an American mission loaned him a bungalow, but he needed to buy furniture and the anticipated costs of the next voyage were greater, so he began drawing advances against his future salary.

### The LMS press needed new equipment

By 1848 the LMS printing press equipment was in bad condition, the old press so worn-out it could not make good text using Cole's beautiful new Chinese metal fonts. Another old standing press only had enough power to do woodcuts, not fine metal type printing. There was also a need for English fonts that could be copied and sold to other English printers in China to earn income to support the press. With printer Cole's efforts on Chinese fonts now complete they were now in a position to "cut the punches, strike the matrices, and cast a complete fount" for these needed English fonts. The LMS local committee asked London to provide two presses and funds for the metal for English fonts to remedy these problems. It pointed out that the new presses would be the only English presses in the south of China, and that would make the LMS press uniquely capable of taking on commercial work and generating enough income to become self-supporting and even profitable.

In Canton Cleland and Gillespie were having major problems, including a terrible time trying to rent housing. The only option was to buy land and build on it, which would require rapid access to money to close the deal, all contrary to the LMS instructions. Despite this instruction the local committee decided the only chance for an LMS mission in Canton rested on its ability to buy land, and it authorized \$1,500 be made available to buy property as soon as it was found, so that a permanent mission could be established there.

### LMS financial problems

Money problems increased in the China missions in 1848-49. In early 1848 in the UK the LMS had discovered that it had a huge deficit and began writing all the missions about cutbacks in salaries and in tighter monetary arrangements for paying for mission expenses. In February Rev. Tidman wrote Medhurst that the LMS was more than £10,000 in debt arising from the missions in Polynesia and the West Indies, and it would not honour any use of "bills" for extra expenditures not previously approved by London from any missions. This was a vexing new rule as events in the field often required sudden expenditures, as when sick members needed to be sent to more healthful locations, or when catastrophes destroyed mission property. By August the London money problems became so pressing that the Directors decided to reduce the salaries to mission men: Single men would be reduced to £150 p.a., married men to £250 p.a. although both would have their housing costs covered. Allowances for children would only be provided if there were more than two, with a rate of £10 p.a. each until the age of 15 or until a maximum annual payment of £300 was reached. These new rates were to be put into effect in January 1849.

Hobson and Gillespie had been receiving £400 p.a. as married men and that was the salary the Free Church faction at Union Church had been offering its prospective minister. Tidman was a demanding financial overseer for the LMS missions and now suggested that mission men should earn their support from their mission congregations. He was upset in October when he learned that the Shanghai mission had authorized £100 to complete Medhurst's house. Tidman did not seem to understand that his August letter with its new rules had arrived in mid-November, after the expenditures had already been made. He refused to pay £50 for Medhurst's furniture in June 1849 but at the same time violated his own rules by assigning the new printer Alexander Wylie (1815 – 1887) an annual salary of £200 plus a £250 grant for a house in Shanghai. Scholars have since argued that in fact the LMS did not have any debt (just operating deficits), and were miscalculating their substantial assets, thus this entire stringency program was not needed. Regardless, the men in the mission felt hard-pressed by poverty because they had already been struggling to manage under the original salary schedule.

#### Legge's school is bilingual vs. American mission schools

The LMS school had taken on seven students from the MES school, now bankrupt, and with 32 students was beginning to look as though it would function as a preparatory school for the theological seminary now populated by the "three lads" and five others. Legge's school taught half-days in English and half in Chinese, and this inclusion of English was very different from the schools supported by American mission boards.

By 1847 the American missions had become strongly disapproving of the use of English in mission schools in China. Their leading figure Rufus Anderson argued that mastery of English gave the Chinese scholars too many job opportunities to stray from the plan to make them missionaries, and was thus not cost-effective. Further, he did not want graduates who would have developed any western habits that would require them to be paid western salaries. Educating them in English was seen as risky in that the students would develop ideas above their station, which he wanted to be that of a poor Chinese missionary living among his poor congregation. This investment-model policy was framed more delicately as being intended to create an independent Chinese church, but its effect was to create graduates who were totally dependent on the missions for employment. By 1869 this narrow and punitive educational policy even led the American Board to persuade other missions to agree on a wage-fixing policy for hiring Chinese staff (Harris, 1991) pp. 327-8. Legge's view of education was far broader and more progressive than this cash-based investment model, and with his incredible energy

he began ambitious plans to enlarge the mission buildings and to hire a school teacher so that he could work only with the senior theology students.

#### Hong Kong mission staff problems

Legge was struggling with problems in the mission. Within a short time of his arrival in Hong Kong, the new medical missionary Dr. James Hyslop became very ill with fever and could not proceed to his station in Xiamen. Rev. Kay found the Union Church congregation small and still dispirited after all its struggles, and was fretting about money problems because he had spent some of his salary paying for life insurance premiums. Thomas Gilfillan had arrived with orders from the LMS to take on the Hong Kong LMS printing press but the interim printer Cole was doing a fine job, so Gilfillan wanted to move to Canton and the local committee agreed. He was upset however with his standard salary of £150 p.a. and pleaded that it would not be enough. He complained the LMS had not provided him with books, hot-weather clothing, or Morrison's Dictionary although it had provided these to other LMS men. During their Hong Kong voyage together Legge and Gilfillan had vigorous disagreements, and over time Gilfillan took umbrage at many aspects of mission life.

Legge, now viewed as the authoritative Dr. Legge, quickly took on a leadership role in the local committee and set up meetings to manage all these problems. Cleland and Gilfillan were to go to Canton to join Dr. Hobson, the whole "local" committee would meet at Canton once every three months, the men in each city would be responsible to account for their own expenses, and the men in the other city would audit the books. Legge was beginning to be hopeful that he would have some students for his seminary when three senior students sought baptism that fall, in a ceremony before a large union congregation in the new church. But more new problems were quick to present themselves.

#### Theology in the mission; a cultural conflict and a Solomonic ruling

Because LMS missions operated only within very broad theological guidelines, the men often had to reason their way through problems with a theological aspect. The LMS men in Hong Kong had to make a theological decision in an interesting case that had to confront Chinese traditions very directly. An elderly Chinese man Ho Achiu wanted to be baptised, but he had two wives, one of whom he had "put aside". All the mission men agreed he was a sincere Christian and he begged to be able to die a Christian, so they were perplexed as to whether to accept him into the church. After some complicated reasoning they decided that 1) for converts from primitive religions who already had more than one wife in that religion, 2) Paul's rule that "a Bishop must be the husband of one wife", implied by default that ordinary men could have two wives in the early

church; and 3) the adoption of Christianity did not require the dissolution of marriage. On those grounds they agreed to “overlook” the fact of his having two wives, and baptized the man. This dextrous and Solomonic reasoning allowed recognition of both Chinese and Christian tradition, and reveals the openness of the LMS men to the problems in melding different traditions in a creatively human way, much as had the early Jesuits in China when they ruled that veneration of ancestors was not “worship”, but “honouring”, and thus was compatible with Christianity.

#### Legge cautious on baptisms

Legge was cautious in accepting applications for baptism and did not pressure his students to become Christian. He believed that the route to true belief was difficult and could not be compromised by quick conversions and baptisms. “We are in no hurry to baptise our candidates”, and instead boasted that two good students were “labouring away at Euclid”. When an old Chinese scholar sought him out to discuss some of the society’s Christian tracts and expressed an interest in being baptised, Legge demurred. He explained to the old man that “by embracing Christianity he would be brought to poverty, and that we could not do anything for him in a worldly point of view”. This attitude was in marked contrast to that of Gutzlaff, actively boasting of thousands of conversions and baptisms (R. Ball, 1850).

#### Legge with sinners, and teetotallers

With his religious Scottish upbringing and his dedication to living a virtuous life and helping others to adopt his beliefs, it would be easy to expect Legge to be quite puritanical. In our contemporary secular societies that is the stereotype of the missionary and of Victorians in general. This image does not match the picture of Legge’s actual behaviour, or of the behaviour of those in his congregations, for he had a more robust approach to the joys of life and a more forgiving attitude about human failings.

Legge wrote the LMS describing an old Chinese man in his church who had brought a miserable story to the congregation about his dissipated son-in-law Asow. Asow had behaved so badly the congregation had originally ejected him from their fellowship, and his father-in-law reminded the congregation that the young man was still “as hardened as he was dissipated”. Despite this the old man asked the congregation to pray for his son who had now become gravely ill and was seeking a return to Christianity. Legge wrote that the congregation responded in a wonderfully Christian way to this appeal, joining the old man in prayers to help the younger return to a more virtuous life.



Legge's integrity without censoriousness had also impressed westerners who encountered him, such as an Englishman who wrote to Legge's daughter decades after he had left Hong Kong. The man described how, when he had been young in Hong Kong he had been wild, and had surrounded himself with "gay companions" and unlimited temptations. Legge had recognized the young man's vulnerability and offered him help without any lecturing: "Think of my house as your home in any time of trouble or temptation". The man ended his letter with effusive praise of Legge's goodness. Hong Kong was a strange society during this period, with a vast excess of expatriate men who had limited opportunities to meet suitable young women or even normal families, and who were apt to spend their free time getting into trouble.

Chapter 30 Translating God: the term question rages

*In which a major conflict of the term for God is fought, with theological and nationalistic and personality clashes threaten the plan for a new Chinese Bible.*

The Bible translation delegates were now struggling in a very public way over the choice of a Chinese term for God in the new Chinese Bible, a struggle that was endangering the crucial support of the Bible society. This struggle continued across the next five years. There was even some skulduggery involving the main opponent of the LMS men on the choice of term, the American Shanghai Episcopal mission man Boone. In a roundabout way the LMS men discovered that Boone had written secret letters to directors of the American and British Mission Bible Societies in favour of his preferred term without making the directors aware of opposing arguments.

The disputes were argued in the main China mission journal founded by Bridgman in Canton, the *Chinese Repository*<sup>24</sup>. In January 1847 the issue began to heat up in this journal, including anonymous articles and editorial comment from the new editor American PM, S. Wells Williams favouring *shin*, with responses from Medhurst and others. The disputes did not remain scholarly, and as early as 1847 the champions of *shin* had begun to use *ad hominem* arguments in their publications. In March 1847 some of Williams' editorial comments against *shangdi* included sarcastic anecdotes used as part of the evidence against the translators who favoured its use. Despite this the translation work continued, and in the spring of 1847 chapters began to arrive in Shanghai, enough translation sections for a delegates meeting in June.

Boone and Bridgman moved to Shanghai in 1847 on a ship that carried 750 chests of opium, and Bridgman, now 46, became a regular member of the translation meetings, even though as early as 1834 John Morrison had written his father Robert that "Bridgman is sadly fallen off...", and quoted trader Matheson who observed that Bridgman has "a contemptuous manner" of treating people. The real problem was that Bridgman was still struggling to learn written Chinese despite his arrival in Canton in 1830, yet at times wrote secret and anonymous letters criticizing the translations of others whose skills were far greater, including young Morrison's.

Boone, the former lawyer now a Bishop, similarly did not have a talent for languages. When he had been working in Xiamen from 1842 to 1843 he had such

---

<sup>24</sup> The *Chinese Repository* was published in Canton by two American PMs, Elijah Bridgman (1801 – 1861) and S. Wells Williams. Bridgman had founded the journal in 1832 and Williams took over the job in 1847 when Bridgman moved to Shanghai. Both were tied to American trade and political interests.

difficulty learning the local dialect, that after returning from a medical furlong in the United States in 1845 he decided not to return to Xiamen because he realized he could never master the dialect. Instead he hired a Javan servant suitable to his new status as Bishop, and sailed to consolidate a mission at Shanghai. There to his dismay he discovered that the Shanghai Chinese did not speak “mandarin”, the northern dialect he had tried to learn during his years in Jakarta with Medhurst and in Macau (1839-1842). Instead, they spoke a local language, thus he faced the task of learning to speak another new language. Although he had studied mandarin, his most fluent spoken language was Hokkien, the language of the seafaring traders of the coast. Despite his shaky grasp of the Chinese language Boone’s views were central in the term conflicts.

#### Organizing the Delegates Committee 1847

With the first meeting of the general committee of translators in Shanghai in June 1847 the meeting agreed to set up new operating methods to speed up the project because its original ambitious plan to convene all PMs in large text review meetings was too cumbersome and expensive. Now, local committees would work on specific parts, and each local would elect a delegate to a Delegates Committee for the final reviews. Each delegate would have one vote. Using delegates would be cheaper, save travel costs, and not disrupt work in the mission stations to the same degree. After completion and approval of all the sections, this Delegates Committee would send the whole intact to the Bible Societies for publication.

#### The Term dispute starts 1847

The term dispute came to a head and was not solved from the time of that first big meeting, when Boone recommended a change away from the *shangdi* that had been used, to *shin*. Three days of debate failed to settle the question. The committee lost one of its members Rev. Lowrie to murderous pirates within a week, when sailing back to his home mission in nearby Ningbo, he was thrown overboard by pirates and drowned.

The term debate continued in letters that passed among the missions all autumn. In the November meeting delegates took a vote and the result was a split decision, with the Shanghai’s local committee divided. LMS men Medhurst and Stronach’s votes were counter-balanced by those of Bridgman and Boone. Milne was added to the committee to replace Lowrie, and the men agreed to continue disagreeing. In the work, the Greek words for God and spirit (*Theos* and *pneuma*) were left as untranslated blanks in the text.

By this time a pattern was emerging in which nearly all the translation work was being done by the LMS men closest to Shanghai plus Bridgman, each of whom

eventually attended between 600 -700 working meetings across 2 ½ years of effort. Boone was a delegate with a vote yet attended only one meeting, later arguing ill health. That did not curtail his activity however, and he began publishing hundreds of pages of articles attacking the LMS translation and the LMS men.

#### LMS and the British and Foreign Bible Society

From London the LMS foreign missions secretary Tidman was strongly objecting to the way the China mission men had decided to deal with the translation conflict. He wrote Medhurst that the delegates should either settle on one term by correspondence before their next meeting, or suspend the entire question until the whole revision was completed. In June 1848 he sent another letter announcing that the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) refused to publish Medhurst's statement arguing in favour of *shangdi* and the LMS Directors agreed with this decision. Arguments for *shin* were being accepted instead, and Tidman refused to seek consultation with independent European Sinologues. This infuriated the expert translator Medhurst, and by October 1848 the pressures on the LMS Directors for seeking expert opinion had increased to the point that they finally agreed to circulate all the different arguments to five scholars to try and settle the term question.

#### The nature of the conflicts: meanings of words and of concepts, and skills

Originally the translation conflict was about meaning, reflecting a deep dispute about the beliefs of Chinese of ancient times. Early Roman Catholic missionaries had used various terms, starting with *shangdi* (Supreme Lord) in the earliest days. Then in 1704 Pope Clement XI issued a bull forbidding the use of *shangdi* or *tian* (heaven), and requiring the use of *tian-chu* (heavenly lord). The Protestants took their own road and began diverging, as Protestants will, then time, distance, theology, and expertise in Chinese also added to diverging views. The Protestant missionaries further disagreed on the Chinese meaning of *tien* (heaven), arguing whether it represented a purely physical entity, the sky (argued by "The Inquirer" and others), or whether it represented a metaphysical conception of a Supreme Being.

It gradually became clear that the disputes between the LMS men, and Boone and the Americans actually involved three different issues. First, there were theological differences. Medhurst opposed *shin* because educated Chinese believed that *shin* included many kinds of spirits, including inferior and even evil spirits. Boone opposed *shangdi* because its use was linked with Legge's idea that the Chinese had a historical tradition accepting the idea of God. Boone refused to believe that was possible, and

wrote that “the Chinese do not know any being who can be truly called God, so we have to use the Chinese name for the whole class of Gods, *shin*.”

At another level the translation problem was also one of differing translation skills. Boone was leading the American PMs in arguing strongly against Medhurst, yet the LMS men and most China PMs knew that Boone’s scholarship in Chinese was much weaker than Medhurst’s. Boone had been a student learning Chinese from Medhurst in Jakarta in 1839, when by then Medhurst had been a fluent speaker, scholar, and writer of the language for two decades. Medhurst had already done a complete Chinese version of the New Testament translation (completed with an Old Testament translation by Gutzlaff) in the mid-1830s. A new level of Chinese scholarship was added to the *shangdi* arguments when Legge returned to Hong Kong and was brought into the fray.

Over time a third factor became apparent, with nationalistic clusters of Britons vs. Americans added to the brew.

#### 1848 James Legge and the New Testament term question

At first Legge was not a central figure in this major translation project or its struggles. Much translation work had been done in Shanghai after Legge left Hong Kong in October 1845, and before his return in 1848. Even after returning to Hong Kong he did not become a delegate to the committee, but he had confidence in the Chinese scholarship of Medhurst and the LMS men in the Shanghai committee.

When he returned to Hong Kong in July 1848, Legge was brought into the dispute for his expertise in the ancient Chinese texts, and began writing occasional articles about his findings. Initially Legge followed the lead of his London teacher Kidd, both accepting *shin* from Morrison’s early dictionary, the massive but vastly erratic first attempt at a Chinese – English Dictionary, at a time when Legge knew little Chinese. But in 1848 Legge had not yet settled on a preferred term, and consulted his Chinese LMS pastor Ho, who urged him to use *shangdi*. He learned that Ho agreed with Medhurst that *shin* could be used to refer to “evil spirits” as readily as any other kind, and convinced Legge that *shangdi* was a far better term, so by autumn 1848 Legge joined with Medhurst and the other LMS men.

Legge’s studies in the Chinese classics also confirmed the value of the *shangdi* term in a theological sense. He found it used across thousands of years of ritual hymns and other texts in which the Emperor addressed God. These texts convinced him that *shangdi* represented a long-standing Chinese concept of God, a monotheistic God that meant the same concept as the Old Testament Hebrew Jehovah and the New Testament Greek Theos. This theological point became a crucial part of his conception of *shangdi*,

and a point of cleavage with Boone and others that would never be resolved because many mission men were convinced that Chinese were all heathens without any such transcendent conception.

Solutions: the transfer method transcribing Greek and Hebrew phonetics into Chinese

One method that was considered in trying to solve the term conflict was the “transfer” method. Some PMs thought that for crucial Christian concepts, no Chinese word should be used in any attempt to match to a Chinese meaning. Instead the “true” Hebrew or Greek word should be written using Chinese characters chosen for their strong phonetic quality, as homonyms. The PMs called this method of phonetic transcription “transfer”. It represented a way of avoiding all the meaning of Chinese characters.

Chinese often used this principle in transcribing foreign words into Chinese, using e.g. the character pronounced “fan” for “foreign”. The standard Chinese way for transferring long foreign words to phonetic Chinese characters was to choose a character for each syllable in the European word, often adding vowels after each consonant in order to achieve a truly Chinese sound. In this method, “Christ” would be written as a series of characters that sounded out *ki-li-si-tuh*, and “Morrison” would be written with characters sounding as *Mu-li-sun*. In contrast, a more astringent Manchu transfer method used only the first syllable of a foreign word, thus Morrison became Mu, and Legge became Le. Another transfer idea was simply to print the original Greek letter “th” for *Theos*, and to teach the Chinese the concepts associated with this foreign symbol. These transfer methods would in effect create entirely new “Chinese” words and avoid all the problems of translating into Chinese any words whose meanings might be troublesome. This would entirely circumvent the problem of the meaning of the Chinese character, for it would have no inherent meaning; instead its meaning would be constructed for Chinese students through Christian education.

Trying to seek a compromise decision in the delegates committee, in February 1849 Bridgman proposed the solution of selecting the Chinese characters for the crucial terms using transfers of the word sounds, and at one point Medhurst agreed with this idea even though he considered it a very inferior method. The Bible Societies were also recommending the translators consider transfers, to resolve the conflicts.

There were however, significant problems with all transfer methods. Transfers would generate character strings that would be essentially meaningless in Chinese, thus educated Chinese readers would be perplexed when they tried to read the text. Even worse, different dialects used different sounds for the same characters, so choosing the

characters would be limiting the phonics to only one Chinese dialect because there was no automatically stable phonetic value for any character chosen.

### Boone's 1848 essay

For some time the actual work of the delegates in the New Testament translation committee may have been less heated than the published essays became, because Boone only attended one translation meeting across the years of work, and Bridgman seems to have been quite passive. Instead, the dispute played out in published essays that were sometimes quite vicious and personal. The public face of the dispute first showed in frequent and sometimes anonymous articles in the *Chinese Repository* in Canton. In early 1848 Boone published a 69-page booklet, "An Essay on the proper rendering of the words *Elohim* and *Theos* into the Chinese language", (Boone, 1848) at the press of the *Chinese Repository*, Bridgman's journal.

Boone's essay triggered a five-year series of disputatious essays published in journal articles and self-published pamphlets. These were printed in Hong Kong and Canton by all the major players including the LMS Shanghai men led by Medhurst, and after Legge's return in mid-1848, by him as a senior scholar of Chinese.

In time a more personal element intruded. Boone's antagonism to the LMS translators seemed to go beyond the linguistic or theological to the personal after Legge joined the discussion, probably arising from their 1839 studies in Jakarta with Medhurst. Legge had arrived there as a new young man en route to his first posting, yet out-performed the more senior Boone as they studied Chinese together. Bridgman's 1847 replacement editor Williams, who often wrote anonymous articles against *shangdi*, echoed Bridgman's opposition. Bridgman shared the views of his countryman Boone, and refused to publish Legge's eventual essays, so he was forced to publish his pro-*shangdi* work outside the *Repository* (Pfister, 2010) although it was the main journal read by mission men. Essays printed as pamphlets were circulated to the China PMs, and usually sent back to home mission societies and to the Bible societies that were going to pay the bills.

### Medhurst replies

Medhurst quickly responded to Boone, both publishing articles in the 1848 *Chinese Repository*. An anonymous "Z.Z." wrote in May personally attacking Medhurst, claiming that he was dishonest and did not truly believe *shangdi* was the best term. The editor had the integrity to stand up for Medhurst's honesty in a comment, but argued that Medhurst was misguided in believing that the ancient Chinese had a conception of God similar to that of Christianity. Then Medhurst published a large pamphlet of 107

pages, “Reply to the Essay of Dr. Boone...” (W. H. Medhurst, 1848), supporting the use of *shangdi*. Bridgman soon reviewed a larger 280-page version of this book in the *Chinese Repository*, siding with his friend Boone and commenting, “there are very few pages that we are willing to endorse, still ... we earnestly recommend its perusal”.

Boone and Medhurst continued to publish competing articles in the journal across 1848. The question was narrowing down from a long list of historical usages that included *ling* and *qi* (a kind of vital energy), to a choice between *shin* (spirit), *di* (Lord), or *shangdi* (Supreme Lord).

Medhurst responded to “Z.Z.” in the October 1848 journal noting that Boone failed to cite any Chinese commentators in support of his favoured term, arguing aggressively that Boone could not cite any Chinese sources because he knew their writings would not favour his position. Medhurst reminded readers that many *shin* were not honourable spirits, posing a serious problem for its promoters. In October and November Medhurst continued his attack showing that while *shin* had been used for God in early dictionaries by Morrison, Milne, and Marshman, they also used the term to mean evil spirits on the same page, thus it could not also serve for Jehovah or *Theos*. He argued that neither Roman Catholics, Nestorian Christians, nor Muslims ever used *shin* for the Deity, and that he himself, in his co-translated 1835 Bible with Gutzlaff, had used *shin* only for false gods. Medhurst noted that Matteo Ricci, Jesuit in China in 1610, had written that God had created *shin*, so God could not be *shin*. Further, Muslims called angels *shin*, making it a generic word for spirits, not for God. Positions in this conflict sometimes shifted, as Boone, the most aggressive writer opposing *shangdi*, had used *shangdi* in his own published 1846 catechism.

The term conflict became more intense with open animosity when Medhurst discovered that Boone secretly wrote to the American and British Foreign Bible societies in 1848, arguing for his preferred term and denigrating the main alternative *shangdi*. The LMS men were unaware that their views were being undercut in these secret letters until late in the project.

In January 1849 the BFBS ruled that it would not accept *shin* but still could not decide on the best term, and sent the question back to the delegates. The Delegates Committee published a package of the 1848-49 correspondence on the problem, including letters by active committee members plus their Greek chorus including Boone. Boone topped this by republishing his original 1848 essay. He and Bridgman wrote argumentative letters to the Bible societies and the LMS, warning them against Medhurst and Legge’s term, claiming that although Legge had now become its advocate, the term “could never do any good, and ... would be ultimately abandoned”. They scoffed



about his use of the other local newspapers including the *Hong Kong Register*. Comments in the *China Mail* and the *China Review* were critical of Legge's views and scorned the *Register* as being "Legge's outlet" after he published a 73-page collection of letters at the *Register's* press in 1850. In fact *Repository* editor Williams refused to publish letters from Legge, although Williams did publish his own anti-*shangdi* views anonymously in his own journal.

Sir George Thomas Staunton (1781-1859), one of the earliest fluent speakers and scholars of Chinese and by now the grand old man of Chinese, next weighed in, publishing a 67-page essay "An inquiry into the proper mode of rendering the word "God" in translating...", as a pamphlet in London in 1849 (S. G. T. Staunton, 1849). He reviewed all the arguments in these pamphlets and the evidence from historical Chinese texts and concluded that *shangdi* was the best-documented term for the concept of an "intelligent being, the Lord and Creator of heaven, earth, and all things". He added that it was also "idiomatic, graceful, and in harmony with Chinese notions and feelings". Staunton had learned Chinese starting at age 11 while with his father on Macartney's 1792 embassy to Beijing, and earned his living working with Chinese language until returning to Britain to become an MP starting in 1818. His credentials included the first written Chinese work translated into English (G. Staunton, 1810) a translation of the Qing Penal Code of China that emphasized in its sympathetic notes, the ways in which Chinese share with all humanity notions of both praise and blame, and the ways in which the Penal Code represented values that were more universal than they had been portrayed by James Barrow in his prejudicial 1806 *Travels in China*. Staunton's translation was used as the basis for laws governing Chinese residents in Hong Kong, and his views held weight.

Chinese *literati* were also active in the translation work, and an LMS Shanghai scholar Wang Changgui had helped Medhurst and the active translators create a "chaste and literary" Chinese style for the new Bible. He died in 1849 and his son Wang Tao picked up his work. Both were literary scholars who had passed some levels of the Chinese civil service literary examinations, and had keen eyes for text that would present a concise style that would please educated readers.

In January 1850 the LMS men tried to convince Bridgman and Boone to compromise by printing one run of 5,000 copies of the New Testament using *shangdi* and one run of 5,000 using *shin*, but they refused, and late that month the LMS men published an article recommending using transfer transcription characters, a desperation tactic. Williams' editorial chastised them for breaking out of the committee in writing such an article, then correctly described the many different characters that

had been used in transcribing Jehovah and identifying the different colloquial phonetics as a serious impediment. At this late stage Bridgman now began complaining about the style of the completed New Testament translation, wanting a more colloquial style.

Across the spring of 1850 the LMS Directors understood these problems and understood that neither Bridgman nor Boone were contributing any useful labour to the new task beginning on the Old Testament translation. Milne wrote that Bridgman was “useless and inert”, and Boone was always absent. The Shanghai LMS men were particularly incensed at the possibility that their views might be overturned by the Bible Society on the basis of a big campaign of letters from English and American Episcopalians being rallied by Boone. His campaign argued that more mission men supported their views than those of the LMS men in Shanghai, thus the popular vote should be used as the basis for the decision.

The LMS men were furious because it “would be a restriction on we who have done all the work”. Their opponents’ claim to numbers on their side “ignores the fact that we are the oldest students of the language, and the best acquainted with the Chinese classics, and the best to be depended on questions regarding Chinese philology”. While Boone had attended only one translation meeting claiming ill health the rest of the time, he had been working on a translation of the book of Matthew entirely using what Medhurst described as “the vulgar patois of Shanghai”. Medhurst and all the skilled scholars of Chinese knew that such a text would be useless in any other region of China.

Their March letter bristles with anger at the various voting-representation manoeuvres that Boone tried to use to out-vote the LMS men, and with indignation at the way Boone’s side had no respect for the advice of Chinese scholars in setting the style of the text. In desperation in April Medhurst had wanted each group to be able to publish the version using its preferred term but Boone refused, writing angry letters to the committee, proposing various diversionary voting systems that would be based on anything but actual expertise in Chinese. In one Boone charged that the matter was one of “deciding the use of joint property”, using the legal language of his original profession. Medhurst responded explaining that it was not a question of the right to property, but the “exclusive right” to the text, which the LMS men did not assert for themselves and would not cede to others.

Boone was unfazed and put forward yet another proposal to by-pass translation expertise as the criterion for resolving the problem. He argued the translation committee should turn the decision over to the Bible societies (to whom he had sent secret letters denouncing Medhurst’s terms), on the grounds that they would be paying for the publication. Medhurst responded by pointing out that if money spent were the

relevant criterion then the LMS had earned more votes, the LMS having paid full-time salaries for two men working on the translation for more than two years while the American Bible society had paid only for one LMS translator. By that criterion then the American Bible society had earned the right to only one vote compared to the two the LMS had earned. Further it was improper to let the Bible societies decide on the terms because they would not be the only publishers of the work and other editions would be paid for by others. Boone next alleged that his rights were being violated by the LMS printing the text using its preferred terms. Medhurst responded that Boone's rights were not affected in any way because he could print whatever term he wished, the problem instead was that Boone was violating LMS rights in trying to prevent the LMS from printing using its preferred terms, contrary to an agreement they had all made in November 1847.

Boone's attempts to give votes to those who had contributed neither labour nor money to the project utterly outraged Medhurst's sense of justice, further exacerbated by his awareness of huge variations in scholarship among them, but Boone was undeterred. He kept dreaming up voting or arbitration schemes that would have the effect of overruling the actual translators in a series of personal letters to Medhurst, making a variety of arcane arguments about who the "real owners" of the translation were, in order to take the decision away from the LMS translators. "No one has the right to deprive us of the creation of our labours" Medhurst thundered back, explaining that contrary to Boone's assertion that the mission societies had no claims to ownership, the LMS specifically had a huge claim to ownership because its men had done most of the translations for half a century, "in some individuals it has been their main activity for years – there is no justice in claiming the LMS has no rights to joint ownership". Boone realized that was an argument he could not win so he took yet another tack, the pious victim stance. He claimed that the real problem was that if the LMS used its preferred term, that would "misuse" the Scriptures and injure the cause of Christianity in China, and "does any man have that right?"

#### Legge's essay, April 1850

By April 1850 the vexing question of the best term for God had become hot and Legge became more active. He recognized that while the Shanghai LMS men had made the more winning arguments for some time, they had "not fought so skilfully as Bishop Boone and his friends", and had made a mistake in trying to compromise by proposing use of the phonetic "transfer" method. Legge knew this was a bad idea because the resulting "word" would be meaningless to Chinese readers, and decided it was time to

put his scholarship into the argument with an essay to Shanghai before the summer. He recognized the topic involved deep issues of both theology and grammar, but was now so convinced that *shangdi* was the only acceptable term that he also intended to put an article before the British public if the Bible society in Britain made the error of accepting *shin* for the new Chinese Bible.

Legge's main hope was to convince the American PMs to use a standard term because he knew that publishing different versions in American and English publications of the new Chinese Bible would be a great mistake. He realized he now faced directly against Boone, and the issue was rapidly becoming a personal contest between them, a personal contest that seduced outsiders.

Legge entered the public fray over the God term in April 1850 by publishing a 43-page essay "An argument for *Shang te* as the proper rendering..." (J. Legge, 1850a), and sending it to the directors of the LMS and the Bible societies. In this he commented on problems raised in Boone's essay, reviewed Boone's arguments and responded to them. What is striking is that Legge completely refrained from *ad hominen* comments about the man who had studied beside him in 1839 as they studied Chinese with Medhurst in Jakarta. Legge was scrupulous in sticking to the issues relating to Chinese texts, grammar, theology, and translation.

Editor Shortrede in the *China Mail* of May 23 attacked Legge's article by focussing on topics relating to grammar, and poked sly comments against Legge's "senior wrangler" (Medhurst) for proposing to use the transfer method. Shortrede continued the attack over the following weeks, allowing Legge's short response letter to be published but immediately following it with additional eloquent sarcasm. Shortrede accused Legge of dogmatism while sneeringly acknowledging that he was always "greatly esteemed". By July Shortrede was calling Legge's writings "these strange effusions from an over-excited brain", whose "delirium' had brought him to "arrogant, unclerical and ill-mannered communications... to his outlet the *Hong Kong Register*." In fact Legge had not written the articles in the paper by an anonymous "Junior" that were so annoying Shortrede.

On the positive side, in July 1850 Legge knew that the Shanghai LMS mission printers were now ready to print the New Testament using *shangdi*. The Bible Society had agreed to pay for the print run using that term, and in September Medhurst began printing.

#### Boone attacks Legge late in 1850

Boone turned out to be a vicious opponent who now focussed his animosity directly on Legge, often referring to him in sarcastic and personal attacks in a series of

articles in the *Chinese Repository* starting in July 1850 attacking the use of *shangdi*. Editor Wells Williams often added his own anonymous articles or comments in support of *shin*, Boone's preferred word. Instead of sticking to the arguments, Boone regularly scorned Legge in offensive language throughout five months of essays. In July he chastised Legge for not showing more care in his use of terms, scoffed that Legge "very amusingly sets us (a) task of...", in August he sneered that one topic "seems to puzzle Dr. Legge very much", and so forth in every essay. He accused Legge of dogmatism, of writing "truisms he could have spared us", and of "having a very peculiar view of the nature of language". The December article included a final shot at Legge: "It is to be hoped that Dr. L. succeeded in filling his own mind with due horror at the impious consequences that must follow from regarding the word God as an absolute term". Every topic concerning translation, grammar, or theology, was personalized to Legge, then attacked.

Boone based his arguments mostly with reference to historical translation, grammatical, and theological problems involving Greek, Hebrew, and Latin texts, and the attempts of church scholars to solve them. He almost never dealt with Chinese language issues, and to the other scholars it was clear that his acquaintance with Chinese texts and grammar was very limited. He did not have familiarity with the vast Chinese literature from ancient times, and carefully avoided revealing his ignorance. In November his secret letter to the Bible societies criticized the use of a "transfer" term through the screen of a critique against one chapter in the NT that he and Bridgman had already publicly approved. Boone told the Bible societies that most PMs would never agree to use transfer terms, a point on which he and Legge agreed. He added some disinformation to create further trouble, claiming that "most" PMs had abandoned the use of *shangdi* just as Legge had adopted it, a tally that Legge later disproved, providing empirical lists.

Boone continued his practise of not attending any translation committee meetings with the NT committee in Shanghai, Bridgman explaining that Boone's ill health prevented this, although it did not prevent him from publishing the five long essays.

By autumn 1850 the LMS men became convinced that the true issues were not of translation style or substance, but that conflicts were more personal and arose from ignorance or active obstruction. These suspicions were quickly proven right in Boone's December article in the *Chinese Repository* and in a pamphlet "Defense of an essay..." compiling his views, which included his attacks against *Shangdi* and against Legge (Boone, 1850). In it Boone casually mentioned that he and Bridgman had written a private letter to the Bible societies telling them of his disapproval of using the transfer

method for Jehovah in the Old Testament. Medhurst had proposed this shaky solution as a desperate compromise in order to end the conflicts, and Boone and Bridgman had publicly agreed to use transfer in the committee, but now Boone and Bridgman wrote that “it would never do any good and that it would be ultimately abandoned”, an opinion Legge and Medhurst shared. The secret undermining however was a shocking piece of information to their colleagues on the translation committee.

Legge’s response to Boone’s personal attacks that summer included letters to editors and articles explaining the translation problem for the local paper, identifying ancient Chinese texts that used these characters in exactly the same meaning that Christians did, to refer to the god of all. This infuriated a number of Christians including Boone, who considered that it was heretical to think that the ancient Chinese had a conception of God anywhere close to the “superior” Judeo-Christian idea. More secular thinkers kept apart from the substance of the problem, but often entered the fray to provide a Greek chorus. Editor Shortrede of the *China Mail* was frequently sarcastic about these articles and men until years later.

In August 1850 73 pages of Legge’s letters and articles were published as a pamphlet compilation “Letters on the rendering of the name God...” (J. Legge, 1850b). He argued against using the phonetic-transfer method for such central concepts as God, stressing that it was important to use real Chinese words that had meaning to intelligent Chinese. Transfer words would add a “leaden weight” against meaning in the text. He also dreaded the “deplorable evil” of publishing two different versions of the Bible, in which the words chosen by one group would be considered to sanction idolatry, while the words chosen by the other would be accused of teaching polytheism. Such a situation “will be so disastrous that nothing ought to be left unattempted to avert it, if possible”. Legge agreed he had first been taught to use *shin* by his Chinese language teacher Mr. Kidd in London, before he had any chance to study the question independently. He had only realized in 1848 that this term was very flawed because it was a generic term for a general class of all kinds of spirits including evil spirits. Legge included a letter from LMS pastor Ho, explaining that *shangdi* was the heavenly lord so exalted only the Emperor could worship him, and unique in China in having no images or temples. Ho also explained why *shin* was an inappropriate term.

The LMS was still dithering about the problem, the Bible society was asking the LMS to return a grant that had been advanced for the translation project, and the entire topic had become unpleasantly heated. Legge continued to write a series of informal letters to editors, to churches, and articles to local and UK publications including an 1850 article to his hometown newspaper the *Huntly Express*. Because of the nature of

his opponents however, his patient, detailed reviews of grammatical terms, historical documents, and theological arguments only stirred up more trouble. Boone sent more secret letters to the Bible societies in his attempt to win the argument, and Legge lamented the political naïveté of his Shanghai comrades in not realizing the breadth of the attempts by Boone to undermine them.

Governor-General Sü was eventually pulled into the debate on the Chinese term for God during an interview by George Smith the Anglican Bishop of Victoria, in December 1950. Sü deprecated the *shin* term favoured by Boone, and expressed support for both *shangdi* and *tian shin* (traditionally used by the Jesuits). This enraged the Bishop's friend Williams, who criticized the ideas of such a "pagan".

#### The Old Testament 1850: Organizing a new decision method

In their December meeting in Shanghai in 1849 the delegates calculated they could be finished the New Testament by summer 1850, and began discussing how to go about the translation of the Old Testament. The committee at this meeting included Boone and Bridgman, two new Americans (Shuck representing Ningbo, and Culbertson representing Xiamen), and the three LMS men (Medhurst, Milne, and Stronach) translating at Shanghai.

The three Shanghai LMS men had been much more active in the New Testament translation work than either Bridgman or Boone, and they expected to use the same organizational method for decisions as in the committee for the New Testament, but Bridgman, Boone and their two new compatriots disagreed. Bridgman and Boone insisted on creating a larger committee with more voters, to be organized by starting out with six local mission committees at six stations selecting one or two delegates to the Delegates Committee. Although each station would have only one voting delegate, increasing the number of stations represented in the committee would increase the number of voting members.

Under this geographical system the Shanghai LMS team of Medhurst, Stronach, and Milne would only have one vote, working as one "station" in Shanghai. Bizarrely, Bridgman claimed a vote as the Canton/Hong Kong delegate even though he had lived in Shanghai for two years, and the Hong Kong station had only pro-forma representation but no working delegate thus no working vote. The Shanghai LMS were upset by this change in voting, correctly understanding that decisions in a committee structured this new way would dilute the votes from skilled scholars with votes from new men from new stations with much less translation experience. New men in their new stations could easily out-vote the single vote allocated to the more expert Chinese

scholars in the Shanghai LMS station. This new structure would become very troublesome if the conflict over the term for God continued. The four Americans outvoted the more skilled LMS translators to enact this change in the method of making decisions on the text.

Under the bland guise of a kind of geographic “affirmative action”, Bridgman, Boone, and their new colleagues now could and did outvote the most skilled translators. By April 1850 the new group for the Old Testament had ousted Milne who had been a steady worker on the NT translation, even though it had been Dr. Lockhart’s plan that Milne spend all his time on the Old Testament project with full salary support from the LMS. The LMS men were being squeezed out, but the newly-ascendant Bridgman-Boone group did not seem to recognize that it would be increasingly required to actually do a massive amount of translation work, work it had been unwilling and probably unable to do with the New Testament.

In July 1850 Legge and the other LMS men received a letter advising them that the British and Foreign Bible Society had decided it would not support a new translation for the Old Testament. All the China missions knew that a better Old Testament was necessary, but the BFBS had been troubled by the conflicts among the NT translators. To simplify matters, that same month the LMS sent a letter asking its delegates to withdraw from the Old Testament delegates committee. The LMS members did not receive the letter providing this advice for some time however, and against the background of this conflict, the expanded 11-man Old Testament Delegates Committee began to work in August 1850.

Initially all the New Testament committee members were re-elected, (Medhurst, Boone, Bridgman and Milne from Shanghai, Stronach from Xiamen), plus four new American PMs, Shuck from Xiamen, Culbertson from Ningbo, and Johnson and White from Fuzhou. Newly-elected additional delegates Legge and Hamburg from Hong Kong, and the two new members from Fuzhou were not present. New man Michael Culbertson spent only a few weeks working with the committee in Shanghai then left. Both translation and personal conflict was increasing between the LMS men and their main antagonists, Boone and Bridgman even though the newly-created Old Testament Delegates Committee initially decided to leave blanks for several Hebrew words relating to God and spirit. Things quickly became fraught in the new OT committee, soon reduced to its core Shanghai members through the absence of many of the new American tyros.

The problems that Medhurst anticipated with the new organizational structure for the OT Delegates Committee soon became realized, with the two new American men



Shuck and Culbertson joining Boone and Bridgman to out-vote the LMS men. What completely frustrated the LMS men was that the two new men were novices in Chinese, yet their votes out-weighed that of the Shanghai LMS group, who were given only one vote including Medhurst, the most expert scholar of Chinese language on the translation committee. At this point Medhurst had almost given up, and desperate to avoid more conflicts decided that using phonetically 'transferred' terms, (e.g., the characters sounding out "a-lo-ho" for Elohim), might be necessary. Boone and Bridgman agreed to this decision in public within the committee.

#### Qiying's prayer late 1850; a red herring

A new element entered the controversy for a while, turning out to be a red herring. In late 1850 a document was circulating through mission and translation circles that was purported to be a prayer written in a book by that favourite of Hong Kong society Qiying, in which he used the word *shin* for God. Wells Williams published "Qiying's Prayer" in Chinese and in translation in the January 1851 issue of his *Chinese Repository*, along with a four-page commentary by Boone, glorying in what they considered vindication of their preference for *shin*, even as his final sentence acknowledged that Chinese literature never used it in the way intended in Christianity.

The next month Legge wrote the BFBS a letter for publication, explaining the reasons why he did not trust the authenticity of "Qiying's prayer". In the meantime Boone had inserted this "Qiying prayer" into one of his published essays on the term question, and the Church of England Bishop George Smith accepted it as genuine. Boone and his forces were exultant that the Bishop now publicly accepted this Chinese prayer as evidence supporting their arguments, and the pro-*shin* translators spread copies of this essay widely through the China missions.

Boone's victory was only temporary however because in May 1851 Legge wrote again to the Bible society documenting the finding that the "prayer to the *shin* of Heaven" was a forgery. The page on which the prayer was printed was made of very different paper than all the other pages, the numbering of the pages had been crudely and visibly modified to incorporate the inserted page, and the title on the page was not printed as on all the other pages but pasted on and hand-scripted, all evidence that the whole thing had been a crudely attempted forgery. Everyone finally recognized that the document was a fraud by June 1851. Qiying's name had been crudely inserted into a book of essays and poems published in 1826 by a different person, apparently in an effort to increase the value of the volumes.

Legge felt relieved at the vindication of his own suspicions, but upset that the whole mission community exposed itself to being discredited in such a drawn-out public

conflict. He was completely tired of the whole argument by late 1851 and could barely muster indignation at the latest personal attacks on himself. He realized that the only way for the issue to be settled was to have more of the mission men learn more about the Chinese language and its literature. In November 1851 he began working on a major essay on the topic, hoping the whole controversy was finished.

#### 1851 the New Testament is published with blank spaces

Despite all these battles the NT committee struggled on and convened in July in 1850 in Shanghai to review completed texts. It included the usual members in their usual roles, Medhurst, Milne and Stronach as translators, Bridgman sitting in, with Boone still absent. The LMS men were still doing the vast bulk of the translation work, and Boone was not doing any although he still had a vote. He still had strong opinions however, and published a series of articles in his friend Bridgman's *Chinese Repository* across the summer of 1850 that included very personal attacks on Legge.

By the end of July the work was finished after three years of scholarly effort and much personal strife. Lacking agreement on the term for God, they agreed that local committees could fill in the blank with the term they preferred. Manuscript copies were sent out to all stations for last-minute comments, but the Bible societies would not be allowed to do revisions. In August 1850 the general committee agreed to leave text for *Theos* and *pneuma* untranscribed, but approved all the final text and on September 11 "certified" its final revision, agreeing to make it available for publication with the support that the Bible Societies had promised in 1846. It put the manuscript in the hands of Medhurst for publication in the LMS press at Shanghai.

The BFBS sent £250 to pay for the printing, but the Shanghai committee was still in a tie vote on the term for God and Medhurst correctly noted that it would be completely confusing to print one term for God based on the Greek *Theos* in the New Testament, then use a different one for the Hebrew *Jehovah* in the Old Testament. He didn't want the Chinese to think there were two gods. The NT committee (on which Medhurst et al. still held sway), voted not to release its version for publication until the newly-forming Old Testament committee agreed to send its final version out for general comment in the mission stations in a manner similar to that done with the NT.

First, the Gospels were printed in late 1850. In composing the flyleaf for this in December 1850, the committee agreed to disagree on the term question, leaving a blank space that the different Bible societies could choose to fill in using their preferred terms in the printing. Other than that blank, the version was to be maintained intact in all other ways in the printing. Anticipating future revisions, all PMs were encouraged to send any criticisms to the NT Delegates Committee, both before and after the printing.

Legge received proofs of the blanked New Testament from the LMS Shanghai men in early 1851 and was extremely pleased with the clarity of the Chinese text. He asked his Chinese scholars to examine the work, and one told him "...at last one can understand the scriptures". The text was "an immense improvement" and in March 1851 he wrote the LMS a massive essay on the worthy features of the work and the falseness of the Boone critiques, to reassure the Directors. He ended this intensive intellectual review by excusing himself for not writing more, as his house had been burgled the previous night and all the silver stolen. In April 1851 the Hong Kong LMS men, Legge, Dr. Hirschberg and printer Cole wrote the BFBS explaining why Anglican Bishop Smith's recent recommendation to use a different term "teenshin" (heavenly spirit) was not a good idea. In March 1851 Legge learned that the American Bible Society had decided to use *shin* exclusively based on Boone's lobbying, and that the British society was under similar pressure. More argumentative publications in the *Chinese Repository* continued across 1851.

In the end, Medhurst and Legge printed the Delegates Version of the Chinese New Testament at the LMS presses in Shanghai and Hong Kong starting in late 1851, as did the American Baptist Mission press, leaving blanks for the God term. There was a temporary problem with the funding of the final publication as the BFBS, still alarmed by the controversy, for a while decided it would not pay for the printing. At this point Legge had been sent sections of the NT translations and had written London his opinions. He thought that the Chinese text had high literary merit and was well-written. He wondered if its fine "classical finish" might not be easily accessible to the masses, but nevertheless it was a huge improvement on Morrison and Marshman's original, and Gutzlaff's version was very inferior. Legge admired the faithfulness to the meaning of the original Greek text. He had Ho and other Chinese evangelists comment on it and they assured him that although there were some difficult passages, it was still a far better version. Even the Americans at Fuzhou who favoured *shin* and were now printing using that term, were otherwise accepting all the rest of the text as concluded by the LMS team. This new Chinese New Testament (and later Bible) was eventually termed the Delegates' Version because it had initially started as a joint project including delegates from both LMS and American Protestant missions, even though three LMS men, Medhurst, Milne, and John Stronach, did the bulk of the work.

In the meantime, Williams, Boone and the other Americans clearly knew that the revised committee structure they had created for the Old Testament work had been set up in a manner that would ensure the LMS men would always be outvoted.

Old Testament 1851, a revised Delegates Committee, the LMS withdraws

The delegates committee for the Old Testament now consisted of the LMS men in Shanghai and Boone's larger group of mostly-American men from different stations who opposed Medhurst. Rather than hunkering down to translate the OT, the new (American) men on Boone's enlarged OT committee were starting to do small critiques of certain chapters already published by the LMS men, including New Testament chapters that Boone and Bridgman had already approved in August 1850.

In January 1951 Medhurst, Milne, and Stronach discovered that Boone had described himself in a mission magazine as working "with very little remission" on the Bible translation. They were outraged at this falsehood and required their recording secretary Bridgman to write Boone to correct his statement. Boone jauntily replied that he regretted the mistake, and agreed that he had "never worked one hour on said translation".

This seems to have been the final straw for Medhurst, Milne, and Stronach. In early February 1851 they wrote the OT committee that consistent with instructions from the LMS Directors, they were withdrawing from the OT committee and would proceed to work on the Old Testament revision "unconnected with the Agents of any other institution". They asserted that they would be using the style they had used when associated with Bridgman in translating the New Testament, thus immediately undermining any potential stylistic criticisms from the Americans. The LMS had decided it would support its own Old Testament translation project if its Shanghai men would lead an LMS team including Medhurst, Stronach, and Milne.

The three Shanghai scholars printed up a circular announcing this and inviting all other LMS men to join the project, which would have the help of Legge. They circulated this manifesto to the LMS men in the five treaty ports. The Directors asked Legge to send the men some reference books, recognizing that it would be impracticable for him to travel to Shanghai for the frequent working meetings that would be required. This was the turning point in the creation of the Delegates Version of the Chinese Bible, as the very skilled LMS translators had now asserted control of the project.

1851; the Delegates Committee falls apart

From February 1851 the Shanghai LMS team worked on the Old Testament solely as an LMS project. Their withdrawal from the revised but "official" delegates committee for the OT threw it into crisis because its members did not have the skills to do the job. Within a short period the two delegates from Fuzhou and the two from Hong Kong resigned from the official OT committee, so the remaining "Delegates Committee for the Old Testament" now consisted of old and tired Bridgman, absentee and marginal

Chinese scholar Boone as chairman, and the other new men they had rounded up, novices at Chinese translation.

By November 1851 Boone's committee had prepared a Chinese version of Genesis but were having problems, and the LMS Chinese teachers reported that the text done by Boone's committee included vulgar and unsuitable language, and often drifted into incorrect meanings. The actual style used by the Americans was the same concise classical style everyone had agreed upon in the New Testament, even though Boone's group had attacked the LMS men for using it. While the Shanghai LMS men worked their way through half of the Old Testament translation in 1851, by the end of the year the Boone group was still struggling with Genesis even though it was using translation drafts originally created by Medhurst, Milne, and Stronach. The LMS men speculated that without the help of the translations they had done for the remaining books of the OT it might take the Boone group 10 years to do the job.

In fact Boone's committee was falling apart. Shuck only lasted six months before he returned to the US and "did not account for a single verse of translation", Boone left in September 1851, Bridgman left in February 1852, and eventually there was only Culbertson and a new British man McClatchie, elected to replace all the LMS men of Shanghai. McClatchie had been in China for only 6 years and had never studied any classical Chinese texts. Medhurst, Milne, and Stronach derided an abortive attempt by American Presbyterians in Ningbo to write a Chinese version of their catechism, as being stiff, full of the "most absurd literalisms, mostly unintelligible and ... sometimes conveys a meaning opposite to their intention". "Our superb Chinese teachers tell us they can't make any sense of it and laugh at the folly displayed."

The Shanghai LMS men were incensed to learn that the Boone group in its arguments against the LMS term, had purported to survey missionary opinion about the term question, claiming that the majority favoured the use of *shin*. The problem was that this "vote" gave equal weight to the opinions of experts and to those of neophytes with no knowledge of Chinese, thus it did not represent expert scholarly opinion. The LMS men analysed the data in terms of the "years of expertise" of those voting for and against *shin*, and documented that those 50 in favour of *shin* had 162 years of expertise, compared to the 33 anti-*shin* voters who had 188 years of expertise. Those favouring *shin* thus had an average of 3.2 years of experience with Chinese text, while those favouring *shangdi* had an average of 5.7 years of experience. There were also striking differences in nationality, with 80% of the pro-*shin* forces American, and 90% of the pro-*Shangdi* forces Europeans including Britons.

The attacks from Boone's group continued even after he left for the US, and Bridgman struck his final blow when he left for America in January 1852. He wrote the Shanghai LMS men that he could not support the now-published New Testament, ignoring the fact that he had "certified" it 18 months earlier. But the New Testament was completed and had already been published at several different missions in early 1851, a milestone for mission work in China, and Bridgman's revisionism was now moot.

Publication of the New Testament did not settle the God term question however, because the work left blanks in which each local mission inserted its preferred term, and the Bishop of Victoria tried to broker a compromise in a 10-point publication. Legge refuted each point to the LMS, patiently explaining that there are some kinds of issues where compromise is a good thing, but on questions of fact, truth has to prevail, and compromise away from truth means error. He carefully pointed out that London directors should be very wary of telling China missionaries what Chinese word to use for God just as they should avoid telling the mission men what Chinese word to use for "sun". "If you told us to use the word we know to mean the ocean, should we, or could we use it for sun?" "You have to have confidence in your missionaries ... as the experts in Chinese". He was astonished that some of the American mission directors were telling their missionaries which Chinese words to use.

#### New Testament published, September 1852, with blanks filled in

In September 1852 Medhurst published the entire NT, taking a further "...bold step of printing the revised New Testament with *shangdi* for God and *shin* for spirit", filling in the blank spaces even though he had no official approvals. He knew that although this was opposed by the American and British Episcopalians, it was supported by the LMS, by German PMs, and by other English PMs. Legge commented that he might have advised some delay if he had been in Shanghai, for the sake of diplomacy, but now "the thing is done". Some of the lay members in the Shanghai delegates committee disagreed with Medhurst's decision, and McClatchie and another PM in the Church of England's Church Missionary Society were still objecting to the BFBS, but Legge urged the LMS Directors to stick to their resolutions against all opposition.

#### The question of Chinese style

Although various departures diminished the membership of the "official" OT committee under Boone's chairmanship, they continued to call themselves the Delegates Committee but had problems working independently on their own revision of the Old Testament because they were far less skilled in Chinese words, grammar, or style than the LMS men. Instead of doing any actual work on OT translation, they mounted more public attacks on the LMS on various grounds that had already been endlessly recycled.

First, in March 1851 they authorized Bridgman to write the Bible societies criticizing the style of the LMS translation. They had Boone's lawyerly caution to footnote the fact that neither Boone nor McClatchie had actually been present during the beginning translation work on the OT, noting they were simply supporting the critiques of their only member who had been present, Bridgman. Rather than using the "antique" language of the ancient Chinese classics, they asserted they intended to continue using a translation style that they "had used" in the New Testament.

In fact Bridgman had never objected to the LMS style in their working meetings on the NT, and notoriously, although Boone had rarely attended the meetings, when the topic of style came up in those meetings he had agreed with the LMS choices. While there had been a few months in 1850 during which LMS printer Wylie had supported moves by the Americans to use a "simple" more colloquial style, the other Shanghai LMS men pointed out that Wylie had only studied the local colloquial dialect since his arrival four years earlier, had never read any Chinese books, and had never written any Chinese text using characters, so they considered he did not have enough expertise to participate in the discussion.

The style used by the original Delegates Committee in the New Testament reflected the elegant terseness of classical literary Chinese as used in all Chinese government publications and contemporary books. The LMS men intended to continue creating text that would reflect the meaning and sense of sentences rather than the word-by-word literal translation that had so marred Robert Morrison's early Bible translation. Medhurst, Milne, and Stronach wrote an essay explaining this to the LMS directors in March 1851, noting that the style they would be using was concise, "chaste and correct". They explained that it was an error for translators to use "too many words" in Chinese in attempting to add explanations not in the Authorized Version of the English Bible. While this concise style "might not be easily understood by foreigners with only a partial knowledge of Chinese", it would be very intelligible to common Chinese and not offensive to literati.

The LMS men added a final blow against their antagonists, explaining that any foreigners who claim the Delegates Version is difficult would have trouble translating a single page of official Chinese documents without help. Such men as translators use such a strange casual style that Sir John Davis derided it as "missionary style", while Medhurst, Milne, and Stronach preferred to call it "foreign style" because only foreigners wrote Chinese that way. There were two other writing styles, the "free style" for novels and light reading, and the "conversational" style based on the spoken language of well-educated officials, neither of which were appropriate for works of a

moral character. The LMS men were now ready to do the Old Testament without any further delays.

Boone secretly attacks the LMS translators, to the British and Foreign Bible Society

In November 1851 Boone and Culbertson sent another secret letter against the LMS work to the Bible Societies denouncing two pieces (Genesis, and Ephesians) of the translation work of the Shanghai LMS men. Worse, Boone and Culbertson published this critique anonymously and circulated it among their friends. When Legge learned of this, in April 1852 he wrote the LMS his critique of that anonymous published attack. He did not know who the authors were at that point, but he described some of the criticisms as “egregiously wrong”, the critic “is a mere tyro in Chinese... and not entitled to be heard in the case... His ignorance is only equalled by his presumption, and his presumption is only exceeded by the cavilling captious spirit which marks his observations”. “The critic seems to think that a better translation principle is to do it word by word – without any regard to groups of words or idioms – that would produce an unintelligible, nonsensical version”.

When the Shanghai LMS men learned of Boone’s November 1851 secret letter they sent another major essay on the problem to the LMS in May 1852, providing detailed critiques of the problems with these allegations. They wrote a careful account of the actual translation work, explaining that Boone had spent “not one hour” on the work of NT translation, had never reviewed any of the translation work done by the others, and had never even sat in to listen to the translating committee’s discussions. Medhurst, Milne, and Stronach were especially livid that none of the criticisms of the NT style had been made when the original Delegates Committee was working on the translations, but had instead only developed after the LMS Shanghai men withdrew from working on the Old Testament. From this timing the LMS men understood that the critiques derived from anger, revenge, and jealousy on the part of the Boone group at the loss of the expert translators of the LMS, rather than from expert knowledge of translation. The LMS men printed up a 24-page lively and detailed essay slashing the Boone critique and defending their translation work, and circulated it to the China mission men.

From Boone’s group, new man Culbertson responded in a panic, writing that he had not intended the letter to the Bible Societies to be secret, and claiming that he had no idea it would affect the funding they would provide for printing the new Bible. He explained that Boone had written some of the critique and claimed that he had understood from Boone that he would be sending a copy of the critique to the Shanghai LMS men. Culbertson claimed that the only purpose of Boone’s letter was to justify the diminished committee of which he and Boone were a part, to work on their version of



the OT. The LMS men remained furious about Boone's mischief, fearing it would lead the Bible societies to withdraw all funding, and thus make useless their years of effort. Legge's major review 1852: "The Notions of the Chinese concerning God.."

By 1852 Legge had been considering the translation problem about God for nearly ten years, winnowing the evidence and clarifying his arguments in favour of *shangdi*. Early in 1852 Legge published his response to Boone's "Defense of an essay..." with a 168-page article on "The notions of the Chinese concerning God and spirits..." (J. Legge, 1852). Legge's patient character and his intellectual integrity shine through this document, a grand review of the history of Chinese ideas about God in their literatures and rituals, and the words they used for related ideas. He noted that some of the Chinese sources Boone cited were well-known forgeries, he showed that members on all sides of the quarrel had changed their minds at various times, not just Legge, as alleged by Boone. In particular, Legge documented use of a concept of an overarching heavenly lord (*shangdi*) back to the earliest odes in the Chinese literature, convinced this represented a monotheistic god essentially similar to that of Christianity. Legge's LMS colleagues joined in this view after problems with the alternative terms were identified, but Boone and the American mission men in Shanghai refused to consider that the Chinese had any belief in an overarching god similar to Christianity. In their view the Chinese were heathen pagans who needed to be introduced to the true God of Christianity. The American PMS even considered Legge to be heretical in his conviction of a monotheistic belief indigenous to China.

To some extent their opposition seems to have represented a racist conviction of the superiority of their western religion to anything that might be found in China. Boone wrote, "The Chinese have never conceived of such a Being and have therefore no name of Him". In contrast, Legge argued in his *Notions of the Chinese...*, "I do not wish to eulogize Chinese virtue, or to exhibit the nation as a model to others. But it occupies a place all its own among the other heathen kingdoms of the globe. The extent of its duration, the numerousness of its inhabitants, its regard to decency, the superiority of its people, in strength of character, to the other nations of the east, - all these are facts which I cannot reconcile with the assumption that it has been all along, and continues to be, without any knowledge of God".

Legge worried about his own personal character during these battles, wondering if he had shown enough "meekness and humility", and trying to ensure there was no "haughtiness" in his text, but he wrote his brother John in early 1851 explaining "the only thing is, that a man must give the peculiar ability which he has, its scope. Unless he do this, he cannot write distinctly and forcibly". "The more I preach and write, the more

I feel that the principle attribute of my mind is its logical power, in elaborating the processes of which, however, I am by no means rapid". In comparing his mind with the thoughts of his brother George, James recognized George had a wonderful imagination, "you would almost say his mind is a wilderness of flowers. You go into it and you gather them by handfuls... I find it very different with myself. My fancy is not teeming. My poetical vein must be worked. It yields few treasures of its own accord."

Nothing was finished however. In September 1852 from the US, Boone fought back against Legge and the Shanghai LMS men, publishing in Canton an 80-page pamphlet "Vindication of comments..." (Boone, 1852) again repeating his old critiques of the committee's two-year old translations of the New Testament, long since published. Boone's essay eventually acknowledged that he missed most of the translation meetings because of "a very great derangement of my nervous system", then later severe troubles with his spine, then later sickness that laid him aside for "weeks, nay months" but did not mention he had only attended one meeting in two and a half years. He even confessed that he did not complete his overall review of the final NT even though he had certified agreement with it. Despite his absence from all the meetings that had discussed the issues in detail, he plunged onward to his continuing attack on the translation style the LMS men used in the NT. He confessed he really should have sent them copies of his critiques at the time, but excused himself with vague memory failures.

In November 1852 the Shanghai LMS men published a Reply to Boone (W. Medhurst, Stronach, & Milne, 1852), along with a letter that Legge drafted in September for Tidman, the LMS foreign secretary. Legge explained to Tidman that the new Shanghai version of the New Testament was immeasurably better than any previous version even though no translation work is ever perfect. Legge tried to teach Tidman and the LMS directors the style of written Chinese, explaining that it was elegant, terse, and very different from the spoken style in a way that is not found in English. In addition he explained, colloquial styles vary tremendously across China in a way that made translating a major work like the Bible in one colloquial virtually useless outside a local region. A written text using a loose colloquial style that matched one region would create problems for readers elsewhere. In contrast, all educated Chinese could read the standard, tight literary style. He observed that complaints about the written text came from people with low levels of literacy in Chinese, and had nothing to do with the style.

The Shanghai LMS men were not as detached as Legge in their 80-page Reply to Boone. They raged against him for his 1851 "secret and covert attack" on their work, and for his apology that only concerned their feelings but not the substance of his perfidious attack. They noted that while Boone claimed incapacity to do translation

work arising from various illnesses, all during this period he had published more than 240 pages of critiques against the translation after the entire committee had approved it. They were furious at his underhanded ways and his refusal to do any of the real translation work, then second-guessing the labours of the translators who had given critics many chances to identify problems well before publication. They dated Boone's worst attacks to the period after the LMS men withdrew from the OT committee in February 1851, and concluded that his attacks were actually only personal in nature and not derived from scholarship because he was not a capable scholar of Chinese.

Medhurst printed the Old Testament in 1854, the product of the LMS scholars, while the "official" Old Testament delegates committee run by Bridgman and Boone never completed the work. Although this was not the publication of the disbanded but official delegates committee, the version that Medhurst printed has been since part of what is known as the Delegates Version of the Bible.

#### Nationalism in the term question

The battle over terms reflected an additional kind of rift between the Protestant missionaries based on their original nationality. In general the British missionaries such as Robert Morrison, had been the earliest in China and had laid the groundwork for all protestant translations. Legge was among the earliest missionaries to arrive in Hong Kong after it was ceded to Britain, and his scholarship in Chinese texts had been intensive for some years prior to that. In general the British missionaries were of the *shangdi* opinion and the Americans preferred *shin*.

#### Long-term results of the Term question

Remnants of the Bridgman-Boone faction continued to take shots at Legge over the next 50 years, including after his death. Boone and McClatchie even tried to queer the publication of Legge's later books in Max Müller's giant Oxford series, *Sacred Books of the East*, in the 1880s, but Müller was canny and asked Legge about the matter. Legge described the whole thing as "a long-enduring nightmare", explained the key issues, and Müller wrote the Boone contingent that he himself had published 30 years earlier in favour of *shangdi* and rejoiced in Legge's translations. Another small uproar followed, including in the stylish *China Review* in 1880 and 1881, but *shangdi* survived even another attack in 1902.

The LMS version of the whole Chinese Bible became famous as the "Delegates' Version". Across the decades occasional squalls of conflict appeared, but by 1877 most PMs used *shangdi*. Rare copies of the original still exist, one in the New York Public Library rare Asian books collection. As late as 1920 the Delegates Version produced

primarily by the Shanghai LMS men Medhurst, Milne, and Stronach, was still the best translation of the Bible in Chinese.

### World revolutions 1848

The problem with translating the God term for the new Chinese Bible exhausted the mission men for years across 1848-1854 but there were other challenging events taking place beyond this somewhat rarefied scholarly battle. Hong Kong and the larger world was confronted with rapid, major political changes, for 1848 was the year of revolutions in Europe. Sicily revolted in January, Paris uprisings forced King Louis Philippe to abdicate in February in favour of the Second Republic, then Venice, Vienna, Milan, and Berlin rose in revolts in March, there was a Polish uprising in Warsaw in April, another riot in Paris in May, and a Czech revolt in June. The *China Mail* in November included a report from Paris describing complete chaos, with the government having mustered 100,000 troops to defend the city, setting them up in camps along all the roads. Different factions proposed a nephew of Napoleon, or an Orleans prince, or a Henry V. Secret agents numbering in the tens of thousands were said to be gathering evidence and planning to regain the power they had lost in June. Changes flooded through France for the next four years ending with the crowning of a new Emperor Napoleon III in December 1852. Peasants in Ireland were being evicted in the thousands, and the great famine of 1848-1851 was beginning. Across Europe absolute monarchs were frightened and in disarray as Emperor Ferdinand of the Austro-Hungarian empire was forced to abdicate in favour of his nephew Franz Joseph.

The old order was largely restored over time with the exception of that in France, but the new forces of ideas including nationalism, liberalism, and new proposals about the social order had made their powerful entry. In February Engels and Marx had published the *Communist Manifesto*, and these new ideas were building a basis for revolutions that began dismantling European monarchies over the next 50 years.

Britain was largely unaffected by many of these events although it had another geopolitical interest, the fight against slavery, which had now become a fight against American slave traders in the waters around Africa, across the Atlantic, and along the American coast. Arising largely from the efforts of nonconformist Protestants in Britain, slavery had been outlawed within Britain in 1772, the slave trade had been outlawed throughout the British empire by 1807, and slavery as a status had been completely outlawed in the empire in 1833. That year Canada refused to expatriate slaves who fled from the United States, further isolating the US in the immoral enterprise.

The LMS and other mission societies had worked hard to fight slavery in Africa, so the mission community on the Chinese coast was scandalized by reports from Boston in

August 1848 of a sentence given to a white woman there for the crime of teaching a “certain black and negro woman” (a slave) how to read the Bible. The teacher was given the extreme sentence of ten years in penitentiary because of “the enormity of the offense” (Author, 1848b). This “crime” outraged the mission community and the sentence horrified them; they had been working for decades in Africa creating written languages for illiterate tribes so that they would be able to read the Bible and educational texts to improve their lives.

Hong Kong typhoon and politics; Qiying replaced, troubles rise in Canton

In the more particular case of Hong Kong, in the autumn of 1848 the community was threatened by two major events. A terrible typhoon hit on September 1 in Canton, causing much damage affecting Hong Kong shipping, and the men and families working in it. The other serious change was political; the affable and inquisitive Qiying had been replaced as Governor-General of the “two Kwangs” by Sü. In his first appearances Sü was rude and cold to a new American commissioner who had arrived late for an appointment with Sü because a calm interrupted his sail up the river to Canton. Under Sü’s leadership Canton became more volatile in all relations with foreigners. By November 1850 the young new Qing Xianfeng<sup>25</sup> Emperor degraded Qiying to 5<sup>th</sup> rank for “cowardice and incompetence”, mainly for his cooperative relations with the barbarians, especially for agreeing to let them enter Canton. The Emperor castigated Qiying for his “loss of all principle” when he gave his oral reports to the new young emperor, denouncing the speech “as the raving of a dog”.

British-Chinese relations in Canton were still volatile. In September Cleland had contracted to rent a house near Hobson’s new hospital in Canton but Canton was still in a state of unrest, and when he moved in with his family and furniture a mob threatened the landlord and forced him to evict Cleland. Complaints through the British consul to Governor-General Sü achieved nothing. Nearby, when Hobson’s landlord refused to evict him from his home and hospital because the immediate neighbours were happy to have Hobson’s hospital, one of the thugs in the mob beat the landlord. Governor General Sü responded to complaints about this by claiming the landlord had been beaten for other misdeeds, a claim everyone knew was false.

---

<sup>25</sup> Often named Yihehu in the Chinese Repository, other transcriptions include Hsien-feng and Sze-Hing. After doing some useful rulings, giving posthumous honours to Commissioner Lin, and issuing edicts against opium smoking, he eventually became depressed, addicted to alcohol and drugs, and demented.

### Chapter 31 A huge conflict erupts over Gutzlaff

In the summer of 1848 Legge became entangled in a terrible public quarrel within a few months of his return from London. The problem involved Charles Gutzlaff. He was 45 to Legge's 32, and was known as an energetic and entrepreneurial Prussian mixed up in a murky fashion with the worlds of opium trading while earning an excellent income as Chinese translator to the colonial government, and while also running somewhat mysterious off-time missionary projects.

#### Gutzlaff in Hong Kong

From early 1848 many in Hong Kong had become suspicious of the actions of Gutzlaff because of grandiose claims he made in letters to Europe, claiming to lead a large association of Chinese converts he called the "Chinese Christian Association", or the "Christian Union" (CU). Years earlier the Morrison father and son and Gutzlaff had created a Chinese "Christian Union" but the two Morrises died and the project died until Gutzlaff revived it in Hong Kong in 1844.

In February 1848 Andrew Shortrede, the *China Mail* editor wrote a sarcastic editorial commenting on a news clipping he had received from a Munich newspaper, quoting letters Gutzlaff had sent to Germany from Hong Kong describing himself as the "Consul General of England in the Celestial Empire". In the letters Gutzlaff claimed to have written a voluminous history of the Chinese Empire shortly to be published in Stuttgart, claimed to have just published in Hong Kong a *Universal Geography* in Chinese with 60 large maps, and to have begun a complete Chinese dictionary that he expected to finish in three years. In addition he reported that he had founded a Chinese "Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge" that had 600 members including many mandarins. Shortrede noted that while he was supposed to know what was going on in Hong Kong, he had never heard of such a society, or of any of the many books that Gutzlaff claimed he had published in Hong Kong. What aroused everyone's interest was that Gutzlaff was raising money in Britain, Switzerland, and Prussia on the basis of these flamboyant claims.

Shortrede's report was shocking to the local mission men, as they too were completely unaware of the operations of Gutzlaff's society in the small community of Hong Kong, or of his claimed publications. There was no evidence that Gutzlaff's CU had ever been constituted as any kind of society; it was apparently a private vehicle for Gutzlaff's extravagant plans. This led the mission men to raise more questions about Gutzlaff and his claims. One American mission man wrote Cleland in Hong Kong complaining about an article in the *Evangelical Christendom* journal written by "Gae-han"; "who is he?" The article by Gae-han described a large Chinese "Christian

Association” that had already made a new Bible translation into Chinese, all news to the PMs who understood what a massive process that was. The article boasted of six Chinese evangelists, and again the local mission man could not believe that matched the facts available to him. The LMS eventually learned that Gae-han was the Chinese name Gutzlaff had given to himself for the purposes of raising money in Europe, listing Gaehan as one of the Chinese employees in the CU as a means of increasing its size and credibility as an association of Chinese Christians.

Another Hong Kong man Mr. Macy, wrote the LMS complaining about the article. He reported that not one local missionary had a favourable opinion of the work done by Gutzlaff, and that in comparison with other Chinese Christians, Gutzlaff’s CU members were “utterly destitute of the very beginnings of godliness”. He explained that they became baptized only as a means of getting hired to distribute Bibles, and contradicted with force Gutzlaff’s claim to have 900 members in the group. Macy declared these exaggerated claims were truly false and were intended to deceive “the money holders of the society”. He realized that these huge numbers had the risk of making the work of the other more pure-minded missions look like failures, would deter further donations, and would demoralize the active mission workers in China. They always ran the risk of being seen to live in “self-indulgent ease” when this was far from the case, and Gutzlaff’s claims of such vast success threatened to overwhelm the truth.

Somehow Gutzlaff acquired a copy of critiques of his work, including one the Hong Kong LMS men wrote to Directors in London in late 1847 as part of their annual report, and in March 1848 he became furious against Cleland. He wrote a series of angry letters to Cleland and demanded that he come to the CU office and “prove” his claim of Gutzlaff’s deception. Gutzlaff wrote claiming that he had been in China 18 years (an exaggeration), that he had become a Chinese citizen (highly unlikely), had been adopted into a Chinese clan (impossible)<sup>26</sup>, and had taken on a Chinese literary name. He claimed he had often written articles sometimes using his Chinese name Gae-han or sometimes using “Philosinensis”. Cleland responded stoutly that he had never claimed the CCA was a deception because he knew nothing about it.

Gutzlaff next wrote Cleland that he was a “lying coward” for “shunning the light” of a public meeting. Gutzlaff claimed he had CU members busy all throughout distant provinces in the interior of China distributing Christian literature. Cleland refused a

---

<sup>26</sup> Gutzlaff claimed that he had been adopted by a Chinese clan with the name Kwo in Siam in 1830, and thus became a Chinese subject. There was no system in China for a non-Chinese to become a citizen.

meeting but wrote Gutzlaff defending his own views, reminding Gutzlaff that he had the burden of proof for his claims about the work of the CU because he had published them. Gutzlaff offered to show 400-500 essays written by his CCA men to the LMS men. Cleland agreed they would be happy to read any selection of 12 of them the following day if their authors would also attend and be available for oral examination. Gutzlaff refused, claiming that the essays were only for reading, and neither the essays nor the men arrived at the LMS.

Cleland knew that Gutzlaff was not even working as a missionary because he was employed at a fine salary as Chinese Secretary for the Hong Kong government. Gutzlaff had hired Revs. Hamberg and Lechler, two honest German PMs to do some mission work for the CU, but they were often away. Cleland thought that if Gutzlaff had written honestly using his Christian name in the many articles he published praising his own mission, people would not have been deceived into thinking the CU had an eloquent Chinese missionary. Cleland's view was that Gutzlaff had been deceptive in signing articles with the concocted Chinese name he had given himself, giving European readers the false impression that the article was written by a Chinese person. Cleland pointed out in addition that two of the Chinese missionary names "Gae-han" had included in his article, were actually geographical place-names in Hong Kong and there was no tradition of landed estates for which tenants would take on the names of their estate, nor any tradition of individuals taking on the name of their home village. One such place-name might be an error, but two were "passing strange".

Cleland wrote the LMS summarizing more problems in Gutzlaff's claims and in the operations of the CU. Men in Gutzlaff's CU had kidnapped two LMS schoolboys and demanded \$150 ransom that was paid for their return, and a similar case happened in Canton. When the LMS complained to Gutzlaff he claimed no knowledge of this. Cleland also reported that when some of Gutzlaff's Chinese preachers went with Hamberg into the interior of China, Hamberg had been scandalized to discover that they worshipped their ancestors when they went to their home villages. Gutzlaff baptized Chinese who had been refused by his own missionaries Hamberg and Lechler, and also refused by other missions because of their unsuitability. Cleland reported that other Chinese applied for jobs at the other missions and claimed to have no connection with the CU, but Gutzlaff listed their names as his converts.

The personal character of the CU men came to be the central problem. For one thing, stealing money under the auspices of Christianity seemed to be pervasive among CU "converts". Cleland reported that one of the colporteurs (leaflet distribution men) Gutzlaff had hired had simply sold all the leaflets by weight in Canton. Another took



three months salary in advance for his missionary journey into the interior, then quickly returned to Hong Kong claiming he had been robbed of all his leaflets; even the CU's Rev. Hamberg did not believe him. Another CU man sought money from a mission man claiming he needed it for the burial of his father; when the mission man and a friend went to the man's house and saw the old father alive and well the CU man responded blithely that Jesus Christ had restored him to life. Other CU men spoke disparagingly about Christianity and told their preaching audiences that miracle-workers in Beijing could do better. Moreover it was not clear that any of the colporteurs ever went to the interior of China. Europeans living in the interior of China told the LMS men that they had never seen any evidence of the work of Gutzlaff or of his CU men. The only things they learned about him were the reports that Gutzlaff had published in European and American journals.

Cleland reported that Hamberg and Lechler working in the CU had no confidence in Gutzlaff's Chinese converts and refused to write any accounts to describe it. All the claims of its activities were Gutzlaff's alone, and their visible falseness was creating great hypocrisy within the CU. Cleland could not identify one good Chinese Christian in the CU, and in allowing thieves, kidnappers, ignorant men, and liars to represent the CU with the Chinese, Gutzlaff was ruining the reputation of all the missions. Across this period the names Gutzlaff used for his operations shifted from "Chinese Christian Association" to Chinese Christian Union, from one document to the next.

Some of the details of these problems became public in November 1848 after Gutzlaff applied to the Religious Tract Society (RTS) in London for increasing amounts of money to print leaflets. The RTS asked for a copy of the CU constitution and treasurer's report, but Hamberg and Lechler had never seen either, and the RTS decided to suspend any further payments to Gutzlaff until they heard from Legge. They asked for his candid opinion about the "Chinese Christian Union", mentioning "many are surprised at our apparent neglect of the openings noticed by Gutzlaff and his friends". The RTS wondered if Gutzlaff's agents should be trusted to distribute tracts printed for the RTS by the LMS. Legge responded very diplomatically in early 1849 that the Hong Kong LMS committee had no confidence in the Christian Union and the RTS could make its own decisions about grants to the organization.

#### The inquest of 1848: Legge under attack with Gutzlaff a hidden opponent

This bland letter belied a maelstrom in Hong Kong in the last part of 1848 in which Legge was pulled into a major and highly contentious coroner's inquest that rested in

part on a flawed translation by Gutzlaff. This case pitted Gutzlaff against Legge in a very public court, both popular and official.

The court case concerned events on October 15, 1848, in which two Chinese junk men were killed and 11 wounded in an altercation in Hong Kong harbour. Andrew Shortrede was the presiding coroner into the deaths and reported the daily testimony in his newspaper the *China Mail*. The colony was full of indignation and alarm at the events, and for a while became outraged at Legge for his testimony to the inquest.

Testimony suggested that several British men were pulling in to land their boat on a moonless stormy dark night when Chinese boatmen from two nearby junks threw rocks at them. One British man Muir took umbrage and sought out the police; a constable came back in a small boat in the dark and was also hit by rocks. He retreated as he did not have jurisdiction to open fire in the harbour, then under urging from Muir, the police boat again approached the junks without showing the police light. When the constable got close he saw fire being passed on the junks, presumably showing that the junks were preparing to fire weapons, so again he retreated. Late at night the police made a third trip with three boats, hailed the junks, and were repelled by gunshots. Although gunfire was exchanged there was no “whistling” of balls, so it seemed the Chinese were not loading their guns with shot.

The police boats all retreated again, then enlisted the help of six war ships borrowed from the Navy. The 58 men on these attacked with pistols, muskets, cutlasses and boarding pikes, and boarded the junks, with swords clashing. The junks responded with small arms and 4-5 ginjalls <sup>27</sup>, and threw hot water and molasses at the invaders, but it was no contest. Twenty-two Chinese men jumped into the water and were rescued. Three men were taken from the junks, and eventually 11 wounded men were taken to the Colonial Surgeon Dr. Morrison. Hoo Atsing was dead in the event, while U Afu and Niu Achiu were taken to the hospital for treatment but both died early the next morning, killed by common carbine balls. The other injured men had bayonet and cutlass wounds.

In the inquest into the deaths, a Chinese man who had been visiting one of the junks explained that a long dark boat approached them with no light so they assumed it was a pirate attack and prepared to defend themselves. Another Chinese witness said that two years earlier men dressed as Englishmen who identified themselves as policemen had robbed his boat in Hong Kong, and in the current case he had feared it

---

<sup>27</sup> Ginjalls were long tapering guns from 6 -14 feet long, that were propped up by a tripod support. They were carried on the shoulders of two men and fired by a third. The term arose in India and similar weapons were used in Tibet

was the same situation. The moon was not yet up and it was very dark, it was raining, the wind was strong, and the sea was high. They reported that the men who boarded the junk cut off the queues of many of the junk-men, the Manchu hair-style required of all Chinese as a mark of their submission to the Manchu Qing dynasty.

Lawyers established that the precipitating incident had been “very slight”, and the mobilization of the huge numbers of British men and boats was out of proportion to the initial squabble. They also established that pirates had been masquerading as policemen and operating in the harbour in recent times, and that the original British men had spoken loudly about boarding the junk in the original encounter, well within the hearing of the Chinese sailors.

It eventually became clear that a core issue in the affair concerned communication and translation, both oral and written. When questioned about what communication there had been between the two sides, the naval Lieutenant Lloyd said the police called out in Fukien dialect “do not fire” and the Chinese translator on the police boat spoke to the junk men in “tih tchieu” (Chiew chow, Teochew, or Swatow dialect), but it turned out the junk men spoke Cantonese and could not understand what was being said to them. Then the coroner examined a Proclamation written in Chinese by Gutzlaff, Chinese translator for the Hong Kong government. The document purported to outline British Maritime rules to Chinese boatmen. The Hong Kong government had issued it and provided it to all trading junks in the harbour in 1846. The English original explained firstly that Hong Kong was a free port with no fees, secondly that junks could buy opium in small quantities only from licensed dealers but were free to buy from anyone if they had to buy large quantities, and thirdly, that the only person who could board their junks without the consent of the master would be the Harbour Master, or someone with a warrant and a police constable. Any captain who encountered persons who interfered with these regulations and molested ships, should go to the Chief Magistrate and report the problem.

Coroner Editor Shortrede had been warned by someone that Gutzlaff’s translation into Chinese was flawed in a way that affected the case, and he wanted an expert in written Chinese to testify. He did not know James Legge personally but knew Legge was considered an expert in Chinese translation, so passed on the Chinese Proclamation to Legge for translation and testimony. Legge was reluctant to enter into the court but Shortrede persisted because the case was so important, and he spent a breakfast with Legge urging him to help the cause of justice.

Legge finally agreed. He studied the text and consulted other skilled translators including Ho and a Chinese man who had been top in his class in the literary civil

service examinations in Canton. In the inquest Legge was pressed to explain the problem in the translation of the third regulation. He showed how it would not be clear to a Chinese reader that he was forbidden to prevent the Harbour Master and constable from boarding. The Chinese was written so badly that it was confusing on this key point, and Legge's Chinese colleagues agreed that the Proclamation as written gave a captain the right to resist boarding even by officials. The wording was translated back into English as: "If there be men and the captain does not want them to enter the vessel, then he may be able to obstruct and stop them". A Captain would be justified in thinking "men" included the Harbour Master and police.

Legge mentioned that when he showed the text to Ho, a Chinese scholar at the mission, "he laughed heartily at the composition" and agreed with Legge's translation. At this point Legge had not seen the English original and did not know what it said, he was simply commenting on the confusing wording in the Chinese text he had been given. Three days later, the verdict acquitted the two Chinese junk men of any culpability in the deaths of the two Chinese sailors on the grounds that the Chinese correctly believed that they had the right to resist boarding attempts when they believed thieves were attacking them.

Next came the inquest into the death of one Indian policeman, Barker Ally, in the same event, the question being whether the junkmen were guilty of murder. Ally's body was recovered three days after the conflict. He had died of a spear wound to the chest, he had a gunshot wound to one eye, and had fallen overboard early in the action. In testimony the Police Superintendent disputed the authority of the Proclamation in assigning boarding rights to the Harbour Master, and said the Proclamation was not an Ordinance. The Superintendent claimed that only he and the Registrar-General were authorized to board boats, and the Harbour Master was not. The Harbour Master testified that he had been distributing the Proclamation since 1846 and believed that it gave him alone the authority to board junks. As to the behaviour of the Chinese, a policeman who had been in the boarding party testified that the boat-men spoke in the "Chiew-chow" dialect, and that they had on board "only the usual number of stones" for defending their boat. The verdict three days later was that the Junkmen acted "under a mistake as to the characters of the persons boarding them... and...their acts were justifiable in resisting their Junk being boarded."

These two coroner's verdicts supporting the Chinese junkmen against their British accusers outraged the British community, and much of the outrage was focussed against Legge for his testimony about the Chinese text. Popular opinion blamed Legge as the source of a grave miscarriage of justice, in that the verdict did not blame the Chinese

junkmen and implied the homicides arose from the excessive reactions of the British. Gutzlaff, whose skills as a translator had been shown wanting, followed the inquests in detail and was furious at Legge's testimony over the poor quality of Gutzlaff's Chinese translation of the Proclamation. At the height of the conflict Gutzlaff threatened Legge that he would soon face accusations "before the two Houses of Parliament and what penalties these could inflict".

Legge was taking such a beating in public criticism that Shortrede felt compelled to come to Legge's defence in the *China Mail* even though Shortrede was a rather sarcastic critic where missionaries were concerned. Within a few days he wrote explaining the role of the Chinese Proclamation in the incident. First, the Harbour Master had never given the Police a copy of the Proclamation, so the Police incorrectly believed they had the exclusive rights to board vessels. Secondly, the Chinese text was badly translated and misleading, thus the Chinese believed they had the right to resist being boarded. Even if they had asked the Harbour Master for clarification about who could board, they would have been given incorrect information because he did not know that the Police believed they and the Registrar-General had sole authority to board. Finally, Shortrede defended Legge's role in the inquest, because some had started to question the honesty of his testimony. Shortrede then published the Chinese text so everyone could study it.

This led to an even greater uproar because the crucial Chinese character in the third regulation appeared in the *China Mail* text in a position that supported the critics of Legge. Many entered the fray, and the editor of the *Friend of China* publicly disputed Legge's critique of Gutzlaff's Chinese version.

Legge then wrote to explain his exact role in the inquest. First, before he attended the inquest he had only read the third regulation in Chinese, and had identified the translation problem. After the inquest he read the entire Proclamation for the first time and found the Chinese translation even more incorrect than the third regulation that had been the subject of his testimony. Then there was a problem with which version of the Proclamation he had been asked to examine. Coroner Shortrede had asked him to "back-translate" some Chinese text but Legge had never seen the official Chinese version of the Proclamation (the version given to the coroner's court) until after his testimony; what Shortrede had given him to translate was a different version. In comparing the two, Legge wrote to the *Hong Kong Register* that the official version was even more confused than the version he had been given to back-translate. "I certainly do not consider the "official" translation to be the "correct one"".

Then things got even messier. Shortrede then confessed in an article on November 9 that his *China Mail* had made errors in the Chinese text it had published for public

discussion. His typesetting office had transposed a key character (*kwan*, meaning government official) from its position in the crucial third regulation. The placement of this word had been the core of Legge's critique, and in the incorrect *China Mail* version the placement was contrary to the meaning that Legge had explained, thus making it seem that Legge had misled the inquest. Shortrede was honest and realized he had made an error that showed Legge in a highly unfortunate light, so Shortrede then printed a corrected Chinese version. To make things even more complicated, he had obtained the "correct" Chinese version from LMS Mission House. Shortrede warned that rumours were spreading that the change "was done wilfully at Mission House", and complained that many were spreading the incorrect version around the community.

Legge wrote Shortrede suggesting that the altered text represented "a small malignity", specific mischief against himself, and Shortrede agreed, scolding the community that Legge was absolutely correct. All the evidence showed that the change in the text was not done in Mission House, and Shortrede was "grieved" by the incorrect rumours against Legge and Mission house. Shortrede went to lengths to explain how the Chinese text was set in his printing office and asserted the error had been made there, arising because the British workmen "are not acquainted with the language". He had even spotted another error in the *China Mail* Chinese text, but one that had no consequence.

To make matters even murkier, the Harbour Master Mr. Pedder then began distributing two different English back-translations of the Chinese version of the Proclamation around the community, and many in the British community began incorrectly to believe that the original Proclamation had been in Chinese. Pedder sent one English version of the Chinese text to the *Hong Kong Register* and a different English version to the *China Mail*. These had been back-translated by a teenage student of Gutzlaff's, so Shortrede warned that "we are not convinced (the student) is more authoritative than more senior scholars of the two languages", noting that the boy had only studied under Gutzlaff for a few months. Gutzlaff realized his own work was being criticized, then declared that he had nothing to do with the original and erroneous Chinese translation, even though he was the government's Chinese translator. Shortrede in his characteristically sarcastic tone printed that it would be unlikely that Gutzlaff would defend his own mistakes. Pedder's version argued that that character for man (*ren*) always implied ordinary men, whereas the character *kwan*, *guan* always meant officials and was used in one place to imply that officials could not be refused; this appeared to be contrary to Legge's testimony. Shortrede by now was openly championing Legge; he pointed out that the position of *kwan* in Pedder's version was

such poor Chinese and so awkward that any reader of Chinese would immediately know that it was a mistake.

Legge was very upset by all this, which impugned both his translation skill and his personal integrity, and wrote Shortrede for publication. He explained that Shortrede as foreman of the coroner's jury had asked him to translate the Chinese version of the third regulation, and he had never expected that it would bring him, "for the first time in my life, into a controversy in the Public Press. I did a conscientious job, and I understand Chinese well enough to read that document. I still maintain that its meaning is not plain. It is in fact a piece of bad Chinese composition", and "every Chinaman ... competent to give an opinion on the subject will pronounce it to be so". He explained that some time after the inquest he had finally been given a copy of the original Proclamation in English and the Chinese "official translation", and in his opinion that "did not deserve to be called a translation at all". The grave error in the Chinese version was that it implied a captain could refuse boarding even to the Harbour Master. Legge explained that the flawed text in the section on "men who can be refused" had to include officials or there would be no point in having the section, because Captains already knew that they could refuse boarding to ordinary men. Legge ended in a conciliatory way by apologizing to Gutzlaff on the rather vague grounds that, with one exception, he is "the oldest student of the Chinese language among Foreigners". Legge was willing to acknowledge Gutzlaff's "merits as a Chinese scholar" but suggested that in translating these regulations he had been "nodding".

The English community was still so angry with Legge for testimony that ended up supporting the Chinese junkmen, that Shortrede wrote again and more aggressively to rescue Legge from the widespread gossip and hostility his steadily objective testimony had generated. Shortrede explained that at the outset of the inquest he knew Legge only by reputation, and had the text passed to Legge through an intermediary. Legge had been very reluctant and in a breakfast meeting during the inquest Shortrede had worked hard to convince Legge to translate the document. Shortrede explained the purpose of the Proclamation to Legge, they had both recognized that the third regulation was the crucial text, and Shortrede had pressed Legge to translate it and attend as a witness in order "to serve the ends of justice". Legge was "so much better qualified to state its import than the police interpreters or any other that could be fixed upon".

Shortrede stressed that Legge was unaware of Pedder's testimony and did not know that Gutzlaff had done the Chinese version; Legge simply came and gave his translation. Further, the jury immediately recognized that the Chinese text differed from the English original, and that the misplacement of one crucial word was enough to

affect the verdict. Shortrede explained that the final verdict depended as much on Harbour Master Pedder's testimony as it did on Legge's. Shortrede scolded again that everyone was complaining about Dr. Legge's translation as the agent of the acquittals, but the value of Legge's evidence was mainly philological rather than as a determining element in the verdict "despite the gossip of those who have not read the evidence". Shortrede concluded his defence of Legge by writing the original English text of the third regulation and the English translation of Gutzlaff's Chinese translation of the original, showing how they were clearly different in meaning.

Thus, within his first three months back in the colony Legge had been plunged into a highly controversial and very public role. The popular conclusion was that Legge was overly solicitous toward the Chinese, but in addition he had gained a powerful enemy, Gutzlaff, whose sloppy work had been fully exposed in court and in the newspapers. Legge wrote the LMS that he had learned that Gutzlaff "had been driven wild (by the court case) and in his paroxysm has said the wildest things about myself". In front of two other PMs, Burns and Hamberg, Gutzlaff had claimed he bore Legge no malice, but he had "propagated very slanderous reports" about Legge implying that Legge was the person who had transposed the crucial Chinese word in the flawed document studied in the court. Legge learned from Mr. Hillier (the Police Magistrate, Sheriff, and Dr. Medhurst's son-in-law) that unpleasant things were being said about him in the Governor's House, and wrote the Governor, receiving a reply "expressing in flattering terms his opinion of all my course in the matter". The community in Hong Kong now seemed to have settled, but Legge was still worried about mischievous reports that Gutzlaff might send back to Britain.

Shortrede was not merely an impartial editor and jurist in this situation however, and some of what he wrote and published earlier in the *Mail* was certainly prejudicial against Legge. It is likely that this hostility dated from the previous year, 1847, in which Shortrede had been part of the group that had tried to take over Union Church during Legge's absence. They had tried to recreate it as a highly specific and fundamentalist "Free Church of Scotland" instead of honouring the basic nondenominational rule of its founders, Legge and the LMS. Shortrede's annoyance at the LMS would cause more serious problems in the future.

James Legge was now a very public figure who had shown scholarly impartiality in a conflict that was in part between English and Chinese interests, and while Shortrede recognized this and admired Legge's integrity, to many in the expatriate community this had established him as an outsider. Although Shortrede's defence of Legge settled the issues of the coroner's inquest by mid-November, Legge and Gutzlaff were not yet



finished with each other, and conflicts about the nature and operation of Gutzlaff's union of Chinese converts became increasingly public and heated in the next few years.

#### 1849 mission problems; Legge vs. Gutzlaff

While Legge had been proven a better translator than Gutzlaff in the junkmen disaster inquest in October 1848, and relations with the Governor had been returned to ordinary cordiality because of Shortrede's interventions, 1849 was a year of increasing struggle between Legge and Gutzlaff. At issue was Gutzlaff's claim in his writings and through his influential position in the heart of the colony's government, to be operating a vast mission effort in China with great success and thousands of converts.

In September the LMS men in Shanghai knew that Gutzlaff was going to Europe in a money-raising trip where he would be continuing these extreme claims. *The Friend of China and Hong Kong Gazette*, a local newspaper edited by John Carr, wrote in late September praising Gutzlaff's work for not deluding "the world with fictitious reports". Carr criticized "the missionary chapel" in the bazaar (which all would know was the LMS chapel) for luring in "mere vagrants" through promises of free dinners. Legge and Hirschberg were furious, wrote denying the allegation and insisting that their denial be published in both the local and overseas edition, which was done. But Gutzlaff clearly had convinced many in Hong Kong that his Christian converts were "respectable Chinese" in contrast to those of the mission societies.

From Shanghai both Medhurst and Dr. Lockhart were writing to the Directors outlining the problems with Gutzlaff's claims. Gutzlaff was either a scoundrel telling lies, or was completely gullible to the accounts from his CU employees retailing wondrous conversions of "the Spirit moving the people". Lockhart emphasized these accounts were not trustworthy, and the CU itself was wholly a fabrication, and was comprised solely of Gutzlaff. Medhurst criticized Gutzlaff's claims of his work in China, explaining that the 15 provinces Gutzlaff claimed to be preaching in were in fact inaccessible to him. Gutzlaff had lived for years in Kowloon, and in the towns of Kowloon, Xiamen, and Fuzhou where he could easily set up missions, he had no congregations at all, yet he claimed converts as far away as the borders of Tibet. Gutzlaff thus claimed his work was flourishing only where it could never be seen. The men in the treaty port missions had never encountered any hint of the CU or its employees other than from the occasional deluded opium smoker. It seemed to many of the mission men that Gutzlaff was too gullible to the reports of his employees, that his "credulity was celebrated". Gutzlaff's official job required him to work six days a week, yet he boasted of thousands adopting

Christianity and becoming missionaries for him, and his claims were simply not matched by any evidence.

Legge felt forced by events to provide the LMS in London with a detailed critique of Gutzlaff's work in a September letter. In addition, he wrote that if Gutzlaff made representations to the Bible and Tract Societies for financial support, the LMS Directors should provide Legge's analysis of the CU to them because he realized they would both be under pressure from their donors to support Gutzlaff's work rather than that of less amazing missions if they did not know the truth. Further, if Gutzlaff made public appeals, Legge asked that his letter be published in a mission journal for all to read. Because so much was at stake and his text would be shown to a wider audience, Legge wrote with full understanding that his critique would probably end up being published.

Legge summarized the problems, which were basic and profound. Gutzlaff's members in his Christian Union were not Christian in that they did not know any Christian ideas, they did not believe in any Christian beliefs, and they did not behave in accordance with Christian standards. Men were baptized and accepted into the CU as "converts" if they were able to memorize short bits of Christian Chinese text that could be preached. Membership yielded men paid jobs as tract-distributors and as preachers for the inland mission. In this way a huge group (Gutzlaff claimed 3,000 but Legge said this was impossible) of scallywags became "Christian" for the payoff of \$5.00 per month, without any understanding of what they were doing.

The operation was attractive to Chinese without any gainful occupation because they thought that Gutzlaff, with a government job, was a high mandarin who could bring them material advantages. Legge explained that Gutzlaff had a full-time government job as Chinese Secretary to the Governor with no time to do mission preaching in the interior of China, and that the CU had never formed itself into any identifiable society with accountability for its funds. While Legge acknowledged Gutzlaff's devotion to China as suggested in his Chinese name Gae-han ("Chinese-lover"), appreciated Gutzlaff's great eloquence in oral Chinese, and recognized Gutzlaff's great efforts, the core problem was that the CU was a sham whose members simply could not be considered Christian by any reasonable standard. Dr. Hobson had encounters with CU men whom Gutzlaff had recommended; one had previously been fired for lying while the other did not know there was such a thing as the Sabbath and smoked opium. Legge knew many CU members and found them working in their shops on the Sabbath, running fortune-telling operations with the Bible lying in a tangle of superstitious texts and paraphernalia. None of the CU's "army of preachers" and assistants could recite the Ten Commandments.

In addition, even in the core preaching texts that Gutzlaff prepared for this army of employees, he had not taken good care with the Chinese texts and they were far from explaining Christianity. Gutzlaff was claiming to distribute huge quantities of Christian texts and Legge was so surprised by the scale that he was “very much disposed to say it is a lie”. In addition, he knew with confidence that his Press could do better than Gutzlaff on printing costs and wanted to ensure the Bible Society knew this. When one CU man came seeking donations to build a huge hall in a village east of Canton because, he said, Jesus had built such a hall in Judea, Legge invited the man to come back the next day with other CU members to discuss their work. The next day Legge, Kay, Cole, and Hirschberg interviewed them about their beliefs. Not one could recite the Ten Commandments and they had never heard of the apostle Paul. In Hong Kong the CU had no committees, no supervisory staff, and had made no public reports about its activities or accounts. In sum, the CU was “one of the vilest impositions that was ever perpetrated upon the Public”. It had nothing to do with Christianity but mainly functioned to provide jobs to ignorant men. It was a “bubble and a sham”.

Legge explained that relations with Gutzlaff had failed after the inquest that had shown Gutzlaff’s weaknesses as a translator to a large public. Following this public disgrace Gutzlaff attacked Legge, claiming that he had slandered Gutzlaff in the testimony Legge had been called upon to give. After the affair was all over, Legge had consulted with Medhurst, the most senior Chinese scholar among the mission men, and Medhurst had confirmed Legge’s interpretation of the text. That was enough to satisfy Legge about the whole event, but Gutzlaff had become an angry enemy.

Legge and other LMS men became involved in the growing controversy about Gutzlaff’s aggressive claims of his missionary successes and his energetic efforts in raising money in Europe, because good mission work was very hard to do in China. Early in 1850 Legge wrote the LMS directors outlining basic problems affecting all mission work in China. Chinese people quickly concluded that missions were rich when they discovered that they received money from abroad. Early converts were often given jobs as mission workers in the printing and teaching tasks, and outsiders thought they were being paid for having become Christians, not understanding they were being paid for their work. Among the poor there were many whom the Chinese called “idlers” with no regular livelihood, living off the slender help of the few members of their extended family who had incomes. The apparent wealth of the mission provided opportunities to many of these unemployed, happy to be baptized if it yielded jobs passing out booklets, and there were many eager takers for baptism with these expectations.

Legge wrote the LMS that this is what was going on in the work of Gutzlaff's CU. It was apparently baptizing large numbers who were then hired to go into China and pass out mission booklets, but the converts in fact knew virtually nothing about Christianity. Legge said Gutzlaff's system operated with "a melancholy and pernicious recklessness" that had nothing to do with Christianity but instead operated to encourage false professions of faith. He argued that this corrupt system argued in favour of the discipline of a congregational system of church government in which each congregation should decide who had become truly Christian and worthy of baptism. In this system converts would be more pure-minded because they would understand their baptism only allowed them to join their poor Chinese countrymen in the congregation. This differed from Gutzlaff's system in which all the applicant had to do was swear belief in front of a foreign mission man in order to become rich. Legge was so upset by the CU that he declared it was worse than opium for the Chinese.

In March 1850 Milne added to Legge's critique, and wrote the LMS that newspaper reports of Gutzlaff's claims in his money-raising talks in Europe in 1849 showed him in his "usual character as a forger of facts and author of fictions". Milne warned that Gutzlaff's claims that the Chinese Emperor allowed all missionaries to travel and work everywhere in China was "completely false".

In London the LMS had been receiving letters from Britons and Europeans curious about Gutzlaff and his money-raising speeches, as some were aware his work was controversial. From Holland a query came after Gutzlaff gave a speech there asking the local churches "to send out young ladies – whom he is to endeavour to establish in Chinese families – to teach Christianity to them. The said young ladies, to be acceptable, it seems, must all have dark hair and dark eyes, as a *sine qua non* among their qualifications".

Writers were often aware that a group of Hong Kong mission men had signed an 1850 statement condemning Gutzlaff, and were curious about that. Legge and other mission men were the authors of the statement. They had held a meeting reviewing Gutzlaff's work and printed up the Minutes, which were seriously unfavourably to the CU. They sent this to London, writing that this document would either force Gutzlaff to be quiet or to demand an inquiry, which they were agreed would prove disastrous to him.

Gutzlaff had left for his European tour late in 1849, and almost immediately the men Gutzlaff had appointed as "auditor" and as Secretary to the CU, were fired by Rev. Hamburg, the honest German missionary trying to work with the men Gutzlaff had baptized and hired. After losing their jobs these men stopped attending services, raising

the question of their devotion to their new faith. Hamberg knew that many of Gutzlaff's agents were known to be "very wicked persons", and reported that not one of the agents was competent to preach Christianity. He soon also fired all the CU men who were opium users. A German missionary, Vogel, appeared in the summer of 1850 during Gutzlaff's absence, expecting to be sent to Beijing as the Imperial Astronomer in an arrangement Gutzlaff had promised him.

The worst was that Legge no longer believed Gutzlaff was sincere in his efforts but was deliberately lying about his work, because in Hong Kong in late October Legge found out that Gutzlaff was making claims in his European tour that were simply false. Legge was now convinced that Gutzlaff was not naïve, but was only "wearing a mask". The controversy soon became very public and quite rough. Soon the *Hong Kong Register* published an anonymous attack on Gutzlaff charging him with fallacies and misrepresentation, adding "if ever a man said he had done much for the cause of Christianity, and in reality had done little, it is Dr. Gutzlaff". The *China Mail* assumed this article had been written by Legge, and published material scornful of Legge until the *Register* contradicted that assumption.

The *Mail* eventually backed off its former endorsement of Gutzlaff and reversed course, printing a long and sarcastic review of claims Gutzlaff was making in Europe, as published in a German newspaper. This German article had described Gutzlaff's report of brilliantly rebutting the five-hour speech of a mandarin with a two-sentence retort, his claim to have mastered "25 Asiatic tongues", his mastery of "40,000" Chinese characters, and many other miraculous accomplishments, "laughable as it may appear".

The *Hong Kong Register* picked up the attack on Gutzlaff's claims on October 29, calling them "astounding" and a "racy tissue of monstrosities, more open, gross, and palpable than ever". The editor wrote of his honest indignation at Gutzlaff's "unblushing effrontery" in proclaiming his imagined deeds to the world. He usurped the claims of effective missionaries by his "fallacious statements, self laudations, and gross exaggerations". He was not simply naïve but a highly practical man who was therefore "the more dangerous and the more to be condemned... for he must well know... that what he blazons forth is incorrect", and his exaggerations will now demolish his reputation. Early in November it continued that although Gutzlaff had made himself aware of Chinese spoken dialects to an extent greater than any other missionary, "his mastery of any one is generally doubted by other Chinese scholars", and the editor doubted Gutzlaff's claim that he had knowledge of "twenty-five Asiatic languages besides Japanese".

Rev. Hamberg was so perturbed by the CU men he was supposed to be supervising as missionaries, that he took a number of these CU “Christians” to be interviewed by the Anglican Bishop. There they revealed that they had never taken Gutzlaff’s pamphlets into the interior of China as instructed, but simply collected the money for doing that. They reported that up to 40% of the CU workers were opium addicts (Paquette, 1995). They acknowledged they used false names and birthplaces so that Gutzlaff’s claim that they represented men from all provinces in China would appear to be true.

#### Gutzlaff returns to Hong Kong in 1851 and dies

After Gutzlaff’s return to Hong Kong in January 1851 with his third new wife, Englishwoman Dorothy Gabriel, he found out about the criticisms of his claims and published an incensed manifesto attacking his critics for mounting their attack while he was away in Europe. He claimed he was ready to answer all questions in person, and furious that a Hong Kong tribunal had convened to evaluate what was going on in the CU. In a tone of outraged innocence he declared all the CU work to be ruined and its workers so persecuted that he was withdrawing from all mission work in China. Legge was equally outraged at this attempt to avoid answering any of the mission community’s concerns about the CU, and wrote of Gutzlaff having “skulked out of his position in a manner so utterly unworthy”. That month Legge reported that no honest man would work along “Dr. Gutzlaff”. After Gutzlaff’s return the CU workers changed their story a second time, now claiming they had given a false report to Bishop Smith because Hamberg had paid them to lie.

Another side to Gutzlaff’s behaviour appeared during the voyage to Hong Kong. Despite having his new wife at his side, a young Dutch woman in his party named Miss Wakker “discovered... that he was a wolf in sheep’s clothing”. She had been convinced by him to come to China where he would introduce her to leading Chinese families. Unfortunately during the voyage “she began to discover a cloven hoof under Dr. Gutzlaff’s missionary vestments, and found on her arrival here, that all he had told her about China was a tissue of lies”. During that voyage the new Mrs. Gutzlaff developed “a mortal hatred of Miss Wakker and made her life miserable until she fled their home” to be taken in by helpful people. She sought work from Legge and he hired her as a teacher in his school after learning that she was a devoted teacher and an accomplished actor. He wrote “Dr. Gutzlaff will ... be a ball of wrath when he learns how she is engaged, but he basely deceived her and basedly treated her. Little did he think he was bringing out someone to help in our mission!”. Within a few months the excellent Miss Wakker was engaged to be married to an American missionary, and everyone but Gutzlaff was happy.

#### Mrs. Gutzlaff and money

Most of the story ended with the sudden death of Gutzlaff on August 9, 1851, of kidney failure, although his new wife of one year turned out to be capable of more trouble. Gutzlaff was 48 years old when he died, and had already outlived two wives. Poor penurious Hobson was scandalized to learn that Gutzlaff's new widow would be returning home with an inheritance of \$50,000. As early as 1832 Robert Morrison had written the LMS about Gutzlaff, noting that he was very secretive about money, explaining that after the death of his first English wife Gutzlaff was expecting an inheritance from her from England, was getting a good commercial salary, and living for no charge with the LMS mission (Morrison, 1832). Acerbic editor Shortrede wrote in the *China Mail* of Gutzlaff's death, noting that his salary had been a considerable one that enabled him to leave a fortune, "as little in accordance with his original expectations, as with the professions of poverty in which he was at all times wont to indulge". Shortrede observed that Gutzlaff's talents "were more various than exact" and predicted that his Chinese Christian Union would likely expire with him, noting that his reputation was higher abroad than in China". That prediction was soon fulfilled (Lutz, 2000).

Legge and Gutzlaff were now free of each other, but Gutzlaff's legacy continued to scandalize after his death. Within a week of his death Bishop Smith convened a meeting of the German-speaking missionaries to discuss the operations of the CU, and he wrote the widowed Mrs. Gutzlaff to explain his findings. PMs Vogel, Genaehr, Lechler, and Hamberg attended the meeting and all but one agreed "there was not one honest, sincere Christian man in the Union whom they would trust. Every one ought to be sent away as worse than useless". The mission men considered it harmed the entire mission community to be associated in any way with such a corrupt group. The one dissenter, Neumann, had only been in China for five months and had no Chinese language skills and no knowledge of the operations of the China missions, so his views were ignored.

Bishop Smith wanted to learn of Mrs. Gutzlaff's intentions for the CU, preferably before she left town. Her response must have included some kind of threat, complaining that those mission men were simply jealous of her husband and not giving an honest account, for the Bishop's next letter to her was testy. He explained that although Gutzlaff had claimed he would order the Bishop to convene an inquiry into the CU, in fact Gutzlaff had never asked the Bishop for this. In light of her hostile response to his query he decided to let the whole matter rest in her hands, rather than generate more controversies about her husband's character. He closed by defending all the other mission men "who in poverty and obscurity are labouring", and disabused her notion that all the 70 PMs in China were simply suffering from "bitter jealousy" of Gutzlaff.

The woman who was Gutzlaff's wife for less than a year when he died, was turning out to be as controversial and self-interested as he had been. By December 1852 Dorothy Gutzlaff had still not left the colony and was fighting about money. A civil lawsuit quickly developed over debts owed to a Chinese printer for Chinese character woodblocks he had cut for Gutzlaff. Mrs. Gutzlaff sued the printer over possession of these woodcuts. Under oath Mrs. Gutzlaff explained that she told the Chinese printer to take the Chinese printing blocks to missionary Neumann, who she ordered to send them to England for use there. Neumann accepted the blocks but refused to send them to England, claiming they were the property of the CU and claiming that he was the authorized representative of the CU. Mrs. Gutzlaff was furious, arguing that the blocks were hers as part of Gutzlaff's estate, that she had never heard of the CU and it had no standing in law.

Under oath, as reported in the *China Mail*, she claimed that Gutzlaff had withdrawn from the CU in January 1851 and had published a statement to this effect. She claimed that the Chinese printer had come to her asking her to pay for the blocks and for instructions concerning their use. She had no intention of paying for them until she possessed them, and ordered him to give them to Neumann for safekeeping. He refused to release them on the grounds that Gutzlaff raised the money for the blocks for the CU, thus the CU owned them. Mrs. Gutzlaff contested this, claiming that the printer had always been paid directly by Gutzlaff, never by the CU, thus staking her claim to ownership as his widow.

In fact Gutzlaff had never kept books, there was virtually no accounting done for the CU, and it seemed that Gutzlaff just pooled all his various moneys into one slush fund for his own use. When he returned from Europe in January 1851 under attack for his mission claims and his financial accountability, he had asked a local man to do accounting for the CU, but the man testified he had to give up because Gutzlaff was unable to provide any receipts. Although Gutzlaff had written European congregations giving the names of various officers of the CU, in fact there were no officers; Gutzlaff was the only person of authority. In the courtroom, the accountant affirmed that Gutzlaff considered the Chinese printing blocks to be the property of the CU.

The accountant explained that when the printer originally sought payment in 1849 for the completed work, Gutzlaff sent the man to Hamberg, who had been in charge of the CU during Gutzlaff's European tour. Hamberg had not ordered the blocks and refused to pay for them, and sent the printer back to the CU "treasurer", Gutzlaff. Hamberg had never considered the blocks to be the property of the CU. Mission man Neumann attested that he had been sent out by German congregations to work in the



CU, and that he had taken over the accounts after Gutzlaff had died at the request of Mrs. Gutzlaff. Unfortunately he discovered the CU had no money, but instead had debts greater than \$400. Mrs. Gutzlaff promised him that she would lend him money including enough to pay for the blocks, with the promise that he would repay her when anticipated donations arrived from the German churches. On that basis Neumann had assured the printer that he would be paid. Instead, Mrs. Gutzlaff never loaned him any money, thus the printer could not be paid until money for the CU arrived from Germany. Gutzlaff had not paid the printer because he claimed the CU did not have any money. The verdict of the court was highly unfavourable to Gutzlaff, his CU operation, and his widow's machinations. The court ruled that the printing blocks did not belong to Gutzlaff and thus not to his widow, and it ordered Mrs. Gutzlaff to pay all the court costs. The long saga with Gutzlaff and his fantastical claims collapsed in a miserable court case.

#### Mrs. Gutzlaff attracts Rev. Moncrieff

Although Gutzlaff was now dead, the colony was now intrigued by an interesting scandal in the form of his wealthy widow Dorothy Gabriel, who was causing ripples of gossip in the community. He had married the third Mrs. Gutzlaff in England only a year earlier and returned to much scandal, yet at Gutzlaff's funeral in August 1851, newcomer Anglican Rev. Edward Moncrieff preached a highly laudatory sermon about Gutzlaff then within an unseemly short time became engaged to marry the rich widow. Scandalous rumour arose because there was a widely held suspicion that Moncrieff's laudatory sermon had more to do with attracting the rich widow than lamenting the dead husband. Moncrieff had come to Hong Kong in March 1850 with Bishop Smith, and took up duties at St. Paul's College, in the Bishop's private Chapel, and as the Colonial Chaplain.

To his credit, Bishop Smith considered this rapid engagement unsuitable and tried to find out the details of the matter. Moncrieff and Mrs. Gutzlaff both lied so much during the Bishop's investigation that in 1852 he fired Moncrieff from his positions and sent him packing back to England. Widow Gutzlaff still had a tenuous hold on the old Christian Union, although by now it had faded to a remnant group of 18 men led by a German missionary who could not speak Chinese. With the departure of Moncrieff Mrs. Gutzlaff finally abandoned the CU, and Gutzlaff's contentious role in the Hong Kong and Canton missions finally ended.

In June 1852 *China Mail* editor Shortrede learned that there was some European plan to revive a "Gutzlaff society". He hoped that this would not lead to more "importations of deluded female missionaries" such as those whom Gutzlaff had told

that there were Chinese ladies of rank in the interior who were eager for the Christian message. Shortrede was his usual outspoken self in concluding “ten good medical missions to China would have better effect than 1000 “Chinese Unions”.

### Chapter 32 Hong Kong mission work, struggles, and deaths

*In which the mission men struggle with problems that are personal, linguistic, theological, financial, medical, and political.*

Apart from his participation in the term question conflicts, the public strife regarding his translation in the criminal court, and the battles with Gutzlaff, across 1848-1852 Legge put his prodigious energies back in regular mission work with his educational institutions, Union Church, the Chinese churches, and his pre-dawn translations of the classical Chinese texts.

### The MES collapses into bankruptcy

With the opening of the interior of China to the Protestant missions, there was a great exodus of men to the “inland” mission by 1849, and some of the Hong Kong institutions lost the staff they needed. The MES School foundered in bankruptcy. John Morrison, along with American and British merchants (Olyphant, Lancelot Dent, and William Jardine), and PMs including Bridgman, Gutzlaff, and Abeel, had founded it in Canton in 1836. Morrison wanted it to continue the aims of his father Robert to educate Chinese in both Western and Chinese languages and subjects. The society foundered during its early years with the intrusions of the first Anglo-Chinese war, then began operating a good school in Hong Kong in 1842, after the arrival of a talented teacher from Yale, Rev. Samuel Robbins Brown. Governor Pottinger had even given the school a grant, the \$1,200 that Legge and the LMS men had been expecting to support their ACC. As Hong Kong’s fortunes shifted with the opening to China, many of the trustees had returned to Britain, other missions were running schools, and headmaster Brown left in 1846 because of deteriorating health for the United States. He took three outstanding pupils with him, including Wong Shing (Huang Shing, 1827 – 1890), and Wong Fun (Huang Kuan, 1827-1879), both to return to later careers in the Hong Kong LMS and in Hong Kong public life. Brown left the MES teaching to his assistant Mr. Macy. Sam Brown had been a talented teacher and was described by one of his star pupils Yung Wing as gentlemanly, agreeable, and flexible, but Macy did not seem to have the same virtues. Without Brown’s dynamic leadership and with the dispersion of traders and missions along the coast, by 1849 the school had been increasingly suffering financial problems that led it to bankruptcy.

With the school's collapse Legge took the MES students into his school and began working on increasing its size, pressing the LMS to add a teacher who would not be a missionary. In 1850 Legge's English-Chinese day school had 45 boys, most of whom paid a tuition fee of \$2.00 per month, and Mary was teaching a small class of girls. His plans for the theology students were that they should not end up as "Bookworms, nor Translators nor philosophers. We want preachers, But this is a problem in the east – Once students minds have been opened to science and the treasures of learning – they get so interested in the life of the mind they do not want to mingle with their country men because now the intellectual difference is too great".

The same year Legge opened a boarding school, and a year later that school had 50 boys, with Dr. Hirschberg helping Legge teach this crowd. That year in Hong Kong there were 10 missionaries teaching 165 pupils in their schools. Legge's student numbers stayed rather stable, with 38 boys in the boarding school and 45 in the day school in 1855, and in 1856 Legge closed the boy's boarding school, which had provided classes to an average of 45 boys since 1850. From 1852 his mission operated its first boarding school for girls, under the care of Mrs. Chalmers, wife of a new LMS man, Rev. John Chalmers (1825-1899) who arrived in 1852.

#### American mission schools policy; against bilingual education for Chinese

Local American PMs urged their home Mission Boards to support the MES school but the American Board refused to do this because the school provided instruction equally in English and Chinese. Rufus Anderson, the leading figure in the American Board was strongly opposed to teaching English to Chinese students because when they graduated they could get good jobs in commerce and government rather than becoming poor missionaries sharing the poverty of their Chinese congregations. Anderson concluded that the costs of educating them were thus a bad investment. In contrast to this official policy, the American PMs actually in Canton wanted to provide the more comprehensive education because they were then able to attract students from more highly educated Chinese families, rather than just "the children of the indigent and orphans" (Harris, 1991). The mission men knew there was a risk of losing their graduates to good secular jobs, but still hoped to convert some of them and help them to become Chinese missionaries.

#### Legge's educational goals

Legge and the LMS men shared the goal of providing a broad bilingual education to the students, and the LMS never used a straightforward capitalist calculation to set its educational policy. In his Theological Seminary Legge hoped to educate converts after

they had achieved a good general education, to train them in higher education about Christianity so that they would be able to go into China and set up indigenous churches. Even his seminary taught a broad arts and science curriculum that included algebra, geometry, history, science, theology, and ecclesiastical history (Hutchinson, 1877). He sought donations to support six scholarships to provide for room and board, tuition, and clothing, trying to keep the school's operating costs self-sustaining by the enlistment of donors to help individual students.

#### Students Song and Li go to Singapore

But Legge's students' careers did not always follow the paths that he had hoped. He had returned from the UK with the three lads, and by April the portrait of them with Legge painted by Henry Room had been recreated in an engraving by John Cochran and published in Mary's father's evangelical magazine, the EMMC. In 1849 in Hong Kong the three lads were part of a group of eight students completing the examinations to enter the LMS Theological Seminary. Legge knew they were now in a vulnerable position because they had reached an age making them prime targets for offers of good jobs in business and government, potentially disrupting his hopes they would become evangelists in China.

In the summer of 1849 Legge began to worry about two of these students who had gone back to the Straits in February for a three-month visit to Malacca and Singapore, their studies disrupted because their families in Singapore had pressed them to return home. Legge knew that once in Singapore both Song and Li would be under great family pressure to marry and set up family life there, ending their education in Hong Kong. He next discovered that Miss Grant, a mission teacher of Chinese girls in Singapore, immediately tried to convince Song to marry one of her Christian girls, while Song's father was trying to marry him to a cousin. Miss Grant became more aggressive in her plan once she found out Song had no legal obligation to return to the LMS in Hong Kong, and bribed him by offering him a teaching job if he would marry her student. That gave Song a choice between gaining a wife and job in Singapore or returning to years of poverty and study in Hong Kong, and it is no surprise that he married and began teaching. Li returned to Hong Kong in June with an LMS man who told Legge that Miss Grant's behaviour was "most selfish and dastardly". Eventually Legge wrote Song to explain to him that in breaking his educational contract with his sponsor Mr. Caston, Song was now responsible for repaying all the money that his sponsor had paid out for Song's room and board. The remaining lad Ng Asow was still in Hong Kong "labouring away" at Euclid.

### Union Church settles down

Union Church began searching for its own independent minister after the debacle of Rev. Kay's preaching, but after little success, in May 1849 the English members of his old original "union" congregation invited Legge to become their minister rather than the substitute LMS minister Gilfillan. Legge explained to them that he would spend most of his time on educational work for the mission and could only preach one Sunday service in English because he had also to do a mission service in Chinese. Gilfillan was relieved that Legge was taking over the Union Church preaching, and this plan was agreeable to the church leaders. Gilfillan had been originally sent out as a printer, but had chafed at various aspects of his LMS situation.

To prevent further unnecessary conflicts over the nature of the Union Church, Legge worked with a committee to create a remarkable document as founding statement of "faith and order" for the congregation. It stated that while members came from many different churches with different doctrines and different ideas about church organization and governance, yet they all were united in being Christians and this was the basis of the Union Church. He was thus able to ensure its non-denominational nature, and quickly obtained commitments for the support of the church.

Within the Chinese congregation pastor Ho was doing excellent work; he "continues to be a treasure who deserves to be prized". Legge noted that a letter from the Directors to Ho would be wonderful. Legge's spoken Chinese was Cantonese rather than the "mandarin" northern dialect of the Qing court, and his fluency was good enough that he was able to preach in Cantonese, but Ho was the major pastor and preacher with the Chinese congregations.

In late 1849 the LMS Shanghai men wrote asking Legge to join them in the translation work of the Bible, but he knew he had too much work in Hong Kong to consider all the travel that translation work would require and declined the offer. That refusal did not end up saving him from nearly fifty years of conflict over translation problems with that Bible.

### The LMS Press: thriving, with beautiful Chinese fonts

The LMS press now thriving under printer Richard Cole, and Legge ordered 4,000 pounds of metal for types for the new Chinese fonts that Cole was making in two sizes. Legge agreed with Cole's project to continue developing the radically new approach that Sam Dyer had begun with moveable metal type. Cole's printing was going extremely well, the new large and small Chinese fonts were well under way and commercial orders

were starting to bring in some cash. The new small font was going to be used in printing the Delegates' Version of the New Testament.

Legge now recognized that although the move to metal fonts had required a huge front-end investment of time and money, its beautiful texts would now be a tremendous asset to the work of the LMS missions along the entire Chinese coast. He boasted to his brother in Huntly that the characters could print Chinese more beautifully than the Chinese had done in the Imperial versions of their classics. Not only could his press print very fine characters, but with the metal type he could print millions of copies, where in comparison, woodblocks for many of the fine characters could not remain intact for more than 10,000 copies. His text was also smaller and finer than the Medhurst-Gutzlaff 1838 version of the New Testament, and thus needed 20% fewer pages to print.

Printer Cole had made a third and smallest Chinese font for use in Notes because the use of steel punches allowed a very fine line to be created. Whereas the 1838 Bible had required the work of two woodblock cutters for two and a half years, Legge's use of Dyer's system of movable metal type meant that two compositors could compose the entire work in 60 days. The efforts to print elegant and large runs of Chinese text had led to many experiments with different materials including tin characters formed in clay moulds, but Dyer's experiments with steel punches and copper matrices to create hot lead type, and Cole's use of that system to complete a large set of elegant characters in three sizes, meant the LMS printing press at Hong Kong printed the best Chinese text available in the world at the time.

Legge obtained funds from the Bible Society in England to pay for the long tedious foundry work of creating the 1,800 forms for the small font set, and the type for the massive numbers of small and large Chinese characters that were needed for the new Bible, which needed 180,000 characters. The method meant that more sets of the metal fonts could be made from the copper matrixes, and Legge knew that both commercial and mission printing presses were very interested in buying sets of these new metal characters. He had a temporary moment of capitalist enthusiasm, "we can now beat the Chinese in their own market".

Bibles and other Christian texts were no longer handed out by the mission, but had to be purchased by people interested enough in the contents to pay, because Legge had learned that Chinese would not value anything that was handed out at no charge. With the new metal type, the New Testament could cover its paper and printing costs at a price of three-pence, although that did not yield any surplus for the overhead costs of the press. In his reports back to the LMS Legge used basic fund accounting methods,

meticulously separating out the costs of the different mission operations in a way that showed the costs of the school as distinct from those of the press, and allowed any profits from the printing press to be clearly identified.

This massive effort into creating good Chinese fonts was appreciated beyond Legge's own immediate missionary and commercial circles. He was asked to provide the font moulds to the Russian embassy for their use in creating a Russian-Chinese Dictionary in St. Petersburg. Years later in visiting Paris, Legge was asked for help by the Superintendent of Printing of the Institute of France, in creating fonts that would include every known Chinese character. French type-makers had created a set of Chinese fonts that had been used by American missions in Ningbo, but these were distorted by their rather flowery, romantic, and European visual style that did not represent the compact visual style of good Chinese in the way that the LMS fonts did.

While printer Cole was working very effectively, Legge learned that someone sent the LMS Directors an anonymous letter against Cole and his wife. Legge responded explaining that "there are a thousand outs and ins in his relation to the American Mission" in Shanghai, but concluding the basic problem was personal. While Cole "is silly and weak in many points", he and his wife were basically good people who wished to do good, and "moreover he is a Capital Printer".

#### Canton vs. Hong Kong Missions

In late summer 1849 trouble began brewing between the LMS men in Canton and Hong Kong, who had been organizing their work through a joint "local" committee. When Gillespie returned from the UK in April 1849 with his new and seasick wife, they moved to join Hobson in Canton in late summer 1849, Scots printer Gilfillan joined them later that year, and tensions began to develop between the Hong Kong and the new Canton LMS men. Gillespie was upset because the "local committee" (i.e. the combined Hong Kong and Canton men), had voted to send Gilfillan to Xiamen to print the New Testament but he didn't want to go because he had just spent three years learning Cantonese and dreaded having to spend more years learning the Xiamen dialect.

There seemed to be some specific conflicts between Legge and Gilfillan, who had many arguments with Legge on their journey to Hong Kong in 1848 about Gutzlaff. Gilfillan complained about his salary (he had built up significant debts and a servant had stolen some of his money), and wrote of his need for a "wife", meaning his sister. Gilfillan also found his new life as a mission printer troublesome. The Hong Kong members of the committee (Legge and Hirschberg) wanted to add their printer Cole to the group as a replacement mission man in Hong Kong with full standing and vote, now that Gilfillan was added to the Canton group. The new men in Canton voted against the

motion even though Cole's addition would have replaced the vote lost when printer Gilfillan left Hong Kong, so this Hong Kong proposal did not give greater weight to votes from the Hong Kong station but merely rebalanced the votes. This frustrating vote upset Legge enough that in July 1849 he resigned as the general secretary of the committee on the grounds of workload.

Then in early August Gillespie wrote to advise the Directors that the Canton men had voted for independence from the Hong Kong committee, although the vote was actually taken when Dr. Hobson, its founding member, was away in Hong Kong visiting Legge. In effect, Canton's oldest and most accomplished LMS man had been neatly finessed out of the Canton vote. Gillespie argued that too much time was wasted in travel for meetings of the general committee, and complained that sometimes the Hong Kong men reconsidered a decision of the general committee and changed plans without checking with the Canton men, apparently referring to the question of Gilfillan being sent north to Xiamen. They argued that American missions were becoming very important in Canton, and without a strong independent LMS station there that the Cantonese were likely to believe that "all good comes from Americans". Gilfillan tried to get Legge to write in support of his reluctance to move to Xiamen but Legge refused because Gilfillan used intemperate language, speaking too "grossly of certain addlepated individuals".

Legge found out about the Canton vote indirectly some time later and was quite upset that the men had written London announcing their decision without any consultation with the whole committee or even with London. Rather than create a major rift Legge and Hirschberg decided only to ask the Canton men to reconsider. Legge was still more interested in the LMS providing him with a schoolteacher, than in getting caught up in a local battle.

#### Mission Doctors Hobson, Hirschberg, Dr. Parker, and the MMSC

The LMS medical missions had shifting staff during 1847-48, with Hobson resigning from the Hong Kong hospital in December 1848, ordered by the LMS to move to Canton to set up a hospital there. To accomplish this he used money that he had raised for the proposed Hong Kong Medical School, which by now had become impossible because of the deaths of two of the doctors originally supporting the plan and the departure of the students for other occupations. In Canton Dr. Hobson established a hospital but was upset when the LMS refused his request for £1,500 to use in building a mission house.

Before long his departure left no doctor for the Hong Kong hospital, as Dr. Hirschberg was spending his time in clinics in Kowloon across the harbour. In mid-1849



Hirschberg proposed closing the original hospital on Morrison Hill and moving his operations down to the Chinese bazaar area used by the Chinese church and congregation. In part this closing of the Hong Kong hospital also arose because by August Hirschberg had become very upset about the role of opium merchants as trustees of the Medical Mission Society of China (MMSC). The Hong Kong hospital had its own Trustees but received some funding from the MMSC, along with support from its own breakaway society based in Hong Kong, the Medical Missionary Society.

American Missionary cum consular secretary Dr. Parker and others had founded the MMSC in Canton in 1838. They designed it to create funding for Christian hospitals that would be separate from the funds for the regular missions. Its directors included William Jardine and other merchants with histories of opium trading, although by this time the tea trade from China was worth 50% more (at £4.5 million pa) than the opium trade at £3 million (Author, 1849). Dr. Parker was a mission man but he was also a highly entrepreneurial doctor who set up a lucrative private practice in Canton while still receiving a full-time salary from his American mission board, and this upset honest Hobson. In 1847 Parker eagerly moved into additional employment, taking on consular work for the US as acting Chargé d’Affaires, although he had no training in diplomacy. His main attribute was oral fluency in Chinese, and eventually his patriotic fervour led him to advocate US seizure of Formosa (Taiwan) so aggressively that he was recalled (Harris, 1991).

The LMS members were more sensitive to the corruption of opium interests, and in late 1848 the Hong Kong members broke away from the opium-confounded MMSC. Hobson even wanted to withdraw from his local Canton branch of the MMSC to join the Hong Kong MMS. The Hong Kong group was regarded as “seceders” by the more American Canton medical group, which even included lawyers such as Boone. By now Boone was a major combatant in the dispute over which Chinese term to use for “God” in the New Testament, and the disputes between the American and British missionaries on translation and medical issues were also infused with nationalistic prejudices.

Dr. Hirschberg wanted the LMS Hong Kong hospital to break all links with the opium business and to run the new hospital in the Chinese bazaar entirely as an LMS operation. He had worked out new sources of financial support and buildings that would provide a house with living quarters for himself, 28 in-patient beds, and a large waiting hall for 150 that could be used for preaching, all for \$30 PM. The landlord promised to pay 1/4 of the costs of renovation, and a Ladies Association would be funding the operating costs. The LMS men in Canton supported this plan, and Hirschberg was keen to get the project underway as soon as the Directors approved it.

### Mission doctors and Traditional Chinese Medicine

The mission doctors were all busy, and Dr. Hobson's hospital in Canton was doing well. In his first year there he wrote an annual report of his medical work in Hong Kong in 1848, in particular describing some of the problems arising from damaging treatments from practitioners of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) that he tried to remedy.

In China eye diseases were a huge problem and the standard treatments used in TCM made eye disorders worse. The Chinese language did not include any word for cornea (the transparent film over the surface of the eye), and the TCM tradition did not have any accurate knowledge of the anatomy of the eye, thus did not understand that a cataract was an opacity of the lens, an internal structure in the eye that lay under the cornea. Resulting from this flawed understanding of eye anatomy, TCM practitioners tried to treat cataracts by scraping the cornea, not understanding that the defect lay in a deeper layer under the cornea. Milne wrote from Ningbo that he had to treat a Chinese girl with cataracts whose eye had been pierced by the attempts of a TCM practitioner to remove her cataracts by scraping the cornea with a sharp straw. It pierced the eyeball and allowed the internal substance of the eye to hang out.

Mission doctors described their cases in some detail in their annual reports, and showed awareness of modern scientific controversies. Dr. MacGowan in Ningbo, discussing the wide prevalence of foot-binding across centuries of tradition yet the persistence of normally-sized feet in Chinese girls, concluded correctly that this was contrary to the theory put forward by "M. Lamarck". Lamarck's new European theory of the inheritance of acquired characteristics that was to be challenged later by Darwin's major publications, although by 1844 Darwin had already written a letter spelling out his new belief in the plasticity of species through a different mechanism, natural selection.

The gross errors in anatomical understanding within TCM derived from a lack of anatomical studies arising from the Confucian tradition that it is wrong to make any breach in the body of the living or dead because the body must be intact at death. This meant that basic anatomical studies were never done with humans; there was no interest even in doing surgical studies with animals to learn comparative anatomy. Hobson summed up the problem with TCM as arising from Chinese scholarly and cultural traditions in which "all study of animated nature is neglected and despised". Tradition generally looked down upon medical practitioners because it was thought the father of a household should be responsible to manage the health of his household. The result of these traditions was both anatomical error and the impossibility of surgery in

TCM. Arising from this, surgery to remove often-massive tumours quickly became an important part of all the medical missions.

Surgery was especially useful because by now the mission doctors were using ether as anaesthetic in operations despite resistance to it among American doctors in the years following its first successful use in 1846, resistance based on a belief that it was dangerous (Pernick, 1985). Mission doctors quickly realized its advantages, especially that fact that it allowed more leisurely surgery and the possibility of removing the massive and complex tumours they commonly faced. Dr. Parker in Canton reported on using ether in many large tumour removals done still at a very fast pace, for surgical skills had been honed on the necessity of fast work, and tumours typically fell to the floor within minutes of the operation if their vasculature was not complex and threatening.

#### Shanghai mission problems with printer Alexander Wylie

While the Shanghai station was embroiled in the conflict about the term for God in the new Bible, other problems were brewing there within the LMS group, involving a new printer, Scots-educated Alexander Wylie (1815 – 1887). Legge was not directly involved in the conflicts although he had hired Wylie in 1846 in London for the Shanghai mission. In London Wylie had been an apprentice cabinet-maker but in his spare time was studying a Latin text on Chinese grammar, Prémare's 18<sup>th</sup> century *Notitiae Linguae Sinicae*. Legge recognized that this Scot from humble origins was extremely intelligent and had mastered reading Chinese to a remarkable extent totally on his own. Legge and the LMS made arrangements for Wylie to apprentice to a London printer for six months in preparation for going to Shanghai to serve as LMS printer there, and Wylie arrived in Shanghai in 1847 bringing with him a cylinder press from the BFBS.

LMS Mission Secretary Tidman intended to give Wylie extra salary for his job as Superintendent of the Press, and Legge had arranged that he be given an annual salary of £200 plus a £250 grant for a house. But when Wylie arrived in Shanghai the local committee gave him only a salary of £150 p.a., and it soon developed there was confusion about his terms of engagement. Was he a civilian employed as a printing superintendent or was he a regular missionary? Early after his arrival Wylie drew a bill on the LMS for his salary in the traditional way and the local committee scolded him, informing him that he was not an LMS employee but an employee of their local committee, and would be paid directly by them. This seemed a peculiar arrangement.

In early 1849 Wylie married and asked for an increase in salary to the married rate of £250 pa, seeking that this rise be backdated to the date of his marriage. He supported this request with a letter from the LMS Directors listing that married salary, but the local committee treasurer Stronach disagreed and set Wylie's new rate at £225. Stronach reasoned that when Rev. Muirhead was single his salary had been £200 p.a. and when he married this had been increased by 50% to £300, thus Wylie's married salary should also be increased by 50% from £150 to £225. Wylie was furious, believing that the decision was based on personal ill will, and a nasty conflict broke out with the other men in the Shanghai mission that festered all year long. At various stages aggrieved parties would insist that the other write letters of apology, would refuse, or otherwise side-step demands.

By September Wylie was fed up. He wrote the Directors complaining that he had spent two years in drudgery learning Chinese but had never been acknowledged as the press superintendent. He was "constantly submitted to annoyance and vexations", saw no hope of things improving, and begged to be released from his Shanghai placement. In early October Wylie's wife had been seriously ill with dysentery for weeks before childbirth and she failed to recover after delivering her child; after six more days of suffering she died. Wylie's colleagues in the mission were deeply upset by his loss and when they offered him warmth and comfort, relations improved for a time. Their warmth surprised him and in the glow of warmer feelings he told them about the letter he had sent to the Directors, showing them his copy of it.

Wylie had used such testy language that the other men were shocked at his complaints against them and asked him to write them a letter of contrition in which he should also offer to make any reparations the local committee might propose. Wylie composed a contrite letter that Medhurst found reasonable, but Milne was still offended; he wanted the letter to be a clear apology. This angered Wylie, who refused to change anything, and insisted that his draft be sent to London because it correctly identified the change in the tone of feeling among the men for the better; he no longer wished a transfer. The committee invited him to meet with them but he refused, so they voted to send all materials in to London, including a detailed review of the reasons why Wylie had not been made Superintendent of the Press.

Milne and Medhurst then sent a series of letters from the Shanghai LMS Committee to Tidman outlining problems with Wylie's behaviour, which largely concerned his work as a printer. After his arrival they had let him take over the printing operation without supervision, and he soon printed a run of 10,000 scriptures that were all blurred. In addition he had set up printing cylinders and paper stock incorrectly in

another job, ruining a large quantity of paper. Thus, although he was not the printer, he was not working productively as a supervisor of the printing staff, allowing serious errors in the production work. The fact that the printers were using machine printing for the first time meant that his supervision was even more crucial, and he failed to take responsibility for the work.

When the other men, including Medhurst who had much printing experience, began to question Wylie, they learned that he knew nothing about composition and press work, nothing about reading and correcting proofs, and did not have that core skill, “the printer’s eye”. Medhurst began to work in the press daily to inspect every sheet before allowing it to be printed in a run, and encouraged Wylie to become a more practical printer. They all knew a big order was soon coming from the BFBS in which many thousands of the new Chinese Bibles would be required, and Wylie needed to improve to be prepared for that job. They decided he should stop his Chinese lessons and concentrate on printing until his skills improved. He did that for a while then slacked off again after a few weeks.

In addition to these problems with the press, Wylie had retreated from other mission work after his wife arrived. He stopped doing tract distribution and stopped attending the Chinese worship services, and this annoyed the other men even though he had been hired for the press, not as a missionary.

Tidman could not afford to send another man out and begged Medhurst to try and make use of Wylie any way he could. Then in December Wylie found out that the Shanghai LMS Committee had sent letters complaining about him without his knowledge, even though he was a member of the committee. He rightly called keeping him ignorant of this “most reprehensible” in a note to Tidman. In December 1849 Tidman sent a consoling letter to Wylie and urged him to try and recreate better “fraternal relations” with the other men, and within a few months Wylie responded that he was doing this. Milne confirmed that Wylie, through “conference, compromise, and explanation” was now working in a satisfactory manner.

#### Shanghai mission deaths and illness

There were other problems in the Shanghai mission that 1849 summer with an epidemic of sickness and deaths. Milne was sick for months with malaria and heavily dosed with quinine, while his wife struggled to recover after childbirth. The year before 96 people had died in 70 days from fevers, their graves still present today. Two days before Mrs. Wylie died, Rev. Southall died of liver disease after suffering delirium, dysentery, and convulsions in his dying days, while his wife was also very ill during the whole period. Medhurst developed fever and major convulsions in August, Wylie and

many of the Chinese staff had also suffered fevers and dysentery, and Dr. Lockhart was nearly destroyed with exhaustion and anxiety. The whole summer had been hell in every way for the mission in Shanghai, with relief only beginning to come as cooler weather came in late fall.

#### Canton problems with Gillespie

In Canton Hobson was desperate because of losses to the mission. Gillespie and Cleland retired from mission life in 1850 and returned to Britain, and Gilfillan only stayed in Canton a short while before being transferred to Xiamen. These departures had roots in several kinds of miseries.

Gillespie had originally arrived in Canton in 1845 hoping to establish an LMS mission, but the anti-foreign conflicts there drove him out after his landlord decided to refuse him access to his house. He moved to Hong Kong and he and Cleland took on the Union Church preaching in Legge's absence. Gillespie was greatly relieved by Legge's return in 1848, as he was desperate to return to Britain to get a wife. His unscheduled trip to Britain in April 1849 failed badly almost immediately after he married. His new wife sold her home and possessions in preparation for her new life as a missionary wife, then unfortunately their ship encountered severe storms on their attempts to get out of the English Channel and she became so severely ill that the boat was forced to return her to land at Portsmouth. Gillespie left her there weeping, confined to bed, and penniless in a strange town, to return to his Hong Kong voyage. She was penniless because they had used the proceeds from the sale of all her possessions to pay for the voyage. Gillespie wrote a panic-stricken letter to the Directors begging them to provide her some financial help, proposing that they take this money out of his furniture allowance. When he arrived back in Hong Kong in June 1849 he went to Canton to join Hobson, Cleland, and Gilfillan. There he was mutely but terribly worried about his wife, and Legge feared that Hobson and Gillespie might not be able to form a good working friendship.

Gillespie spent 1849-50 worrying about his sick, abandoned, and impoverished wife. By March 1850 he finally could not stand the situation any longer and decided to submit an application to resign and return to Britain. To try and get some relief from his worries, that month he left Canton and took a trip to his friends in the Xiamen mission, hoping the directors would accept his resignation. As a matter of honour and contract LMS men could not simply resign from their missionary contract in good standing, but had to have their proposed resignation approved by the directors. Legge was terribly sorry that Gillespie's situation had become so intolerable, and wrote in support of Gillespie's need of merciful treatment in the matter of his sudden departure to Scotland and his travel expenses.

Gillespie had been in the LMS nearly seven years before withdrawing, but many of those years had been used in travel and in learning Chinese. At the same time he had been a hard worker and good English preacher in Hong Kong and Canton, and the mission men agreed that a sacrifice of his marriage was far greater than mission life could demand. Legge wrote the Directors in June recommending they approve money for Gillespie to take the more costly but faster “overland” route through the Red Sea and by rail overland across the Sinai, rather than sailing south of Africa. Gillespie left China in June without the prior approval of the LMS directors and even worse, he took the more expensive overland route without having their approval. Legge and the local committee stuck by their decision in a letter later that year to the LMS. They were convinced that Gillespie’s faster trip home was justified by his wife’s “state of great danger”, so the four men all assumed a £10 share of the extra costs, to be deducted from their salaries.

Gillespie arrived in Britain in September 1850 to find that the Directors were sternly demanding an accounting of his actions and refusing to pay for his trip. They had sent him a tough letter in August, not received by him because he had already left. They were “astonished” at his sudden abandonment of his mission, pointed out that Gillespie’s wife had been sick before he became engaged to her, and a Prof. Simpson had opined that her health would be unfavourable to a hot climate. They described his scattered history in China, with a two-year sudden absence within his first 3 years there, and an equally sudden resignation not long after his return, yielding less than five years of work. Most of this time was spent learning Chinese rather than doing mission work, and now he was quitting just when his skills were good enough to do the real job. They noted that Gillespie had now cost them £1,671 in salary and expenses, and told him his actions were received not just with regret, but also with “disapprobation”. They recognized his privation but scolded him for his lack of judgment. They concluded that they would accept his resignation but refused to pay any further moneys for his travel expenses home.

In response Gillespie put forth a case about his terrible worries about his sick abandoned wife. After leaving her with medical attention she had gradually recovered well enough to be carried to Edinburgh, but continued to vomit “large quantities of black clotted blood” for months. Her doctors assured Gillespie that she would have died if she had gone to China with him. Now the LMS was accusing him of marrying her “too rashly”; he defended saying he had known her for several months and knew of other missionaries who married with less acquaintance. The LMS charged that because his wife had been sick during the five years before she joined him, they would not cover her

medical costs. They also criticized his marriage on the grounds that Gillespie did not have letters of reference as to her character before he married her; he defended himself that he did have such documents from her pastor. To their charge that he had already previously returned to Britain without permission, he defended that he had returned after five years of work because he thought it was permitted after some years of work. He protested the directors' charge that he left Hong Kong against their instructions because at the time he left, their instructions had not yet arrived. He hoped to repay the extra costs of the rail journey from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean if his health allowed him to work, and regretted his work had been prematurely stopped.

The story did not end there. In August 1851 Hobson learned that Gillespie had been dishonest with the mission about the severity of his wife's illness, telling them she was close to death when that was far from the case. Hobson was somewhat stoical about the way the mission men had put together their own salary money to help with Gillespie's travel costs. "I hope it will teach us all a lesson".

#### Gilfillan problems in Canton

Gilfillan was also a problem in Canton. He had been hired as a printer and typesetter by the LMS for the Hong Kong press, coming with Legge and the others in the 1848 voyage. Although he had been hired as a printer he must have held strong views on the mission to China, and became caught up in powerful "disputations" during the long voyage out, arguments that apparently concerned Gutzlaff's work.

From his arrival in Hong Kong in July 1848 he complained about many things. He soon decided he was desperate for a woman to take care of him, writing the directors to send him a "wife", a particular woman from Glasgow "for her sake, for my sake and for the sake of the education of Chinese girls. She has been my sweetheart from infancy. I mean my sister". In May 1850 he decided he couldn't afford to take care of his sister after all. Instead he wanted to move to Canton and work there with Gillespie, arguing that learning Cantonese in Hong Kong was unusually difficult because it was home to too many different Chinese dialects, a "Babel of brogues", while in Canton he would be surrounded by only one dialect.

Cole was working effectively as the printer in the Hong Kong LMS press and a second printer was not needed, and Legge's preaching at Union Church was better than his own, so Gilfillan transferred to Canton. When Xiamen needed another printer to help with the new Bible Gilfillan resisted the local committee's decision to send him, and tried to enlist Legge in his plan to avoid the transfer. Legge refused because Gilfillan's letter had spoken "so grossly of certain addle-pated individuals that I never answered



him". In the end Gilfillan went to Xiamen, still complaining in November 1850 that he wanted reassignment.

### Cleland problems in Canton

Cleland's story was miserable in a different way. He had been so seasick on his voyage out in 1846 that he had been unable to learn much Chinese en route. He had been unable to make a success of preaching in English at Union Church while Legge was in Britain, and the congregation there had asked him to step down to be replaced by the roving Free Church pastor, Burns. While Legge was still in England, Cleland moved over to Canton to work with Hobson, but here he seemed incapable of mastering Chinese. Unbeknownst to the LMS directors he accepted an offer to preach to the Church of England English congregation in Canton and was eventually given a lavish honorarium of £500 for his services, which made use of the sermons he had previously prepared for use in Hong Kong. In 1851 in which he was thrown out of his housing, problems which Hobson attributed to Cleland's own "bad arrangements", explaining that Cleland had used such bad judgement in setting up his housing that he had frightened the neighbours, who then forced his eviction and resolved never to let a foreigner live in their district. This created problems for Hobson in finding better housing for his own family.

By late summer Cleland responded to a pointed letter from the Directors seeking information about his progress in Chinese, which actually was a problem. He was now bitterly unhappy in Canton, and his children were sick. He wrote a long harangue asking to be recalled home and suggesting that their letter could only be in response to some "informer"; he was angry that he was even being asked such questions. He reeled off a list of complaints. He had been required to preach in English for his first two years to help the Hong Kong mission in Legge's absence, and these sermons were a struggle because he had no stock of sermons, yet he was now criticized for not making better progress in his oral Chinese. He wrote that his time in Union Church had been miserable, had taken away his best years and spoilt him as a missionary, using him merely as a minister, which he could have done with much greater comfort and ease in Britain.

Cleland alleged that his reputation had been permanently impugned by the questions in the letter, and he was aggrieved that Legge had not thanked him for bringing three students to baptism during the period he had run the Hong Kong school. He complained that he had sought a posting in Fuzhou but instead was sent to Canton where life for mission wives and children was impossibly confining because of the anti-

foreign sentiments in their neighbourhood, and he was miserably unhappy. “As we walk in the streets, their expressions of hostility accompany almost our every step, such as “foreign devil”, “pelt him with stones”, “beat him to death”, “cut off his head”. These threats were very real because six Britons had been recently murdered at Wangchuke. His two children were now sick because of the artificial indoor life they were forced to lead, unable to get fresh air and exercise because of the dangers of the town. He suspected some hidden “informer” criticizing his work, and realized he could not be posted to another of the treaty ports because he would then have to start Chinese studies all over again with a new dialect and he could not face that. He ended by recognizing his “deficiencies” and his failure to adapt to the work, admitting that he suffered from “unconquerable shyness” that made him timid in all his attempts to speak, especially in a foreign language. His letters mix this shyness with sadness, as well as with more volatile emotions including anger and resentment about every challenge he and his family faced across his brief four years in the LMS.

In his resignation letter of June 1850 Cleland wrote that the thought of remaining in China gave him only “melancholy forebodings”, and asked for approval to return to England. Cleland’s resignation was accepted and on 26 October 1850 he and his family sailed for the UK.

Legge summed up Cleland’s mission career by recognizing his talents and his cheerful temperament, but also realizing that Cleland had never had any interest or enthusiasm for mission work and was simply not interested in adapting to all the problems it presented. Legge regretted only the loss of Cleland’s cheerfulness, “for it is much to have our dumpish spirits here enlivened”.

Cleland’s spirits must have suffered further when he reached London, because the directors were furious at him for having taken on paid employment in Canton with the Church of England when he was supposed to be a full-time LMS man. Legge wrote a letter trying to propitiate the directors, explaining that the local committee knew of this offer and left the decision to Cleland, adding that Cleland had not stipulated any salary, but that the money had been given to him as a gift with which he could pay his family’s travel expenses for returning to the UK.

#### Hobson has problems with the Chinese staff

Hobson also had delicate personnel problems in his Chinese staff and congregation across 1850 - 51. One of the members of his Chinese congregation and mission staff was caught lying about important matters. Chen Oankum was accused of being an opium-smoker, “unchaste in conduct, frequently being out at night”, and of having “insolent worldly habits” including theft, bringing much reproach on his Christian profession. He

had asked for holiday time and travelling expenses to go to his hometown, but instead had gone only to a nearby town where he spent all the money.

The congregation learned of this, but when he returned he lied about it. Because he had a long history of various delinquencies the congregation was scandalized. They held grave meetings with and about him, deciding "... this with other improprieties and sinful conduct led to his expulsion... by a unanimous vote". They gave him two months salary to support him while he looked for another job, but instead he hung around the station and cadged money from his old friends at every opportunity. After a time the congregation voted to expel him for showing no efforts to reform his "long continued course of immoral conduct".

Fat, another member of Hobson's Chinese staff had married a third wife while still married to a second one, even though he didn't really want a new wife but only wanted someone to wash his clothes. He had married his second wife 100 days after his first one died, so the congregation decided not to make an issue of it even though he had not married in a Christian ceremony. When wife number two absconded after a few months his adult son tracked her down and discovered she had married a new man, so Fat concluded he should do the same. Hobson and the congregation let the issue slide after receiving proof that the second wife had truly remarried, but the whole episode kept the congregation upset for months.

Hobson was anguished about all this because he was a particularly pure-minded man who expected entirely ethical behaviour from everyone, and he was always deeply upset when he discovered frailties in those who worked with him. Legge seems to have been more ready to forgive and to encourage people who had faltered to try again, as other incidents showed later.

The loss of Cleland, Gillespie and Gilfillan from the Canton mission was thus a mixed outcome for Hobson; he benefited from their help but his work was disrupted by their problems. Their departures also affected Legge even although his work was in Hong Kong, because the two stations worked closely together and helped each other in times of trouble. By late summer 1850 the LMS station in Canton had lost all but Hobson, and he felt stranded. The congregation there was in crisis, and Hobson desperately wanted a visit from Legge as well as another doctor to help with the work. In August 1850 Hobson became very ill with fever and took his family to Legge instead. A local doctor arranged for a job for Hobson as ship's surgeon for a trip to Shanghai as a means to regaining his health, and Hobson recovered over a two-month break. In Hong Kong he learned from Legge that Canton was not the only LMS station in crisis, the men in Shanghai were struggling with Wylie and the conflicts over translation.

### Hobson's teaching and books

Despite these personnel problems Hobson was deeply committed to his medical work in Canton, and was also very interested in teaching Chinese assistants basic medical science and clinical practise. His medical work in Canton across 1850 provided clinical care for more than 25,000 patients, and he began training two Chinese students, Awei and Aking, in surgery. He created a simple textbook of surgery in Chinese, and was teaching a small class of students the basics of physiology, anatomy, and medicine. His Chinese teacher would take notes during these classes using the very fast “running hand” Chinese style, then would revise the text into good Chinese and get Hobson to do a final editing job. “In this way a book is nearly ready for the press on physiology”, a woodcut book that included lithographic drawings. He had previously published a text in Chinese on medicine, one on astronomy to be used in teaching science, and would soon complete a fourth one on anatomy.

In October 1851 Hobson published his physiology text, printing 1,400 copies at a cost of £25, which he had accumulated in a fund from donations. He sent a copy as a gift to the Directors, and was especially keen to note that it explained “all nations are of one blood”. Hobson considered its publication an experiment, as he knew that most of the Christian literature that the missions published was “treated with contempt or indifference ... as being useless”. His astronomy text, complete with a map of the world and detailed diagrams of the solar system and the workings of eclipses according to European science, was more accurate than the Chinese one but had not met with much demand. Hobson hoped that “something more practical will get a better reception”.

By December it was clear that his physiology and anatomy texts were a great success with the Chinese, “read with much interest and likely to be long in demand”. The physiology text was “very handsomely spoken of in one of the public papers,” and the Chinese Secretary of the government had already bought a copy. Hobson had spent \$120 for printing the lithography plates and \$30 for cutting the woodblocks for the text, all donated to him from England. Hobson was exhilarated to discover there was such demand for the book he would need to publish a second edition.

Hobson's personal situation was increasingly isolated however, after his sole remaining mission friend the Free Church preacher William Burns had become so discouraged with the Canton situation that he moved to Xiamen in June 1851. Hobson was very sorry to see him go, “he was my only friend here”; Burns had great zeal although it was complicated by emotions that ranged from “joyous to very discouraged”. Legge regarded Hobson's mission work in Canton as thriving better than any other, and

warned the LMS in February 1851 that Hobson had not had a letter from them for more than 12 months.

#### Hobson and Parker; a clash of values in Canton

Hobson was disgusted when the American mission doctor Peter Parker hired on as the Secretary of the US legation in Canton starting in 1845, with an eventual income of £2,000 p.a. from various diplomatic positions and from his extensive private practice among the American and Chinese elites in Canton, while still collecting a salary as a full-time mission doctor for some years. Hobson was a man of great ethical integrity, and such violations of mission values sickened him. Not only had Parker used his mission position to become rich through his creation of a private practice, but he and his wife had developed a taste for the extravagant worldly style and amusements connected with high office in the prosperous high-life of the trading community. Although Parker had promised the other mission men in Canton that his new political job would not change him and that he would not attend official balls, very quickly he began attending them, relishing his new life of status and privilege, so the mission men decided to withdraw their regular religious meetings from his home.

Hobson had decided from the outset of his mission that he would never accept a fee for any service, as all he did was intended to honour and display his faith, and he received a full salary for that from the LMS. Along with Legge and others of the dissenting tradition, Hobson had a strongly principled belief that the church should not become entangled as agents of the state, making their statement against the established Church of England but also believing in the principle and expecting other mission men to live by it.

1850 in Canton ended on a sombre note when James G. Bridgman, a talented young American PM in Canton attempted suicide on December 1st in a “paroxysm of religious despair” and died five days later. A post-mortem showed his brain was “highly congested”. He had arrived in 1844, translated Premaré’s Latin classic on Chinese grammar (*Notitia Linguae Sinicae*) into English in 1847, then served as temporary editor of the *Chinese Repository* 1847-48, before becoming mentally disturbed and withdrawing from social life. Hobson wrote “it has cast a gloom over our missionary circle”. One gloom among many.

#### Xiamen problems with Hyslop, Young, Alex Stronach, and Gilfillan

Legge knew that the Xiamen LMS station was also having serious problems in the autumn of 1850. Across Dr. Hyslop’s two years there with Alex Stronach, William Young, and Gilfillan, Hyslop had been “a hindrance”, a “stumbling-block”, and his behaviour “peculiarly ill-adapted for this work”. Alex Stronach complained that Hyslop

went to parties given by worldly expatriates not connected with the mission, and got drunk. On one occasion he was so intoxicated that even his partying friends had to send him home. Stronach, Young, and Gilfillan became so upset they decided to withdraw from the communion service if Hyslop presumed to go forward to share in it. The men met with Hyslop, and for a while it seemed he agreed he should resign from the LMS.

Young felt badly about Hyslop's situation because several friends foresaw this problem before Hyslop ever left England. "We feel badly and know we are all frail and liable to sin – but he cannot remain in our communion". Hyslop wrote a resignation letter in September 1850, but when in April 1851 he received two letters from the Directors outlining his problem behaviours, he now defended himself. The letters made moral distinctions between a "recall" and a "resignation", and he wanted his separation from the LMS treated as an honourable resignation. Hyslop claimed the charges of drunken partying were a "calumny" and false. When he tried to get the name of his "accuser" from the other LMS men they demurred, and Hyslop claimed they made the "insulting suggestion that "possibly I might feel obliged to shoot or horsewhip my (accuser)". He assured the Directors that all but one person at the second party would attest to his sobriety, and said of the sole exception "he calls himself a fool and we all agree".

Hyslop's defence gradually turned into an attack on Alex Stronach, his main accuser. "I have never made any objections to his self-complac(en)cy)..., his (granting himself) spiritual illumination and especial favours of heaven", but he is "deficient in self-government, not possessed of a well-regulated mind, often extravagant, and absurdly vain. Therefore I have not been able to give him respect and affection". Hyslop reported that after first arriving at the station he had been warned by Young to have as little as possible to do with Stronach, "for he was very officious and would give a great deal of trouble". On another occasion he claimed Gilfillan had told him "Mr. Stronach is a fool". Hyslop's letter also hints at social-class differences lurking under this conflict, as when Hyslop complains of Stronach's vulgarity and lack of refinement.

In any event, Hyslop's wife went with Mrs. Young to Hong Kong to seek good health, and he stayed in place waiting for the Directors' next letter. While the station waited for the Directors' instructions, Stronach became aggressive and restricted Hyslop's salary, drawing mission bills without enough money to include Hyslop's full due. By the time these "absurd" events took place Hyslop was so furious he wanted to be recalled but refused to resign even though Stronach was evicting him from their communal house on 11 days notice. He had used up all his money on medical tools and supplies, so "here I am with a single mercantile boat, and a fever ship, until you send

orders for my recall to England. ... In the name of justice... I ask you to recall us to our native land". "We are moving into the loft of a warehouse". Hyslop was getting ready to leave for the UK by October 1851 and wrote to find out if the LMS would pay his return fare if he took a job as ship's surgeon to Sydney Australia first.

Alex Stronach sent a different version of events, complaining that Hyslop's "resignation" left the hospital vacant, and reporting the sale of the hospital. Stronach sold some of the medical tools to Hyslop, who had originally purchased them on behalf of the LMS. Stronach urged that the next LMS man should be a missionary rather than a medical man. He was happy to report that the New Testament was now ready for printing and wanted the BFBS to fund a long print run of at least 5,000 copies of several NT books.

That summer Legge and his daughter Eliza visited the Xiamen station and went into a city to talk with the people and hand out books with Alex Stronach. In September 1851 Legge reported that the station had now removed Dr. Hyslop as an LMS agent. Legge recalled a comment about Hyslop from Mr. Freeman in London before Hyslop was accepted by the LMS for the China Mission. "Mr. Freeman used to say that he was a genius though eccentric. Eccentric geniuses are likely to be very dangerous persons to any missionary society...before we left England it had become a question whether Mr. Hyslop could be regarded as a Christian at all". Legge fretted that Hyslop's disgrace would embarrass and distress the Directors, and hurt all the missions in China. In February 1852 Hyslop had given up, was on his way to Sydney Australia, and wrote that he intended to live in Manila. Legge approved of this plan "because then no missionary society will have to spend money on him". Hyslop left his wife in Xiamen, was shipwrecked en route and killed by natives on an island. His wife, left destitute in Xiamen became engaged to marry but that plan was not sustained and she sought help from the LMS to return to Britain.

#### Young and wife ill in Xiamen

During this strife in the Xiamen station, William Young and his wife were seriously ill. He suffered an ulcerated throat that was treated with medicine supplemented by horrific procedures that included blistering to each side of his neck and daily cauterizations of the ulcers. A planned 21-day sea voyage to help him recover collapsed after three days because the monsoon interfered. His wife had been sick with dysentery for months and had to disband her girls' boarding school.

#### Gilfillan problems in Xiamen

Printer Thomas Gilfillan was also having problems with mission life in Xiamen. Leaving Canton because printing was not a major activity of that mission, Gilfillan was

needed in Xiamen to help print the New Testament, where he continued to complain of many things and considered resigning. He was annoyed that he would have to learn a different dialect, and complained that there were only “hundreds of thousands” of Chinese in Xiamen while there were millions in Canton who could benefit from Christianity. Gilfillan’s salary was the standard (now-reduced) £150 p.a. set for a single man, but he soon reported problems of poverty that were compounded by a new servant stealing all his cash, the sizeable sum of £24, equivalent to two months salary. To soften his complaints he also thanked the LMS for deciding to pay for the costs of providing him with Morrison’s *Dictionary*, advised them to delete that amount from the debt he was accumulating with the LMS, and told them that he would ensure that the Dictionary would remain LMS property “in the event of my demise”.

Gilfillan’s complaining letters to the Directors must have triggered a robust letter from them, for in November 1850 he responded with a fresh mixture of whining and self-justification, backing off from his proposal to return to the UK. What he really wanted to do was live in Canton, but he declared he would put good effort into his work in Xiamen although his on-going complaints did not bode well for this plan. Legge noted that Gilfillan had good talents, Christian principles, and perseverance, but he also had a “most vicious temper”. Nothing was effectively settled and Gilfillan left Xiamen for the UK in the summer of 1851.

#### The Governor of Macau is murdered

Although the year of revolutions in Europe was finished, the Hong Kong community was stunned by violent local events in 1849, starting with the murder of the Portuguese Governor of Macau. He was murdered on August 22, 1849 by seven Chinese men who attacked him while he was riding. His head and hand were cut off, and his body was mutilated. The Macau government rushed troops to secure the border wall with China, they were fired upon and returned the fire, and after the Chinese fort troops fled, calm was restored. Within days the Qing Governor-General Sü in Canton had recovered the Governor’s head and hand but refused to return them to Macau. Because the murderers had rushed out of Macau through the normal immigration Barrier into Canton province with no interference, they were suspected of being agents of the Chinese government. Two weeks later Sü reported finding “the criminal” and decapitating him, but no-one believed the story because there were still six men at large, and the “criminal’s” confession was written in the style and wording of Sü. Next Sü tried to barter the head and hand for three Chinese men currently held in Macau for questioning in the event, enraging the colony for this proposed “barbaric traffic”.



Despite their outrage at the attack, it was widely known in Hong Kong and Macau that the Macau Governor had been cruel, arrogant, and stupid in his actions. He had roads built through Chinese cemeteries, and imposed free trade that cut off taxes to the Qing. In response Sü had moved all the Chinese customs agents from the Macau Barrier up to the Whampoa anchorage, and all trade deserted Macau. The Macau governor responded in turn ordering that any Chinese person who left his property without a license would forfeit the property. By the end of the year public opinion concurred that the Macau governor had governed very badly and should have been more mindful of Chinese thinking. A new Portuguese governor was sent out but he died very quickly of fever, leaving Macau affairs troubled.

#### China and the western nations: more unrest

This murder was part of a larger problem the Qing faced in Southern China. The south was in a state of considerable unrest across 1849 and the uproar affected Hong Kong. The dynasty was short of money and had been selling official ranks for some time to raise money, creating two problems. It established incompetent officials, and arising from their incompetence and corruption there was famine in the hinterlands, because these men used grain to pay for these titles and the grain was being removed from provinces where many were starving.

In addition, a frenzy began building up in Canton about the right of the English to enter the city on April 6, as had been promised by Qiyong in 1847. In January 1849 placards in Canton denounced English “rebels” who wanted to “roam about for pleasure in the villages” and cursed them as “dogs and sheep” who must be exterminated, but the rhetoric was not backed by any action.

The Emperor refused to enforce Qiyong’s deal, believing that the locals would not comply, the British decided it was not worth another war and ordered that no Briton should attempt to enter the city walls into Canton, and by 8 April full trade resumed at the traditional factories in Shamian. The merchants and even American Rev. Bridgman in Canton were furious, arguing that the Cantonese claims of “a tradition” of excluding foreigners from Canton was less than 100 years old, and complaining that Capt. Elliot should have explicitly required it in the original treaty of 1842. By June the Chinese authorities had granted land to the French in Shanghai, infuriating the Americans who then argued no Chinese land should be granted to any foreign country, blithely ignoring the fact that the American consul had raised the US flag when he was established within the British consular ground in Shanghai.

Qiyong’s replacement Sü was revealing himself to be an arbitrary and brutal governor of Canton province. There were massive floods in the province, in response to

which he told the starving peasants that Heaven caused their problems, they should just work harder. The British Navy was having more success in capturing pirates who were interfering with both Chinese and western shipping, with a fleet of 57 boats captured in October, comprised of 3,037 pirates. Sü recognized that he needed more help with pirates and early in 1850 he wrote to Hong Kong governor Bonham asking for support from a British steamer in the task. This was provided to great success, but when the British asked for coal to replace the quantity they had used Sü refused. Instead he sent a mixed bag of presents including 8 oxen, 8 sheep, barrels of tea and sugar, flour, and fruit. In November the Hong Kong government published new maritime regulations in Chinese to correct Gutzlaff's translation of the rules for junkmen, using Legge's critique to provide a text that made it clear which harbour officials were allowed to board junks. A French scholar M. Biot examined the situation of slavery in China and pronounced that the legal rights of individuals in China were inferior to those in the UK and Europe, but better than those in the United States or Russia.

#### The telegraph and the Chinese language

PM MacGowan wrote an essay in 1851 trying to explain how the new invention the telegraph could be used with Chinese. Because Chinese is not an alphabetic language the challenge was to figure out a way of transmitting Chinese characters. Simple Romanization would not work because different pronunciations were used for characters in different Chinese regions. MacGowan advocated transmitting the visual features instead, and proposed a complex device for transmitting character strokes into telegraph code. The gadget consisted of a round dial plate with 16 settings for a dial, each representing a specific stroke. A character might need 16 different moves on the dial to encompass all its strokes, a tediously complicated and slow method. Later the problem of telegraphing Chinese characters was solved by creating codebooks that provided a four-digit numerical code, or alternatively a three-letter alphabetic code for all the main Chinese characters, and this new technology became a great benefit to China.

While the relations between the Qing dynasty and the western traders continued to be volatile, Legge and his mission faced more personal threats. In the early months of 1849 Hong Kong suffered major typhoons that destroyed mission property, drenching the library and soaking all the books on Legge's desk. Worse, over the next few years Legge, his family, and his mission struggled with illness, deaths, poverty, even as the translation conflict continued as highly personal attacks against him. His struggles were not unique.

### Legge learns of deaths of Rev. Hill, his father Ebenezer, and Rev. Pohlman

There were three deaths in 1849 that affected Legge. In January he learned of the sudden September 1848 death in Huntly of Rev. Hill, the kindly preacher who had supervised the schooling of the three Chinese lads. In the same month he learned of the November 3, 1848 death of his father Ebenezer. James wrote his brothers John and William that when the news reached him he felt “as if I had received a heavy blow... and I was left alone in the world. The thought of my father alive and caring for me, made me feel safe and secure”. Legge was now 33 years old and in the thick of many problems. Within a month an American Xiamen mission man William Pohlman died suddenly in a shipwreck in January returning from a trip to Hong Kong where he had just visited Legge, in good health and “elastic spirits”, purchasing lamps for his new church in Xiamen, the first church erected in China for Chinese congregations. Legge was quite upset by this death; Pohlman had been in China 12 years, was very fluent in Chinese and an effective worker.

### Hong Kong mission successes and strains

Across the early years of his return to Hong Kong from 1848-1850 Legge returned to his traditionally exceptionally active work schedule. Ho Tsunshin was co-preacher with his Chinese congregation, but Legge still preached to them once a week. He continued to teach in both the LMS School and in the new Theological Seminary, in addition to serving as pastor and preacher to the English congregation of the Union Church. While he occasionally had the help of additional LMS staff, the frequent devastations of illness meant that Legge was often required to take up the work of others who had suddenly died or who had to leave for reasons of health. Legge was also feeling extra financial strains in the Hong Kong station because he was increasingly being required to provide food, housing and hospitality to mission families in transit through Hong Kong, yet was still receiving only a standard married allowance from London.

Legge enlarged the preparatory school and the printing press, set up an LMS dispensary with Dr. Hirschberg at the Queen’s Road chapel, ran a daily Bible study group, and had a number of students boarding in his home. His reports about his preparatory school and theological seminary for 1850 were basically positive although the seminary still only had five pupils. For some years Mary had cooked all the food for the 40+ students in the boarding school, but finally this became too much for her and the job was taken over by Keuh Agong, moving over from the LMS hospital.

The school was struggling to maintain good class sizes. The normal method of admitting students into the theological seminary used a contract in which the student

agreed to study for four years in return for free tuition, room, and board with the costs recovered through donations supporting specific students. One of the students was the adopted then orphaned son of the Legge's beloved amah Chang Ache.

In the seminary Li Kimlin, one of the three lads, had applied to become the English teacher in the prep school but had then been enticed down to Singapore and into marriage with rich benefits including a good business and a handsome house, and Legge feared he would never return. Ng Asow was doing well in school, planning to apply to the seminary and behaving well, but then became involved in some scheme with stolen Bills of Exchange. He pled innocence, claiming that when he finally realized things were not right he requested police help, but then panicked and fled at the prospect of being required to attend court and participate as a witness. The case had to be dropped, then others involved in the affair accused him of being party to the theft although Legge was convinced this was not true. Legge was discovering that his students in the seminary were vulnerable to many temptations and that some of them were incapable of learning at the level he expected, and he wrote humbly of the fragility of the enterprise.

Legge and Hobson in Canton met early in 1850 to review the LMS stations and began to think that it was time to close the Hong Kong station and move all its activities to Canton. Hong Kong was not thriving as formerly because the eternal struggles with Cantonese officials over free trade were decimating the trading community. The five treaty ports were now well established and it no longer seemed that a Hong Kong station was necessary as a support base for missions in China, so they wrote in March urging this huge change.

Legge was now confident in his Chinese preaching, necessary in Canton, and he recognized that Hobson was suffering from isolation as he struggled with his various staff problems. To complement Legge's skills, they hoped Hobson could strengthen an LMS school by teaching science courses, and Hobson hoped that the reinforced mission and school would attract a higher calibre of Chinese students. Legge outlined some of the disadvantages of such a move, but concluded that on balance there were stronger reasons to move to Canton than to stay. By September Legge had not yet received any LMS ruling on this proposal and by then a rising rebellion in Guangxi province aimed at restoring the Ming dynasty was threatening Canton. Removal of the Hong Kong station to Canton might not be feasible.

#### Dr. Hirschberg problems and a fantastical scheme

Across 1850 and 1851 Legge was also facing a staff problem in the Hong Kong mission in connection with Dr. Hirschberg's medical work. From early on his efforts had

been rather peripatetic, wandering from his initial assignment in the LMS hospital, quitting that for clinic work across the harbour in Kowloon with Gutzlaff, then in January 1850 settling down in a new dispensary at the Queen's Road chapel, ending his visits to Kowloon. His hospital had never cared for the numbers of patients handled by the MMSC hospital, perhaps because of his desultory interest. In June he developed totally different plan, deciding that he would like to do an inland mission to the Jews of China.

Hirschberg had learned that there was a tradition of a Jewish-Chinese community located in Kaifeng in Henan province, and he decided he wanted to become a missionary to them, reasoning that his previous life in Judaism made him especially appropriate for such a mission. He wrote the LMS in June 1850 pleading for their support for this plan. He confessed that he did not know Hebrew and expected to have to master that, making it clear to us that he knew few details about the community he hoped to convert.

The *Chinese Repository* published an article about this Jewish-Chinese community in July 1851, reporting on a trip two Chinese men took to Kaifeng from Shanghai with the help of the Dr. Medhurst, who had written an introductory letter in Hebrew to be used if Jews were discovered. The two Chinese men reported that they found a few very impoverished Jewish families in a Moslem district, long separated from their religious tradition. There had not been a rabbi for more than 50 years and no one could read Hebrew although they recognized the written text as something familiar. The seven family clans of about 200 individuals were Chinese in race, customs, and language. This historical community in Kaifeng maintained a fragile connection to its Jewish religious practice until the middle of the twentieth century. Hirschberg acknowledged that a trip to Kaifeng would require extra resources from the LMS to cover the costs of a guard and the costs of another doctor to replace him at the Hong Kong hospital, additional challenging barriers to the project.

Hirschberg's proposal was completely outside the mandate of any mission in China and Legge could not afford to let any staff leave his hard-pressed station, so conflict developed over this plan. Cautiously the local committee voted in favour of supporting an investigative trip by Dr. Hirschberg. London demanded answers from him to a series of questions concerning just how many Jews there were in Kaifeng, who would pay the costs of the trip, how long it would take, and who would do Hirschberg's medical work in his absence. His answers in January 1851 were vague and mostly consisted of comments that he hadn't thought about those details yet. In the same letter he mentioned that Miss White, his fiancée from England, would soon be arriving. He was expecting to be married by May and would have to leave the hospital for better

accommodation because the hospital was surrounded with “public houses and bad women”.

In July a new problem developed with Hirschberg in which he used LMS funds inappropriately in an exchange, drawing a bill of £62 for a special grant worth only £50, on the grounds that he believed this correctly matched the LMS intentions to have the mission men receive a fixed dollar value in spite of varying exchange rates, a method they had never used. Then Hirschberg complained in September that he had never been in favour of the proposal by Hobson and Legge to move the Hong Kong mission to Canton, and did not want the LMS to believe that he was a supporter. Legge and Hirschberg were now engaged in a steady series of small conflicts.

Their relationship settled down across much of 1851 as Hirschberg settled into domesticity with his new wife in a rented house, although he wrote in October 1851 complaining to London that the local committee had required him to repay £50 he had used to buy furniture. He thought the LMS rules were clear that he was entitled to a furniture allowance. He listed his financial problems, his growing debt, and explained that the hot humid air of Hong Kong was costly on all possessions, harming books and clothes with mould and moths. Servants were also more expensive than in other China mission stations. He ended with a request for a monthly supply of smallpox vaccine, explaining that the lymph/serum “loses its virtue” very quickly and needs to be fresh to work.

#### Hirschberg and *feng shui*

From his medical practice and the need to dispose of corpses Dr. Hirschberg observed the use of *feng shui* in determining burial places, and developed a cynical view of the practice. A family would hire a *feng shui* master to determine the best burial place and Hirschberg began to notice that the speed of this determination would depend on the wealth of the family. If the family were rich the *feng shui* master would repeatedly delay finding the best position, seeking additional money while his task of determining the wishes of the gods of wind and water went on. This might go on for four weeks, and over time and heat the corpse would soon begin to swell and smell, making the family desperate to get it moved out of their home and into a grave, and increasing their willingness to give more money to the *feng shui* master to complete his work. Hirschberg observed that in poor families the *feng shui* master “never has much trouble reaching the gods”, because this extortion would not lead to additional money.

Other mission scholars were interested in *feng shui*, and decades later another LMS man Edkins wrote an essay on some current examples, then assessed its historical roots. He traced the main ideas back to Greek notions in the classical era about the four

elements (earth, water, fire, air) that were taken by Alexander's forces to India and then by Buddhists from India to China (J. Edkins, 1872). Edkins showed that the doctrine included Buddhist, Hindu, Taoist, and Confucian elements and was far more recent than the classic Yijing its practitioners claimed. He reminded his readers that its practise had been condemned by the 1670 Sacred Imperial Edict prohibiting "strange religions", and was the subject of much jest among country people who enjoyed the homonym in which the word-sound *feng* could equally mean wind or lunacy.

#### Church and state: free land-rents and a matter of principle

The Hong Kong government now presented Legge with a challenging opportunity that would both aid and threaten his station. The government offered remission of the land-rents to churches and missions. Legge was accustomed to total independence of church operations from the intrusions of the state, and worried about what to do with this offer. It concerned relatively low sums of money, but it was the principle that bothered him. He sought advice from the Directors, noting that against the long-standing tradition of independence, there was the reality that all the other churches were taking advantage of the government offer, which was standard policy in the US. He was still bothered by it because he thought Americans did not understand "what a perspicacious thing anti-state voluntarism in England is...". He was afraid to start mixing church and state, after having basing his entire life on a model that decried this.

#### Term question April 1850, NT printing starts

The vexing question about which Chinese term to use for God steamed in the background in Shanghai as Legge decided to enter the argument, which had become hot by April 1850, but by July Legge knew that the Shanghai LMS mission printers were now ready to print the New Testament using *Shangdi*. And the Bible Society had agreed to pay for the print run using that term.

#### Salaries, and money and currency problems in the mission

The salaries of the mission men in Hong Kong and Canton were turning into a major problem for two reasons. Firstly, the LMS had cut back on salaries because of its financial problems in the central office at a time when the LMS men knew that other mission societies were now paying more. The English Presbyterian mission paid its single men £250 compared to the LMS reduction to £150. This affected the lives of the mission families and staff, and it also affected the LMS reputation with the Chinese, as the Church of England Bishop George Smith paid his Chinese assistant more than the LMS could.

Hirschberg had come to China owing student debts to Berlin University and had scrimped to try and repay those and avoid an imminent lawsuit, but the reduced salary

at £150 p.a. left him unable to continue these repayments. He complained in July 1850 that he didn't even have enough money to buy warm clothes he needed for the winter. His reduced salary in combination with the varying exchange rate meant that for £150 he only received \$318 in Hong Kong currency for six months support, and he begged that his salary be restored to its original level. By September this value had dropped to \$305, and in November Legge asked the LMS in London to buy Mexican silver dollars there for the mission because the London exchange rate was better.

Legge wanted London to send the silver out rather than use the traditional paper system of "bills" denominated in pounds that had to be exchanged for dollars in Hong Kong at fluctuating local exchange rates. The varying exchange rates meant significant differences in available cash when the "bills" denominated in Pounds arrived from London. A single mission man's salary (originally £200 p.a.) could yield \$856 at a recent low exchange rate of £4 2 shillings to the dollar, or as much as \$960 at a rare higher rate. All their financial problems with low salaries were made worse by these shifts in the exchange rate.

After convincing London to send out cash dollars instead of bills of exchange in British pound values, by 1851 London was finally sending salaries in Mexican silver dollars, but unfortunately the exchange rates shifted just at that time to favour pounds, so once again the mission men suffered from the vagaries of global financial events. Further, when the dollars for the Hong Kong and Shanghai mission were finally received, not only was their value depreciated because of shifting exchange rates, but many of the Mexican dollars were "bad", and for various reasons were not accepted by local financial houses. Further, Mexican dollars were typically valued at a discount compared to Spanish silver dollars, so the missions suffered more losses, and Legge explained to the directors that they should be sending Spanish dollars because they had a more reliable value.

Legge also suffered financial problems arising from extraordinary expenses he was expected to provide as hospitality and lodging to mission families in transit through Hong Kong. His local committee voted £50 to help with those expenses but his condition was still close to desperate because Hong Kong was an expensive town in which to live. He had already used up a small inheritance of £120 in 1849. Although his salary as a married missionary with children was now £300 p.a., Legge was so poor that he had to remove his children from the English school and teach them himself because he couldn't afford the fees. He struggled hard to be economical in the operations of the mission as well as in his own household, and explained to the directors that the costs of



running his Chinese school were the same as the costs for the school run by the Bishop of the Anglican church, but Legge was teaching 50 students to the Bishop's 20.

Legge had already shown that he had very clear ideas about the ethical handling of mission money during his struggles to clean up the financial mess left by Evans in Malacca. His ideas about the management of donations to missions were also very clear. A man in the UK had written asking Legge if he would accept donations sent directly to him in Hong Kong, and Legge explained that he would put any donations directly into the LMS mission accounts. If the donor wished to send the money directly to the LMS in London and direct its use to the "educational fund" in the Hong Kong mission, that was a perfectly correct way of directing the money. He considered it would be wrong to set up a separate account outside the LMS mission funds and use it to hire Chinese assistants not integrated into the mission operations, explaining that it was not correct for him to work as the agent of "two parties", in the way that such two separate accounts would imply. He understood that such a structure of extraordinary accounts independent of the mission would compromise it and could easily place him in a conflict of interests with many complications. He explained this to Tidman, the LMS secretary for foreign missions, after Legge received a letter from Tidman in which there seemed to be confusion about the management of special donations.

#### Legge summarizes 1850

Although 1850 had been filled with problems that included poverty, illness, staff complications and increasingly bitter public controversies about the translation of the Bible and about the work of Gutzlaff, Legge rose to the challenges. In early 1851 he was still healthy and vigorous even though he realized that "...had not my health been uncommonly good for the East, I must have broken down". Honest missionary Hamberg was preparing to publish an expose of Gutzlaff's CU, vindicating Legge's concerns; 'it will be a *coup de grace*...to Dr. Gutzlaff but he has brought it all upon himself".

#### Students Li Kimlin and Ng Asow

Legge had fresh worries about some of his students in 1851. Li Kimlin had married in Singapore and returned to Hong Kong, but had a "poor passionless miserable wife, with whom he has a melancholy life.... He has his being in a gloomy cloud". Ng Asow was hanging out with "some of the worst men in Hong Kong" and his congregation suspended him. Despite a letter of contrition from Ng, Legge was freshly worried about the prospects for his students. "You teach these boys looking for the time when they will become helps to you. It never arrives. Some of them pierce you with many sorrows, and all cling to you continually for support." His main comfort was Ho. "The recollection of

Ho Tsunshin, my first friend in the East, should make me modify my style -. He is indeed a help – a consistent, prudent Christian through whom my ideas and desires are continually passing into multitudes of his countrymen”.

#### Printer Cole and the Hong Kong mission press

The LMS press in Hong Kong was working quite well since Cole had been hired to run it after having problems in Shanghai. In Hong Kong he did good work and in January 1851 he wanted an increase from his initial salary of £200. He proposed that either he be taken on by the LMS as a full missionary for £250, or that his title be improved to “Superintendent of the Press”, with a new salary for that position. He threatened to quit if his request was not fulfilled, and the local committee agreed to recommend Cole’s second proposal. Cole was building up three beautiful font sets in Chinese and English and they expected the press would be capable of quality work in both languages for the missions and for commercial and government contract jobs. Other missions’ presses were putting in orders to buy the LMS font sets, and the future of the press looked promising.

In August a new printing press arrived from London. Experiments with it showed that it was wonderful, everything working “exceeding well”, and it went into full production. Legge had now finished his main essay on the term question, “Notions of the Chinese...” and he asked the LMS to grant the \$100 needed to publish it because he thought it was very important that it be a publication of the LMS rather than by him as an individual, even though he had been promised private donations to pay the costs of its printing. In November the printing of Legge’s essay was proceeding, but with a few problems. Printer Cole would sometimes set aside Legge’s work for more lucrative contract jobs, and sometimes carelessly allowed the type-setters to introduce gross grammatical errors into his text, embarrassing him. Despite these small problems everyone was happy to have the splendid new press. In Shanghai the LMS press was putting out the new Delegates’ Version of the gospels, the Acts, and the Epistles, and by December the LMS missions were using these in their mission work, using *shangdi*.

In Canton Dr. Hobson was also busy publishing in Chinese, but still using traditional Chinese woodcut blocks. In 1851 he published a textbook of Astronomy  
James and Mary illness 1849 -1851

Legge also faced demanding personal problems across 1849-1851, during the term question conflicts. His treasured wife Mary was frequently ill during her pregnancy across most of 1850. Her condition varied, and for a while she felt well enough to write the LMS in May proposing to run a girls boarding school if funds could be raised to

construct a building and provide monthly costs for 12 boarders. Her letter was vigorous and well organized, and she had ambitious plans that seemed within her capacities.

But Mary became increasingly ill during her pregnancy. On August 23, 1850 their sixth child, daughter Emma Foulger was born, and to the great relief of James and Mary, young Emma survived. The young parents now had three surviving children out of the six that had been born. Mary was only 33 years old and far from strong, and it had become clear that pregnancies were a serious risk to her health, a risk that even their good friend Hobson and other British doctors were not able to diagnose or remedy. Childhood diseases were always dangerous in the heat and humidity of Hong Kong, but that year her young daughters survived measles and whooping cough. By early 1851 however, Mary was again seriously ill with overpowering fatigue, “for two days worse than I have ever known her to be”.

Eliza, Legge’s oldest surviving child and 10, was also ill, “outgrowing her strength,” concurred the doctors, who recommended she be sent to England. James wanted her to stay in the family and decided on a little sea voyage to Xiamen for cooler air, to “brace her up till next winter”. They travelled to Xiamen and stayed with Alex Stronach and his family for 17 days out of a four-week journey. Legge was very favourably impressed by the friendliness of the people in the city of 150,000, but was dismayed to learn that most were illiterate and that infanticide was practiced on a large scale.

Mary’s health became worse starting in June 1851, and after three months of increasingly severe illness Dr. Hobson decided in October that to recover she needed at least relief from the Hong Kong climate, either through a trip to Shanghai or a return to the UK. Instead Mary went to Canton to be with the Hobsons, Hobson reporting her “great prostrations”. Her health rallied briefly and she returned to Hong Kong but by November 1851 Mary was dangerously ill again, so ill that James considered returning to Britain, only to have her rally again by the end of the year. Health problems were not unique to the Legge mission family.

#### Mission men mortality is summarized by Williams

In Canton Wells Williams published a report of all the Protestant mission efforts in China to 1851 in the *Chinese Repository* (S. W. Williams, 1851a). Of the 150 men sent out up to 1851, 25 had died in the field after an average of 5.5 years of efforts. Excluding

four outliers who averaged more than 17 years each<sup>28</sup>, the remaining 21 deceased mission men spent an average of only 3 years on the job before they died. Learning Chinese used up three years, so there was terrific loss to the missions arising mostly from deaths from illness, apart from being killed by pirates or in shipwrecks. Among the 100 men who were married, 25 lost their wives to premature deaths while in the field (including Benjamin Hobson), and the wives' death rate was twice that of men, with childbirth their extra risk.

#### Mission work 1851

Against his persistent worries about Mary, Legge was tiring of his pastoral duties to the English community at Union Church and wanted them to seek another pastor so he could spend more time with the Chinese mission. In some desperation he wrote the LMS pleading for more staff. In October 1850 Legge had been seriously ill with influenza, and against the background of all the other problems of the year his description of his state was graphic. He “felt as shut up in a corner and striking quick and short”. The LMS foreign secretary Tidman was beginning to disapprove of Legge spending any time in translating Chinese literature, even though it was done in the early hours of the morning long before mission activities began. He thus responded that they were unable to offer any relief in the short term, coolly commenting “We have reason to fear that with so many occupations on your hands your energies must be considerably overtasked”.

Hong Kong was no longer looking like a thriving colony in 1851. Property values were falling across the year, reflecting the political struggles with China, and Legge had problems with the mission buildings. The directors in London had refused to transfer him to Canton because it was still too unstable, and they were reluctant to sell off the Hong Kong mission properties at a loss in the currently depressed economic conditions there. In response Legge reported on the condition of the various mission buildings. Dr. Hirschberg had essentially abandoned the hospital on Morrison Hill and the nearby MES school had closed in bankruptcy. The major merchants in Hong Kong were suffering and many handsome new buildings were standing empty. Legge, ever the optimist, reviewed the advantages of expanding the mission school, but this was not supported.

---

<sup>28</sup> Removing rare outlying (extreme) values is a legitimate statistical procedure in calculating averages in distributions where there are extreme values, because otherwise the resulting “average” gives a very distorted picture of what happens in most cases.

Hobson and Legge now believed that the mission should be moved to Canton, but recommended that the LMS retain the Hong Kong school and mission buildings for Legge or any new missionary so he would have a house, rather than selling the buildings at a loss. Hobson hoped the LMS would approve Legge's move to Canton, for "we thoroughly understand each other... and there would be great reason to hope ... that the mission here would be more effective". Hobson wrote the LMS in December 1851 describing Legge and the prospects of the mission in Hong Kong.

"A man of Dr. Legge's abilities and great moral fitness for a working missionary, should have a larger field for the development of his plans and labours than the narrow limits and miserably low populations now met with at Hong Kong; everything at its first formation as a British colony, had the highest expectations of its superior advantages and thrifty intelligent Merchants unhesitatingly bought land at enormous prices, ... But everyone sees now how woefully they have deceived themselves, and all that can, have sold or rented their houses to Government or others... The Missionaries (including myself) were not peculiar therefore in removing to Hong Kong and recommending the erection of expensive buildings. It is to be deeply regretted now, but like the Merchants, as we did it... we supposed for the best..."

Hobson was worried that the LMS considered Legge to be a hothead on the term question, and he wanted to counteract such an opinion, describing Legge's recent publication "The notions of the Chinese concerning..." as

"...a most reliable treatise.... Written in a calm and persuasive manner. You have thought, and no doubt others have, that Drs. Medhurst and Legge have not written in that kind and inoffensive spirit which they should have done. Great allowances must be made for the circumstances in which they have been placed. Both Drs. Boone & Smith have made many foolish & unjustifiable remarks, which those only on the spot can fully understand. There has been provocation..."

#### December fire in Hong Kong

1851 ended with complete misery in Hong Kong. Typhoons, burglars, war, malaria, and cholera were not the only threats to life in the young colony. Just three years after the terrible typhoon of 1848, on December 28, 1851 Hong Kong was hit by another major disaster, a fire starting in the Chinese town. Legge had just finished preaching in the Chinese bazaar chapel and was chatting with his congregation when suddenly "there was a noise of fire in the Chinese part of the town".

The mission building was a long way from the fire and the wind was blowing in the opposite direction, so at first it seemed the mission Chapel and hospital would be safe. But within an hour the direction of the wind changed and

“... the fire spread with astonishing rapidity till it wrapped in one terrific blaze a space containing not fewer than five or six hundred houses, among which were both of our buildings. The scene was awfully grand, but it was heart-rending to see the crowds of Chinese fleeing from their homes, with what little property they could carry with them. One most melancholy event occurred. A company of artillery with sappers and miners were engaged in blowing up a large house to stop the progress of the conflagration. Somehow the powder exploded before they were prepared for it... A Lieut. Lugg and was killed upon the spot, and the Colonel so severely wounded that he died two hours after. Another officer and two at least of the men were also severely wounded. I walked over the ruins (the next day) and certainly never witnessed a scene of such utter desolation. ... Many Chinese were standing mournful bemoaning the loss of their all, and a party of soldiers were busy cleaning away the debris of the house ... searching for the body or the remains rather of the body of their officer. The Chapel was hardly to be distinguished from the ruins around it. Where we had seen a crowded attentive congregation but a few hours before, there were now but three bare and broken walls. The Hospital was in a similar state of destruction.”

The fire burned all night and destroyed around 11,000 Chinese homes. By daybreak many Chinese members of the LMS mission were now homeless, including Li Kimlin, his wife and child, Keuh and wife, and the assistants Asun, Aluk, Amuk and their families. Legge took eight families into the mission house. The LMS Chapel had been built only four years earlier at a cost of \$1,000, and although the Hospital was only rented the mission had spent \$400 on improvements. Dr. Hirschberg rescued some medical instruments but was distraught because the church services in the Chinese bazaar that night had enjoyed the largest and most attentive congregation ever. “This sad accident had cast me down greatly, as it stopped my work”.

Legge quickly joined a government relief committee and helped by writing Chinese text for posters that explained how people could get government help with housing. He printed these on the LMS press and distributed them around the town. As it turned out

most of the homeless Chinese went back to their families in China while the young colony struggled to clean up the horrors of the fire, and little emergency housing was necessary. Everyone understood that many Chinese would leave and return to China, probably never to return.

The colony was devastated. Legge knew it would be some time before it would be possible to figure out what, if any, mission reconstruction would be required. In the aftermath the newspaper criticized the Police Superintendent and the Army officers for being “too timorous to order houses to be torn down in the path of the flames” to serve as a firebreak; in contrast the Navy officers and sailors “took urgent actions to help stop the spread”, and probably saved the main waterfront street, Queen’s Road.

#### Rebellion in southern China was smouldering

In southern China rebellion against the Qing dynasty was smouldering in the “two Kwangs”, the provinces Guangdong and Guangxi. The rebels had taken over a large part of Guangxi and on-going successes were being rumoured, but accurate news was not available and in December 1851 Hobson told Legge “... no one feels alarmed – or even very interested”. In Canton Dr. Parker was being dutiful in reading a weekly sermon for the Church of England, but he used a printed sermon and read it “in a very cold and unimpressive manner” so the dissenters held a separate service which would involve more religious feeling.

By May 1851 the rebellion was costing the Qing officials huge amounts of money, and the stories of atrocities between the government forces and the rebels led to opinion shifts in the Hong Kong community. Governor Ye Mingchen (1807-1859) was now described as Governor-General Sü’s “dastardly colleague”. Manchu generals sent down to improve the Chinese army were having only limited effectiveness, complaining of the troops’ lack of discipline and training.

There were speculations that the rebels started out in various secret societies, then that foreign Christians were implicated in the rebellion, with some using the nickname “God-talkers” (*shangdi-hua*) to describe them, and they were believed to have “books of Jesus”. It was rumoured the rebel king had been baptized in Macau and that his followers observed a day of rest, but they were also known for taking over sacred buildings, so their beliefs were not yet clear. In Hong Kong and Canton people believed that most in the southern districts of Guangxi favoured the rebel cause.

News reached Hong Kong in August 1852 from a close relative of the rebel leader Hong Xiuquan, that Hong had been baptized by Gutzlaff and had named his rebel movement the “*Shangdi*” in honour of the Christian god. Shortrede considered it entirely possible that the rebel leader had been part of Gutzlaff’s “Christian Union”. The

editor had learned from a friend of Hong's that he and another rebel leader Feng Yunshan had failed the literary civil service examinations in China, so their prospects for a rich career in government were finished, and Shortrede considered this a probable origin to Hong's rebellion.

Hong and Feng joined a Triad (secret society) and began practicing martial arts to enforce discipline among their followers. They also were rumoured to "talk with demons". To assert their importance and powers they circulated a story about Hong being taken up into heaven and sitting as the brother of Jesus in a small hall of heaven. When he died he would be taken to a great hall in heaven. It was not clear if this was a report of a dream or hallucination by Hong, or if it was just invented.

In December 1850 the rebels' group was getting larger and Hong used the members actively in plundering raids. Hong named it the "Shangdi Association", himself the King of Heavenly Peace (*wang/hong Taiping*), and gave his friend a Qing title, "King of celestial virtue" (*Tienteh*). In August 1851 they conquered a large city and Hong awarded kingly titles to many of his soldiers, but his friend Tienteh was becoming critical and spread word that Hong was a "wine-bibber and a licentious man" who kept 36 women with him in the campaign. On April 7, 1852 Tienteh hoped Hong would lose a battle so Tienteh could take over and reform the group, but instead the members vanished during a major battle and Tienteh was taken prisoner and began explaining the whole operation to the outside world.

The commander of the Qing troops was Governor Ye, and some rumours reaching Hong Kong suggested his army was very effective in putting down the rebellion. The rumours could not have been more wrong, as the rebellion became increasingly vicious and widespread until its final destruction twelve years later.



### Chapter 33 An *annus horribilis* for Legge

*In which Legge has a fateful encounter with a Jardine, struggles with conflicts in the mission, suffers when Mary dies, and Dr. Hobson publishes medical texts in Chinese as the Taiping rebels increase their attacks.*

If 1851 had ended with the massive and deadly fire in Hong Kong, 1852 presented an endless stream of challenging personal events for Legge, with tragic losses, threats to his safety, the death of Milne in Shanghai, and conflict involving printer Coles and the LMS. The year also featured the final major showdown in the translation struggles with Boone over the term question. The mission problems occurred against the background of trouble in world beyond.

#### World events

In Europe many governments were furious at England for accepting refugees from their various revolutionary events. Complaints sent to Lord Granville from Russia, France, Austria, and Germany were met with a flagrantly liberal response: “All can find asylum here – whether dethroned potentate or republican exile, ... it is the custom of the country and (can) not be altered”, although the government would not permit formation of a conspiracy. Gold was reported discovered in the Queen Charlotte Islands off the Pacific coast north of Vancouver, and *China Mail* editor Shortrede hoped that any use of Chinese miners would “not imitate the terrible policies of the Governor of California”, who was creating fear of Chinese migrants as a yellow peril “imperilling tranquillity and prosperity”. These disturbances in the macrocosm were echoed in problems affecting Legge and his friends across the LMS missions in south China.

#### Hobson’s problems in Canton, Liang Fa helps

Hobson in Canton was still having troubles finding housing. The tenants in the house he had rented months earlier refused to move, so by February 1852 he was still searching for a place for his family to live. Eventually the problem seemed to be resolved and in August he was given the opportunity to move into suitable buildings. Within weeks this plan again collapsed when the landlord demanded a commission at the last minute. When Hobson protested, the landlord promised the building would be available by early October, but by now Hobson no longer trusted any promises: “nothing ever seems reliable here”.

These problems with the mission were compounded because his family was isolated and he was lonely. The controversies over the term question interfered with the relations among the PMs in Canton. As a result, gentle, anxious Hobson chose to lead

the more peaceful life of intense medical work and isolation, sorry that the intensity of the conflicts over different views were a barrier to closer relations.

News reached him that gave details about troublesome Dr. Hyslop's death en route from Australia to Manila, and Hobson wrote Tidman of "the awful end of Dr. Hyslop. How little you thought that he would terminate his existence in a bush among savages. I trust his last sad hours were spend in contrition for the past..." Hyslop's ship was wrecked on a reef after being out of port 10 days and he, the Captain, the Mate, and some sailors left the reef in a boat hoping to make Moreton Bay half-way down the east coast of Australia. They landed in an unfamiliar part of the coast where the aborigines murdered Hyslop, while the Captain and Mate escaped. Hyslop had left his wife behind in Xiamen, and the mission men who had found her husband so troublesome now regarded her with great sympathy.

Hobson's trusty "aged" (63) Chinese evangelist Liang Fa wrote the LMS early in 1852 giving an outline of his life and telling Tidman how much he appreciated Hobson for his "mild temper, genteel manners, and... benevolent heart". Liang concluded his glowing testimonial by asking for more funds so he could hire more Chinese preachers. Liang had transferred to Canton to be near his hometown, working as an evangelist for the Canton mission. While John Morrison had considered Liang's spoken Chinese to be close to baby talk, there was no question of his commitment to the Chinese Christian community. Some of the texts he translated into Chinese early in his life at the LMS mission in Malacca had been read in 1837 by the Taiping rebel leader Hong Xiuquan, and some of the religious themes in those texts were incorporated into various manifestos Hong published as his rebellion spread in the 1850s.

Awo, a member of the Chinese Christian community in Canton, was continuing to create problems for Hobson. Awo had robbed Hobson after Hobson had tried to find a small house for him, and after Awo's many misdeeds had made him unwelcome at Hobson's mission hospital he had drifted into occasional work at the other missions.

In late 1852 Hobson was still having troubles getting housing in Canton because he had just discovered that the house he had been waiting for and on which he had paid a sizeable deposit, had a rotten foundation that made it useless. He had to forfeit the \$90 deposit on this house and was troubled that he still did not have a decent home for his family.

The only promising news Hobson had concerned his recent books in Chinese. His Chinese texts on astronomy and physiology were both a great success in the Chinese community. He realized that these works on topics of popular interest were reaching more Chinese than any more conventional mission publications and planned to publish

a second edition with added illustrations. By 1853 he discovered these works had been quickly pirated and published by various Chinese publishers including by Governor Ye, who calmly paid tribute to Hobson's merits in the introduction.

#### Legge's fateful encounter with Jardine

In 1852 the Taiping rebellion had been successful in taking many areas in southern Canton province, and Legge's friend Robert Strachan (owner of the *Hong Kong Register*), told Legge that he had heard that the rebels were going to attack Canton on a certain day. He proposed that Legge should come with him to watch the events unfold. This was not as bizarre as we would find it today because the engagements were often erratic and operatic in their staging, and Strachan expected to find more performance than bloodshed.

At first reluctant, Legge agreed and went, along with Joseph Jardine, a Hong Kong merchant and partner in his famous now-dead uncle William's firm Jardine, Matheson & Co. They took a steamer to Whampoa, and while starting to offload, Legge realized the rebels held a nearby island. Rather than seeking out the battle, Legge convinced Strachan, Jardine, and Capt. Macdermott it would be more interesting to visit the rebel camp and talk with the men.

The captain had his Chinese boatman row the party to the island and while underway, Legge chatted with the Chinese skipper in Chinese. The captain listened to this and joked to the boatman "You Chinese despise us foreigners because we cannot speak your language, but here, you see, is an Englishman who does speak Chinese". Jardine noticed the fluency Legge showed during this conversation, and when Jardine later spoke to the boatman, he told Jardine in pidgin that Legge "speakee Chinese more better I". Jardine was quite impressed with this, but Legge was embarrassed because he understood pidgin better than Jardine did. Legge knew that the boatman was explaining that James spoke "more like a book", that is, in a more formal and literary way, than the boatman did. Regardless, this conversation left a lasting impression upon Jardine, for it was still true that very few Europeans learned to speak Chinese. The minor misunderstanding in this brief event provided the basis of wonderful assistance from Jardine to Legge years later.

When the boat party reached the island they were taken to the rebel headquarters where they had a long talk with the leaders. The rebels told the Britons that they planned to attack Canton on the next Monday. Legge and his party then went toward Canton, staying until Monday in the western suburb of Guangli with Benjamin Hobson at the hospital he had established. On Tuesday Canton mission man Wesleyan Josiah

Cox (1828-1906) joined them for another expedition. They crossed the river toward Canton and as they neared the rebels' island with its great Buddhist temple, learned that the rebels had been defeated in the previous day's battle.

In the wake of the battle the successful troops of the Imperial dynasty were rampaging through the village and countryside, burning, plundering, mutilating, and beheading. Terrified Chinese villagers brought an old man to Legge for care. The Qing soldiers had cut off the man's ears, and burned down his house. Legge was horrified and immediately urged the old man to go to the Hobson's hospital. The old man explained this was impossible because he had no money to pay for a boatman, so Legge took direct action. He

“... tore down a placard from a wall, and wrote with a pencil in Chinese:  
“To any boatman. Please take the bearer in your boat across the river to the hospital at (Guangli) and show him to the English doctor; he will pay you liberally for your trouble’.”

Legge signed this note “On the faith of an Englishman”, and wrote a separate note for Dr. Hobson. Later that day Legge and his group returned to the hospital where they found the old man. A boatman had accepted the promise and taken the poor victim, but his injuries were so severe that he had died.

In the meantime Legge and his group had another horrifying encounter with Qing forces, an encounter in which he acted with reckless courage. They reached an area where the Imperial troops were destroying a village they believed had supported the rebels. The rampaging troops were full of the blood of victory and sure of their status as Imperial agents: “We are patriots called out by the landed gentry of this country to act against these rebels”. They invited the Britons to come along with them. As different patches of conflict broke out the troops had the inspiration to force the naïve Britons into a position at the front of their battle-line, where they were at risk of fire from both sides. After the troops won a small encounter, their officer rested on a small hill, sitting “majestically” surrounded by his retainers. Qing soldiers came forward to show off the decapitated heads of their village-victims, holding each by its queue and laying these trophies before their leader.

The soldiers were not particular about their victims, and before the horrified eyes of the Britons a small girl was brought forward and thrown on the ground in front of the leader in a position for beheading. She seemed confused and Legge could not bear the thought that she also would be murdered. He walked up to the officer and challenged him to explain how putting a little girl to death would serve his cause. The officer did not

bother to speak in reply, but made a languid gesture that the girl be picked up by a nearby rough soldier. He grabbed her, laid his sword on her neck and told her to lie still or he would cut off her head. Legge was so “indignant at the man’s cruelty, I gave him a sharp blow with my cane across his shoulder, and he turned fiercely round, but meeting my glance he seemed to be ashamed and withdrew” (J. Legge, 1872b).

The situation was perilous as the party was entirely helpless against the power of the bloodstained soldiers exhilarated with their victory, and Legge had just interfered in a way that might have cost face to the officer. He was saved from retaliation only through a rapid supportive flanking move made by his large and muscular Scottish friend Strachan, whom the Chinese described as “having the strength of 500 men”. However Legge’s impulsive act of righteous outrage impressed the Qing officer enough that he let the travellers return to their boat without further trouble. Legge later described the movements of the Imperial troops through the countryside as “like the progress of locusts. Their thirst for blood was quenchless. Their outrages on the young and old were indescribable”.

#### Legge rebuilds the burned-out Hong Kong mission

After the terrible fire on the last day of 1851 the Hong Kong mission was faced with the loss of its Chinese chapel and hospital, and with major losses of its congregations because most Chinese left to return to China. The LMS men wanted to rebuild the chapel and hospital as a unit, and advised the LMS buy fire insurance on its properties in future. In late January 1852 the government was doing town planning for the rebuilding that promised to improve the town of Victoria, but this plan required owners of leased lots to rebuild by a set deadline or the land would revert to the crown, so there was urgency in receiving LMS permission to rebuild the Chinese chapel and hospital.

A proposed design would cost around \$800, and would meet criteria to be eligible for fire insurance. Approval was received along with support to pay for fire insurance, and by July Hirschberg reported that the buildings were coming along very well, probably to cost \$1,000 including the furniture. He was busy seeking donations despite some ill health and had adopted a Chinese fund-raising method to encourage Chinese donations. He created a large “donors book” in which the names of each donor were written on large strips of red paper that were shuffled to ensure the largest donors were seen first when the book was opened. This was a successful plan, all the needed funds were collected, and the buildings were opened at the end of September. The new Chinese chapel was opened in late October 1852, to large attendance.

Legge was soliciting funds for the school although he felt guilty about not giving it more of his time, pleading for a teacher. In April wrote of his frustration at not having more time to do major fund-raising for the school because donations from both England and Hong Kong were falling off. Legge had increased the size of the preparatory school in order to create a cohort for the Theological Seminary, yet many of the senior students were a problem, either through ill health, or increasingly through tempting competing job offers.

Chinese workers were becoming part of a new trade as the California gold rush was in full swing and there was massive migration of Chinese men across the Pacific to work there. Each returning ship from San Francisco brought back men made wealthy in the gold fields, and excitement was growing across the south Chinese coast. One of Legge's less stellar students Ho Cheongkow quit school, went to California in the summer and by December wrote that he had a job in a shop in which he earned £250 p.a., the same salary that a married LMS mission man earned. Legge wrote somewhat philosophically "so even some education can be a big help to Chinese youths in worldly success". He knew that two of his senior students were also "tempted by the gold of California", but so far had refused job offers.

From Legge's point of view the best thing that had happened in the last few years was his final published article on the term question in March 1852, on the "Notions of the Chinese concerning God...". He now felt relieved to be settling back to more normal mission work but was still upset that the Bible Society had stamped the Boone/Culbertson attack on the New Testament translation with "private and confidential" yet were passing it along to mission societies including his own LMS, while ignoring their own Chinese mission scholars. He wrote London, "Your statement (that some LMS Directors were being swayed by it) gave me still greater pain"; instead such ill-justified documents should be "thrown into the fire". In August he learned that the LMS had "approved" his essay and had purchased 100 copies, but he was gloomy about its effects on the American mission men. "Probably not one half of them have read it". Boone was rumoured to be working on a Reply and Legge hoped that he would not have to work on a rejoinder "for I am tired of the controversy". He was happy to send London copies of the newly published Chinese NT, "the handsomest Scriptures ever printed in Chinese" although he apologized that he should have printed them on higher quality paper.

Boone indeed published his aggressive new essay in September 1852 (Vindication of comments...) (Boone, 1852). He justified his secret letters against the Shanghai translators, acknowledged his failure to attend the translation meetings and to do any

actual work, then rambled through a mixture of compliments and criticisms of the text the others had done. Legge wrote the LMS in late September, decrying the bitterness of Boone's attack, which was at times very personally directed against Legge. For the benefit of the LMS Legge carefully ploughed through Boone's arguments on the general quality of the Delegates New Testament, and on the term question. Much of Boone's apparent criticism of the translation style was only a guise through which he could reanimate the term question. Legge was particularly annoyed that Boone basically accused the LMS men of heresy in their choice of term, telling other mission men in Shanghai that Legge was guilty of the heresy of Socianism (a belief that "God" is a only relative term). From Legge's perspective Boone's failure to propose any alternative translations vitiated all his critiques and all his claims to scholarship. Above all Legge hoped the BFBS would not cave in to pressures from "prejudiced sources" who were not scholars of Chinese.

In the mission Legge was still scrupulous in considering requests for baptism, but in July 1852 reported on two, including a senior Chinese scholar from the Magistrate's office whose baptism Legge had delayed for some time because the old man still had the proud "unsubdued heart of a Chinese professor of literature". Legge reflected on the hundreds of phony baptisms of the Chinese Union, "one of the most audacious and wicked impositions ever practised on the Christian Church". Rather than hiring ignorant rough men to distribute Christian pamphlets they did not understand, Legge stuck to his convictions that mission work had to be based on sincerity of belief even though that yielded embarrassingly low convert numbers to report to his Directors.

The LMS acted to improve the operation of the Hong Kong station and on 28 June Legge received a new mission man when Rev. John Chalmers (1825-1899) and his wife arrived. Mary Legge equally welcomed their arrival, as Mrs. Chalmers was Mary's cousin. Both Chalmers were relieved to find Mary well and planning to stay in Hong Kong, rather than ill and following an earlier plan to return to the UK. Legge was cheery when he wrote in September 1852, pleased with the increasingly speedy transit of letters from England. He had promised Mary when he proposed to her that "before long" the mail to Hong Kong would be done in 40 days, and now that had happened, the fastest ever trip.

Chalmers was a well-educated man, a talented mathematician with a scientific outlook, and he quickly took over the mathematics teaching of the senior boys at ACC boarding school, while senior student Asow taught the junior boys. Asow's troublesome behaviour had improved with his congregation's disciplinary actions. Chalmers preached at Union Church every other week and spent his remaining time learning

Chinese. The school had 45 boys and 10 girls, and the congregation had 24 baptized members.

### Soolong becomes a problem

Legge was less than sanguine about another young man the LMS had sent out from England. Soolong was a Chinese youth who had gone to there to be educated and was now returning with a plan to do mission work, but he could neither read nor write Chinese. The LMS Directors had the blandly racist assumption that being Chinese he would soon overcome this drawback and quickly pick up the written language, so Legge wrote explaining that it takes Chinese many years of study to learn to write well, “and a native assistant who is not a good deal of a scholar, is of little worth”.

When Soolong arrived Legge discovered he came with no instructions other than to attend the Seminary, so Legge treated him like the other students. He gave Soolong a room, explained he was to eat with the other students, attend Chinese and English classes, and receive a monthly allowance like the other students. Soolong was not pleased with this, considering himself superior to the local Chinese students. Soolong was dissatisfied, but in fact he had very few skills. He could argue “speculative philosophy” and “Bibleography”, but for example, did not know how to do simple arithmetic, so he had no basis on which to learn algebra with the other students. Chalmers chafed, “Somehow, he has got too old to learn”. Soolong accepted Legge’s terms while awaiting detailed instructions from the LMS director Henderson who had sent him to Hong Kong. It developed that Soolong was the personal protégé of Henderson, and the mission men were uncertain of what was being expected of and for the clueless young man with his superior airs.

Legge realized that Soolong had exaggerated expectations of his status yet underwhelming skills, so decided that he would offer Soolong a contract that if he completed a certain level of schooling, Legge would hire him as an evangelist. Legge had noticed that Chinese students educated in England “often think they can get a plush job and do a little Christian work in their spare time”, not understanding the purpose of the seminary was to train men to be full-time preachers. Legge lamented that Soolong would be much better off if “his friends in Scotland taught him a trade rather than all that English – He could have been a great help as an engraver or printer”, but if he is to be a teacher and preacher, “alas for him. His friends little know the toil and discouragements which were before him”.



Legge: translation work, the term question, and the Taiping

Since his return in 1848 Legge had been working on English-Chinese and Chinese-English translations every day as part of his private study of the Classics. Increasingly he had also been using his expanding skills with the ancient texts to help solve problems in the New Testament translations being done by the Delegates Committee, reading ancient Chinese texts to help understand the vexatious term question by identifying all the ancient usages for concepts relating to a heavenly lord. Legge's unmatched mastery of the vast Chinese literature, and his insistence upon grounding the choice of term on the basis of empirical examinations of Chinese text and current usage, allowed him to argue with great authority. He wrote that ancient texts clearly showed that the *shin* as a class were subordinate to *shangdi* as shown in metaphors where the *shin* were made by Di, the "potter". He wrote that *di* represented Lord or God in a transcendent (not corporeal) way, and that *shang* intensified that title. Although Legge was a bit apologetic about the use of his time on this one issue, he discovered that his research on the term question improved his Chinese and thus also helped him become a better Chinese preacher.

By 1854 the missionaries learned that the leader of the Taiping rebellion was using *shangdi* as his term for the Biblical God. In response to this news Anglican Bishop George Smith told his British clergy, "The unexpected religious movement in the interior of China has occurred to settle this question, and to take it virtually out of our hands... Thus a great difficulty has been removed and henceforth the term "Shang-te" will be universally employed for "God" in all the works issued by the Christian missionaries of China" (H. E. Legge, 1905).

Printer Cole becomes a problem at the Press

The LMS printing press now became a focus of problems. It was still costing more than it earned in 1852, with a net loss of \$200 on its income of \$800 in 1851, because LMS printer Cole had to make many more new Chinese characters for the new DV New Testament. In addition Cole was restless with his employment situation. He wanted the LMS to send him money for his fare to return to the US at the end of his contract, which ended November. The problem was that Cole had not been sent to China by the LMS, but was only hired on locally in Hong Kong. Cole had forfeited his fare home from the American Presbyterian mission in Ningbo when he left it and moved to the Hong Kong LMS press.

Cole argued that his application for return fare home had merit because he had paid his own moving costs to Hong Kong, and had now worked for four years. This was fudging the story somewhat, as he had basically been forced out of his previous job in

Ningbo and came on his own to Hong Kong hoping for a job. Cole recognized that he had only a shaky claim on this travel allowance, but was angry that when he had asked the local committee to write seeking these moneys a year earlier, they had refused. He complained against them that in the interim his anticipated travel costs had now risen to nearly \$400. Cole complained to the LMS that he had only agreed to a second 18-month appointment because he had believed that the directors would pay his return passage. Failing that he threatened to resign on the grounds that he could not be held to a service contract if the LMS did not honour his understanding of that contract. Legge knew that at the same time that Cole had renewed his contract with them in January, he had started doing 'end-runs' around the local committee, writing directly to the LMS in London trying to get a better deal and threatening to quit if he did not get it.

In June 1852 the question of what to do with Cole had still not been settled and he was increasingly furious that he was not given the funds that he believed he deserved. In August a puff-piece about Cole appeared in a local paper, praising him for his printing and type-foundry work, but Legge was convinced that the LMS had treated Cole very fairly and suspected Cole had written the piece himself. Things festered all summer and in August Chalmers decided to provide oversight to the workings of the press because Cole's actions suggested "he ought to be dismissed as quietly as possible". In late September Cole's behaviour had become a public problem as he went about Hong Kong complaining about the treatment given him by the LMS and telling all of his eagerness to return to California.

At about the same time Dr. Hobson wrote the LMS describing his worries about the press in Hong Kong, which was always on the verge of making money, but instead always ended up losing it. Part of the problem lay in original calculations done by long-dead printer Dyer, who had based his estimates of the numbers of Chinese character fonts needed on Morrison's old 1807 Dictionary. Time had proved that many of those characters were not needed and many new ones were, but much effort and cost had been put into making those on the original list before the new work on the new Chinese Bible forced a detailed examination of the whole set of Chinese fonts.

Although Hobson recognized that woodcut printing was cheaper (and was using it for his medical texts), and knew that printing did not always need a large European press, he encouraged the LMS directors to provide good support for the innovative LMS press in Hong Kong. He explained that the advantages of European-style metal fonts in a moveable press were vast. The print runs could be very large and done very quickly, and this ease of printing meant that additional Notes and Comments could easily be put into small text in a way not possible with wood-cuts. The final product too, was

gorgeous: “one of our recent publications was more handsome than anything done in China”. Woodcut characters were clumsy in comparison, with a relative lack of uniformity in size and proportion.

Li Kimlin had returned from Singapore with his wife and child, and for more than a year had trained to be an assistant printer, but he was not a printer and Legge argued the press needed a real superintendent, skilled printers, and foundry workers.

Fracture lines were developing within the Hong Kong mission about the needs of the press and about its printer. Hobson’s careful report on the problems upset Dr. Hirschberg, who refused to endorse it or to attend a general meeting to discuss it. Hirschberg did not think Kimlin had the energy to do the work, and his wife was pressing him to return to Singapore, so it was not clear that he would even stay in Hong Kong. Hirschberg wanted a European to superintend the press in all its foundry and press operations. He and Legge agreed that the job was not a job for a missionary, but for an expert printer.

Legge was not particularly perturbed about Cole’s threatened resignation. The new Delegates Version Chinese *New Testament* had been printed, and Cole did not have any other skills to use in the mission, so unless the press obtained new printing contracts there was little for him to do until the DV *Old Testament* was ready for printing late in the year. China was still largely closed to mission work so there was little need for additional pamphlets. Legge believed the most probable sources of income for the press lay in selling copies of their handsome metal type fonts to other presses. Further, even Chinese printers were starting to copy the European methods of creating the long-lasting metal fonts for Chinese characters that the LMS had pioneered, and Legge realized this work in itself was a lasting contribution to improvements in China. He was mainly disappointed that now that he had a wonderful press, there were so few opportunities to use it because of the political situation with China. In the meantime in June he sent some copies of the *New Testament* to the LMS so they could provide them to the Bible Society and receive the printing grant that had been promised.

Suddenly on 23 September Cole resigned and Legge paid him a settlement of \$200, to be taken out of the savings from his unused salary. Legge hoped that Li Kimlin and helper Amuk would be able to manage the printing, though he confessed that “trembling is joined with my hope” because of his many past disappointments with young Chinese men.

#### Money problems: personal, and in the mission

The Legge family was still suffering from poverty and problems arising out of his low salary. Following his return to Hong Kong in 1848 Legge had been forced to

supplement his £300 p.a. salary with some of his own savings from his pre-mission life. Until recently this modest £120 savings account had had been depleted by £30 p.a. but the entire principal was now exhausted yet his needs were still pressing. He wrote the LMS in January 1852 that he had now been forced to borrow against a life insurance policy of £500 held in London; his father-in-law Dr. Morison sent the £50 loan out to Hong Kong. Legge was now 36 years old and had held the policy for 12 years but could no longer afford to pay the £23 annual premium, so he asked if the LMS would pay for the premiums for 1852 and 1853. He reminded the LMS that the cost of living was high in Hong Kong and he had a wife and three children to support. His nominal salary of \$120 per month was insufficient to meet his costs, and with the varying exchange values some months his LMS bills yielded only \$106, but "I don't complain, I try hard", but his financial problems were a terrible strain. The LMS directors decided to give him a special grant of £25 to cover the costs of his life insurance premium and other minor expenses but did not confront the salary problem more directly.

Legge's relief at the arrival of Chalmers was soon crushed by a series of increasingly miserable events in the mission. These started when he was upset with the way Dr. Hirschberg managed donations to the Hong Kong hospital, and a developing row erupted in October.

#### Hirschberg fundraising problems

Legge had agreed that Hirschberg could do fund-raising from Chinese donors for the new hospital, because the mission needed to rebuild the hospital and chapel after the massive fire. The plan was to combine money Hirschberg raised with \$407 the committee had from the LMS, to be topped up with money from a special fund Legge kept for donations from friends in his brother George's congregation in Leicester England, all combined to pay the contractors for the building. In effect the fund-raising was for capital to be used in construction. The Leicester donations had originally been collected to help the Chinese families suffering harm from the great fire of 1851, with any residual money to be used by Legge for the benefit of Chinese Christians. As the rebuilding costs became a problem Legge decided some of the Leicester money could be used for the rebuilding, but only after all the local building donation money was expended.

When the final bills came due, Legge went to Hirschberg to ask him to pay the builder of the hospital but Hirschberg refused, claiming that he had no money available, all had been spent on furnishings. He had collected \$250 when in September 1852 he declared he was going to keep most of this to use for operating expenses in the hospital. Legge explained that was not possible; the donations had been sought for the capital

expenses of building and had to be used to pay the contractor. Legge considered that diverting these funds to an operating account was not proper; if money was needed for medicines Legge would provide them out of the special fund he had, but the construction bill had to be paid first.

Hirschberg refused to provide the money and the mission was short \$100 of the contractor's bill. Hirschberg argued that he was only "responsible" for half of the cost of the building and had turned that amount over to the committee, so the remaining donation fund was his to use as he saw fit. Legge considered this was acting in bad faith toward the contributors. On October 16 the Hong Kong LMS committee had held a troubled meeting in which Legge and Hirschberg battled over the money that had been donated. Chalmers as secretary of the local committee sent London the Minutes reporting the conflicts, which were "mostly of a very painful kind".

In the meeting Hirschberg became aggressive and argued that the local committee had no authority over how he spent the funds, the money was a matter solely between him and his Chinese donors. Hobson, chair of the meeting, told Hirschberg that he was wrong in believing that the local LMS committee had no authority over the hospital fund account, and that Hirschberg had acted improperly. Legge was very upset, but offered that if Hirschberg would acknowledge he had acted wrongly, Legge would release some money from the Leicester funds sent to him by his brother George. If Hirschberg would not acknowledge his errors, Legge would not release any money and would not seek donations for Hirschberg's work.

In the end Legge released money from the Leicester fund and paid the contractor, but he insisted that the local committee review the whole matter and this further infuriated Hirschberg. He complained to London that the meeting broke up late that Saturday night 16 October without prayer because of the conflicts. In fact the meeting was disrupted in dismay because Mary Legge's condition had become grave as she attempted to give birth to her seventh child.

Hobson wrote a private letter to the Directors on 28 October explaining that Dr. Hirschberg had become a problem in the mission both in terms of his attitudes and his actions. Hirschberg only acknowledged under protest that he acted imprudently and wrongly in serious disputes with Legge. Hobson's view was that Hirschberg acted "very injudiciously, and as he was manifestly in the wrong" it should have been easy for him to say so and all could have been settled. But Hirschberg stubbornly refused and intended to force the issue on the Directors. Hirschberg complained that Legge acted like a "dictator and Pope" over him but Dr. Hobson disagreed: "so far as I have seen (Legge) has shown more consideration for (Hirschberg's) feelings than any other previous

colleague associated with him; and this chiefly to avoid giving him cause for offense or complaint”.

In Dr. Hobson’s view the real conflict between Legge and Hirschberg “was from the utter uncongeniality of their minds, and from want of mutual understanding of each other”. Hirschberg was “exceedingly obstinate – nothing will turn him either in opinion or action when he decides upon the course he will take”. Hobson noted that he had never asked the LMS to transfer Dr. Hirschberg to help Hobson’s medical mission in Canton even though he needed another doctor there, because Hobson had long realized that Hirschberg could not work effectively. Originally Hobson had been a supporter of Hirschberg’s appointment as an LMS mission doctor because he had good medical training and because he had a sound Jewish background who had converted to Christianity and would therefore be “likely to bear a strong testimony to the truth of both old and new testament history”. Unfortunately Hirschberg identified himself “more in manner, conversation & habits with the German” than with the “people of God”.

Chalmers, Hirschberg, and Legge were all so upset by this meeting that each one wrote London to give an account. Legge was so disgusted with the struggle that he asked the directors in London to release him from all further business aspects of the mission and leave him to work only on spiritual matters.

Late that night and the next day Legge was devastated by a far worse event.

#### Mary’s death October 17, 1852

Mary’s health had been fragile in March 1852 in the early stages of her seventh pregnancy, then she recovered normal vigour until September when her mouth tissues became inflamed and tender (suggesting gestational diabetes), and her gut unstable. By early October she began vomiting and had trouble retaining any kind of nourishment, losing strength every day. She was wracked by diarrhoea on October 10 that was accompanied by more violent vomiting, and this continued uncontrollably for more than a week until she finally went into premature labour in the early hours of October 17. Although she passed through the labour with “ease and safety” within an hour and delivered a four-week premature son, tragically he was dead, stillborn.

After she was delivered Legge realized that her doctors were still very anxious about her condition, and when she became briefly excited and delirious, he was horrified when Hobson told him that the doctors feared she was dying. Her debilitated condition was made more grave by significant haemorrhage during and after delivery. “She got weaker and weaker, and her mind wandered, awaking to fitful gleams of consciousness.... About five o’clock she turned upon her side without much effort and so

she lay for an hour, sobbing, as it were... As six o'clock drew near, her sobs came less and less frequent and at that hour they stopped".

Despite the careful and devoted attentions of Drs. Balfour and Hobson and their wives, Mary died at 5:30 on Sunday morning October 17. Mary was only 35 years old, and this was the fourth child she had lost. She had suffered stillbirths in December 1843 and February 1845, her daughter Anne had died in September 1848 less than a year old, and now both she and her new son were dead.

Hobson wrote the LMS a touching depiction of the scene:

"It was a most painful scene to witness – the husband weeping over his beloved Mary now unconsciously dosing (sic) into the sleep of death – the dear children Eliza and Mary suddenly awoke from a calm sleep, and sobbing were ushered before their dying mother. Eliza received her few last words "teach your little sister to love Jesus", and around the bed were her most loved and sympathizing friends Dr. Balfour, Mrs. Chalmers, Mrs. Hobson and myself; of these, I outwardly perhaps shewed the most feeling, for I was vividly reminded of the sad and heart-rending scene I had also passed through in the British Channel in December 1845<sup>29</sup>, and how could I restrain my tears and sorrow for the poor afflicted husband, who was now beginning to realize that relentless Death was actually taking away from him the precious partner of his life."

Hobson wrote Mary's parents that "death... overcame her as by sleep... her dear husband bowed his face & hands over her, and, in the most affecting manner, called upon her to speak to him, and hearing a little gurgling still, said with a faltering voice, "No! She is not dead! She is not dead!" But alas! His wife was dead, & he was soon obliged to relax his hold"... and with sobbing and strong cries left the room to pour his sorrows into the ear of God" (Author, 1853).

Mary was buried in the Colonial Cemetery where her grave may still be seen in Happy Valley (Section 9), near her baby Annie who had died in September 1848. Her symptoms seem consistent with what is now termed pre-eclampsia, a dangerous metabolic disorder of pregnancy in which significant protein is found in the urine, and

---

<sup>29</sup> Hobson's first wife died in the English Channel just off Dover and hours from reaching landfall, as they returned to the UK because of her illness.

the mother experiences increasingly high blood pressure that may lead to seizures. Both the kidneys and liver are damaged as the condition worsens, and ultimately both the mother and child are poisoned. For women prone to the disorder, each pregnancy increases the risk of death of both mother and foetus. This is still a serious disorder in modern times, and the only “cure” for the mother is the removal of the foetus either through miscarriage, abortion, or birth.

Later James wrote Mary’s parents “It was nearly eleven o’clock when I left the bedroom. Perhaps, she felt then some premonitions of approaching labour, for her bidding me good night was very tender. She wanted to know where I was going to sleep, and hoped I might be comfortable, for I must be very tired; and then she put up her hand, and put it round my neck, and stroked my head gently two or three times. Oh, how I yearned over her as I left the room, but it did not enter into my mind that she was about to die”.

James was devastated. The fluent linguist was close to speechless with the intensity of his loss. “She died in my arms. We are dumb with silence, ... She was to me a most tenderly attached wife”. Later that day he wrote “I would not belie the gospel I preach to others; - there is a great comfort in Christianity to mourners; - yet I find it is one thing to preach this comfort, and another to prove and feel it. ... Eliza and Mary feel their calamity deeply; but they are as cheerful as they can be, on my account; and thus we are acting upon each other...” Eventually he wrote a long torrential letter of anguish back to his family. Although he tried to insert a more hopeful Christian tone at the end, Hobson’s account belied that.

Hobson was deeply depressed by this event, which reminded him of all the other premature deaths in mission families including his own, with Mary, like all of those others “cut down in her prime”. He tried to invoke Christian beliefs, for “doubtless her emancipated spirit is now perfectly happy among the redeemed in Paradise”, but quickly reverted to mournful thoughts of her loss, an echo of his own loss of his wife seven years earlier just as they neared the English coast.

Chalmers and his wife were also desolate over Mary’s sudden death. It also “made a deep impression on the community here”, James wrote Mary’s parents a week later. “I lie stunned by the bereavement. In the past I see only one bright image, and the future appears a dreary blank.” Her father Dr. Morison printed the anguished letter in the mission journal the following March, along with letters of rich tribute to Mary from the Bishop of Victoria in Hong Kong, from the American Baptist Mission in Hong Kong, and from Dr. Hobson and Chalmers and his wife. That December her father printed a long essay describing her, which apart from praising her character, also suggested that she



had a very active intelligence and intellectual confidence, adding another dimension to the breadth and depth of the powerful connections between James and Mary.

The necessities of daily family and mission life soon exacted a return to regular tasks, and ten days later Chalmers was able to report that “Dear Dr. Legge has borne this stroke with, I think, more than common Christian fortitude”. That Sunday morning the weekly tasks continued to press, and although Legge asked John Chalmers to preach at the morning service, by evening Legge was ready to do his job in the evening service. He preached on I Thessalonians: 4, 13-18, verses declaring that the death of Christians meant heavenly union with Christ “wherefore comfort one another with these words”. Mrs. Chalmers took over the Chinese girls’ school that Mary had run.

Mary’s death left Legge with severely practical domestic problems in addition to his terrific emotional loss. He was now a 36-year-old widower with three young daughters, Eliza now 12, Mary 10, and Emma, only two years old. Mrs. Chalmers cared for them in a temporary arrangement, but everyone understood they would have to be sent to Britain.

#### Hirschberg problems continue

Throughout these shocking events Hirschberg raged on about the donations problem in his single-minded way. His amazingly stubborn and unfeeling nature is revealed when in the morning of Mary Legge’s earlier death he wrote both Legge and Hobson insisting on a private meeting before the afternoon. Hobson answered that Legge wished “to be retired from all business matters right now – but will meet you briefly – as long as it is not regarding painful business matters”. Hirschberg doggedly pressed for a meeting on his business concerns, so Hobson met with him.

Hirschberg claimed that Legge had carried a grudge against Hirschberg for years because Hirschberg had invited acerbic editor Andrew Shortrede to Hirschberg’s wedding, which involved a wedding dinner put on by the Legges in their mission quarters, and Hirschberg believed that Legge considered Shortrede his enemy. Hirschberg also alleged that printer Cole told Hirschberg that Legge had spoken disparagingly of Hirschberg as “a Jew” and as a “half-educated man without any sense of propriety”. Hirschberg claimed that Legge even agreed that he might have said something like that when he found out Hirschberg was running a private medical practise, an activity that both Legge and Dr. Hobson had always completely opposed in mission doctors. To Hirschberg this proved that Legge held a deep animosity toward him that was responsible for all their differences. He ended by begging to be exempted from all business meetings with Legge.

Ten days after Mary's death Hirschberg wrote a long angry letter to London giving his version of events. He opened by expressing pro forma sentiments: "the death of our highly esteemed and much beloved Mrs. Legge has quite stunned and upset us", then quickly launched an attack on Legge. Hirschberg had tried to prevent the local committee meeting in which his fund management was challenged, arguing that he considered the matter trivial. He knew that some money was coming from Leicester to Legge for the missions, and Hirschberg assumed it would all be applied to the hospital construction costs. It is clear from his letter that he understood the Leicester money was not general LMS money but a special fund under the direct control of Legge, but regardless, Hirschberg told of events in a way that suggested Legge was lying, then confessed within sentences that he had paid the builder for benches even after the building had been stopped incomplete because the builder ran out of building money. That is, Hirschberg was paying out moneys for things that had not been contracted and were not part of the building plan, while withholding basic construction money. He argued this on the grounds that the Chinese donations were his to use as he saw fit even though they had been part of the mission construction plan, refusing to recognize that the Leicester donations sent to Legge were of a different sort and Legge's to apply as the mission saw fit.

Hirschberg's difficult personal style was further complicated by his inability to learn Chinese. Although Hobson believed Hirschberg was a sincere Christian who wished to do good, Hobson wrote, "his mind is warped by early prejudices and his energies (which perhaps were never very active), have been impaired by idle habits as a German student, and in this country by the debilitating effects of climate. He was now looking thin and much older than he should for age 39", and was subject to fainting.

Legge also wrote the LMS of this conflict on 28 October, 11 days after Mary's death, a conflict that had cost him "...more agitation and pain than I could describe". When the mission signed the contracts for the new buildings they had all agreed that donations would be put to the building. Hirschberg had asked if money could be kept back from the building fund for medicines and Legge had told him that was impossible, "we could not apply money contributed for one purpose to another". When Hirschberg kept back donations that had been provided to pay the contractor so he could use it instead for interior finishings, that behaviour was "a great and utterly unprovoked breach of faith". Legge wrote "I would be willing to give him some of the Leicester money later for fitting up the hospital". Tellingly, Asow, who actually did most of the collections from the Chinese donors, was equally indignant at Hirschberg's behaviour.

Fund accounting in the missions

This problem of general or targeted donation funds is a frequent problem in charitable donations. It dogged the contemporary Red Cross in the United States when some of the donations made for Hurricane Katrina victims were applied to other disasters. It relates to an aspect of funding that went beyond the differences between capital and operating budgets. While the particular agreements and individual actions in the LMS hospital construction project contributed to Legge's conflict with Hirschberg, at another level it also concerned the general problem of special fund accounts within the operations of LMS missions, and the extent to which an individual mission man had the authority to manage special funds he had solicited, independently of the wishes of the local committee. The history of these special funds was littered with problems across LMS mission history, as Legge had discovered in Malacca when he tried to untangle the mess left behind with the death of Evans.

Arising from those events Legge had strong views about the careful management of mission money, special purpose funds, and the responsibilities to donors arising out of specific fund-raising campaigns. He may have disliked Hirschberg for his lethargic attention to the original hospital and his secret private practise, but his indignation about Hirschberg's use of the hospital building fund was undoubtedly genuine and based on longstanding principles. It was not the "trivial" matter that Hirschberg claimed, either in principle or in practise where it jeopardized the mission's ability to pay the contractor and thus the mission's reputation in the community.

Legge also rejected Hirschberg's claim that Legge always disagreed with him. Instead he wrote, he "always" tried to agree with Hirschberg but had been forced to say "No" to him on only two occasions. In the first event, Hirschberg had stopped working in the LMS hospital on Morrison Hill in 1849 because he was troubled by its funding, with some money coming from the MMSC which had support from some Canton opium merchants, and was far from the Chinese community it was intended to serve. Legge had accepted this as reasonable, yet within six months Hirschberg was proposing to move back into the LMS hospital and sought approval from the local committee. Hobson was strongly opposed to this, as was Rev. Burns, the English Presbyterian minister who had originally urged Hirschberg to leave the Morrison Hill location because it was too far from the Chinese community. Hobson and Legge reminded Hirschberg of the reasons he originally left the location. If he persisted in his plan, they would consult London.

Hirschberg considered the matter and then told them that prayer had guided him to drop the plan, but in fact he had secretly written a private letter to the hospital trustees claiming that it was only because of the committee's opposition that he was dropping the plan. A trustee then complained to Legge and Hobson about their "undue

constraint” of Hirschberg’s plans. For the next 18 months after that conflict Hirschberg withdrew from mission services in the Chinese chapel and only attended a rare prayer meeting or monthly mission committee meeting. Against this background of disputes, it was not clear what Hirschberg was thinking when he proposed to London that he wanted approval to withdraw from the mission business activities, because he had been largely absent from them for nearly two years.

The other occasion on which Legge said “no” to Hirschberg was in mid-1851 after he secretly set up a private practise and solicited a German shipping company to recruit patients for him. A local doctor finally told Legge of this, and he wrote “I could afterward trace many disingenuous manoeuvres by which Dr. Hirschberg managed to keep me in ignorance of his proceedings”. Dr. Balfour, a member of the LMS congregation at Union Church had tried to dissuade Hirschberg because of the “impropriety of his course” but Hirschberg refused to stop. Dr. Hobson was even more indignant, explaining that Hobson and Hirschberg had talked in England of the impropriety of mission doctors running private medical practises and Hirschberg had assured Hobson that he shared his strong views against this. A Christian doctor in their community was so scandalized by Hirschberg’s actions he was considering getting up a petition against Hirschberg and sending it to the LMS. He told Legge using irony, that he would be happy to add £250 p.a. to his own income by setting up a Chinese hospital for the LMS and supported by an LMS salary, then running it only in time he could spare from his private practise. Both agreed that a mission doctor’s obligation was full-time and his mission salary arose from his commitment to the mission.

Hobson and Legge met with Hirschberg and outlined the problem with his secret private practise. At first he defended his actions, claiming he intended to use the income for the LMS Chinese hospital. This seemed unlikely as he was very antagonistic during the interview, and in the end he agreed to give up the private practise when Legge suggested the matter should be referred to London. He was not convinced that Hirschberg understood what the problem was, and suspected he dropped his private practice only because of the possibility that London would learn of his actions.

Legge was also upset because Hirschberg had manipulated departing printer Cole into various machinations against Legge. Cole told Hirschberg he was leaving Hong Kong only because of Legge’s “unkindness”, although the day before Cole left he had visited the newly widowed Legge at home, expressed many consoling sentiments and offering to send various publications from California upon arrival there.

The problem was now what to do with Dr. Hirschberg. He had left the LMS hospital in Hong Kong to work in some loose and erratic connection with Gutzlaff across

the harbour in Kowloon, but Gutzlaff was now dead and his CU dismantled. Dr. Hobson refused to allow Hirschberg to do medical work in the Canton mission because he did not trust Hirschberg's medical skills. The Shanghai mission refused to accept him because Hirschberg, whose Chinese was dismal, wanted a very literal translation of the new Chinese Bible and opposed the version that had been so arduously constructed by the expert translators in the Shanghai LMS. Legge concluded that Dr. Hirschberg "has nothing about him to render him a congenial labourer... in China". Legge begged London to abolish the medical mission in Hong Kong because no one could work with Hirschberg, and having him live in the mission without participating in any of its activities "could only produce consequences worse than any that have yet happened".

Legge worried about his own role in the conflict, aware that the Directors might see him as "a man of strife". "There must be sins with me as great as with others, which breed again & again this falling out. I must bear whatever burden is put upon me, but I really am for peace. My heart's desire and prayer is that I may love my missionary brethren, and be loved by them. The differences that have arisen between others, & me at Malacca and here have given me much unhappiness. They have made me doubt often whether I was called by God into this ministry. They made me and my dear wife sigh often for rest elsewhere. I must have committed many errors. Many chastisements by God have fallen on me." He viewed these problems as direct punishment for his behaviour.

John Chalmers also wrote of this conflict and attempted to guide the Directors in their analysis of the problem by reviewing all the efforts he and the other men had made to achieve reconciliation between Legge and Hirschberg. When those efforts failed the remaining men evaluated which party to the strife had contributed more to the problems, agreeing that it was Hirschberg and "Legge was vindicated". Further, Hirschberg was now so disaffected that leaving him in the Hong Kong mission would be worse than disastrous because he had now become a purveyor of Cole's "scandalous falsehoods" about Legge. Chalmers noted that James and Mary had provided their home and hospitality to Hirschberg and his bride for their wedding, covering all the costs, yet in Hirschberg's twisted view he and his bride had conferred their favours on the Legges in accepting their offer. Chalmers noted that Hirschberg made things worse by inviting a man (Shortrede) to the wedding banquet at Legge's home whom he knew had acted very badly against Legge, and whom he knew Mary specifically did not want "at her table". Hirschberg's tone-deafness to emotion and morality showed up again on the day after Mary's death, when he arrived at Legge's mission home offering to forgive Legge and "to

forget”, never acknowledging any wrongs were on Hirschberg’s side. Chalmers was clearly disgusted with him.

London solved the problem by transferring Hirschberg to Xiamen. In late March 1853 Dr. Hirschberg accepted London’s instructions to join Alex Stronach there, but he now had a long list of new complaints. He argued the move would upset his wife’s “little school”, he would take a long time to become useful because he would have to learn a new dialect, there was a problem over what to do with the unexpended donations he was holding, explained away his low “patient count” as arising from the bad location of the old hospital, and complained about the wording in the local Hong Kong Committee Minutes about some of its meetings.

The local committee tried to be helpful and authorized Hirschberg to take medicines to Xiamen that had been purchased using Hong Kong donations. The transfer was delayed however when he suffered from swollen glands, then dysentery and an inflamed liver so disabling in April and May that he couldn’t work or leave, although a 3-week holiday in Macau helped. Then in May just as he was getting ready to leave the British vice-consul in Xiamen sent word that 3,000 insurgents were only 30 miles away and all Britons were evacuated onto ships pending the attack the rebels had scheduled for May 22. Hirschberg and Legge continued to quarrel about money; it seems Legge had become so suspicious of Hirschberg’s handling of the donations Agong had collected for the hospital, that he now questioned every kind of expenditure that Hirschberg charged to the mission. Hirschberg and his wife finally left, arriving at Xiamen in late June after the rebels had taken it and foreigners discovered they were not at risk.

#### Legge and the LMS Press

In a third letter to the Directors all on the same day in late October 1852 Legge buried his mourning and turned his remaining energies to the major printing tasks facing the mission. He was using a new grant to print the completed *New Testament* in a smaller format than the clumsy octavo size used in Medhurst & Gutzlaff’s 1836 version. This required more paper in the new smaller size and there were problems getting it. Chinese paper was made from bamboo and the previous year had been too dry for good bamboo crops. That scarcity was compounded by the rebellion going on in the bamboo regions of Guangxi, so the price of paper had risen. Legge justified his concern for quality paper, explaining that educated Chinese would not give any credibility to works printed badly on cheap paper.

Legge also explained that London could not expect the new Bibles to be sold despite the claims of Gutzlaff and his Christian Union, “...a single dollar has not yet been paid by the Chinese people for copies of the Sacred Scriptures”. There was a good

Chinese market for books on practical useful topics that might include some scriptures, but both the LMS and the Bible Societies had to understand that Chinese Bibles would not sell, but would need total subsidy.

On the positive side, the translation woes seemed to be ended and Legge was relieved to report that a good manuscript version of the *Old Testament* was now completed, so the whole Bible was now finished. The Delegates' Version as it became known long after Boone had splintered the real delegates' group, was now ready to enter history for a run of more than seven decades. In China the LMS men still referred to it as the Shanghai Bible because the Shanghai LMS men, Medhurst, Stronach, and Milne basically did most of the work on it.

#### Legge reviews the South China missions

Legge was now alone with his three surviving children in the Hong Kong mission house still suffused with the loss of Mary. To help lift his children's spirits he took them to visit the Hobsons in Canton for a few weeks in mid-November 1852. He admired the excellent hospital Hobson had established, with more than 200 patients seen daily, but realized that the entire operation depended on one man. Hobson suffered recurrent fevers, and Legge again contemplated moving the Hong Kong mission to Canton to help Hobson and consolidate the LMS efforts in south China rather than having two fragile missions.

Hong Kong was still suffering a major recession, the MES School had collapsed, the MMSC had disbanded, the LMS hospital had collapsed, and the American missions had largely pulled out. Now Legge even regretted the original 1842 move to Hong Kong rather than Canton, and the establishment of the Union Church. The error in placing high hopes on Hong Kong had not been unique to the LMS, as even merchants and politicians had miscalculated the prospects there and were also leaving now that circumstances had changed. He was depressed at the thought of all the problems facing the missions, and even though he recommended moving to Canton he was not convinced there was any good solution.

Legge was also still raw and suffering from the loss of his wife. "The house is shorn of its brightness. I attend to my duties in it with an aching heart. I seem to be living in a tomb." "Who can estimate my loss? My wife, whose heart was all my own, my wise counsellor, the loving anxious mother, is no more". Another miserable reality was the imminent loss of his children. He needed to send his children back to the UK because without a mother their chances of survival in steamy Hong Kong with its sudden deadly fevers and dysentery, were too horrific to consider. Mary's death and the departure of their daughters meant two other significant changes. Less housing would be needed in

the Hong Kong mission, and Legge would have his salary cut back to the single man level even though he still had children to support. He wrote in December asking the LMS to help him pay the cost of sending the children home to Britain. Legge's life had been shattered and his losses were spreading out in widening circles as this terrible year ended.

The two LMS South China medical missions were very active and effective in Shanghai and Canton during 1850-1852. Lockhart reported on the 1850 operations of his Shanghai hospital, fully operating all across the dreadful translation battles. He saw nearly 10,000 patients that year for a cost of just under \$400. Severely polluted city canal water caused many diseases, then when city officials ordered workers to clean the canals, the filth was simply piled up on the shores, the stench became horrific, and massive fever outbreaks developed. Both Lockhart and Hobson used quinine to remedy fevers, which included malaria.

Dr. Lockhart discussed interesting customs that he encountered, noting the very common phenomenon of Chinese committing suicide in order to cast blame and shame on another, a "revenge suicide", often over fairly minor quarrels. Many cases came to him wanting to be cured of opium addiction and he outlined his treatment program for them. Lockhart had also discovered that chloroform was not very effective in heavy users of opium. Medical cases included many severe skin infections and ulcers so deep into the flesh they were fatal. In cases close to death the Chinese local doctors left their patients so they could not be blamed for the deaths, and these dying cases were brought to the mission.

Social and weather conditions also affected the medical practice and its wider mission. Because of crop failures in 1849 the poor began starving in the winter and Dr. Lockhart's hospital and other missions distributed huge quantities of rice. In Edinburgh an activist gave an assertive lecture on medical missions, warning them against creating idleness through giving food and clothing, rather than just providing simple medical treatment. In response Lockhart felt compelled to pre-empt any such criticism of allegedly increasing beggary and idleness. "Nothing can be plainer than that we are doing men unquestionable good, in restoring them to health, strength, sight, hearing, the use of their limbs and of their senses.... Our charity brings no degradation to the recipient... it fosters no vice and represses no right or virtuous feeling". The modern debate on the nature and scale of humanitarian help is an echo of this longstanding issue in international development aid programs, where critics still complain of the creation of a culture of dependence.



Hobson's hospital in Canton saw more than 25,000 Chinese patients in 1850, costing \$370. He was also giving Chinese students medical lectures in Chinese and working on his Chinese physiology textbook, while running an active church providing sermons four times a week. Canton had a British population of around 81 mostly merchants, while another 89 lived on board ships at Whampoa. In addition there were 149 British Indian subjects living in Canton, mostly Parsi merchants, with 39 as servants.

#### Hobson's medical texts: Popular and pirated

In 1852 Hobson published his second Chinese textbook, and his 1851 physiology and 1852 anatomy texts were so popular within the educated Chinese community that they were immediately pirated and plagiarized. First a wealthy Canton businessman Puan Szeching pirated the book, deleting all the religious components but printing everything else. He commissioned fresh woodcuts for the anatomical drawings, but ignorant cutters did them and Hobson found they had introduced major errors concerning the skeleton and the circulatory system.

Governor Ye was also pirating the books, also ordering new sets of wood blocks cut to print them to use as gifts to friends and officials. In his Introduction to his pirated version of Hobson's text Ye announced that the 271 illustrations organized into 8 scrolls would "be useful to those studying the healing arts". The eight picture scrolls were signed by Ye's father, a highly respected old scholar who lived in the official compound with the viceroy, and this added to the distinction given to the book. Ye wrote of the text and its illustrations "The following words aptly characterize them: the ten thousand springs of life are here disclosed; the entire frame is opened to view; the internal and external parts are discriminated; the form supplies a guide to nature's principles, what seems unreal, is shown to be established. Now for the first time, we have beheld such delineations. Ours does not equal the art of this benevolent man". This was surely an amazing tribute to Hobson.

Hobson was pleased with the wide distribution of his books and especially grateful that the official approvals of them meant the Protestant missions would gain some goodwill, goodwill they needed to catch up to that traditionally reserved for the Roman Catholics with their high-status connections. Hobson was stoical about the piracies. "No one has asked me for right to copy and it is well that (I have) neither the power nor the disposition to prosecute for the infringement of the laws of copyright". Hobson had a new grant from Scotland to use for more drawings and had hired Chinese woodcutters to draw about 100 new illustrations based on the most current British textbooks. He was amused to quote a local review of his textbook, in which the Chinese

critic noted with condescension “...that passage in which he (Hobson) states that the moral qualities of courage and decision have no dependence on the size of the gall-bladder. Is he ignorant that this fact, according to the old writings...was ascertained by post-mortem examinations?”

Three different Chinese officials now pirated and plagiarized Hobson’s texts providing no acknowledgment of his authorship, and he sent copies of these to the LMS for its museum, reckoning that this rapid and multiple reprinting probably set a record. The book was now “circulating through the 18 provinces, and chiefly by the natives themselves”.

### Legge sends his surviving children to Britain

James Legge was 37 years old in 1853, had now lost his wife and four children to premature deaths, and faced the reality that his three remaining daughters had to return to Britain to the care of his family and friends. In the spirit of the times it was considered that this was the only plan. Eliza, Mary, and young Emma (2) were sent off in March 1853 along with mission wife Mrs. Muirhead and a Chinese girl and man as staff to help them, on the cheapest sailing voyage.

Legge’s share of the £190 travel costs for the group was £90, and he hoped the LMS could find some departing mission family to employ the male servant for his return journey. The older girls were being sent to Dr. and Mrs. John Morison, his wife’s parents in England, while toddler Emma would live north in Huntly with James’ brother John and his wife, and be a part of Rev. Troup’s congregation: “my youngest darling will become one of the lambs of your flock”. Legge was still interested in Scotland, ruing the huge movement of young Scotsmen south into England to get rich, leaving Scotland with “uphill work”.

### Chapter 34 Legge, mission men, and the Taiping rebellion

*In which Legge and other mission men become interested in the Taiping rebellion and Legge's closest Chinese friend becomes a major figure.*

#### Turmoil in China, drama in Japan

James Legge was now alone, grieving, and desolate, but in the rigours of life in Hong Kong he had little time to retreat, and was soon called back into more turbulent events that included the rising rebellion in China, which was becoming more widespread and serious. The huge emerging rebellion in south China affected Hong Kong. Rebels were very active in the two Kwangs in 1852, although Governor-General Sü had reported to the Emperor that all was under control. Rebels at times asked for pardon, explaining that they only robbed because they were starving as high rains had destroyed their crops, and there was truth in this claim that the Governor-General ignored. But the rebellion grew and in February 1852 the rebels were sufficiently in control of the communities along the Pearl delta south of Canton that they were levying taxes. Ye, the Governor of Canton, was now widely seen as incompetent, hiding and sending memos to the emperor, and all Canton ridiculed and laughed at him.

Other Asian communities in the region were also the source of dangers, and the continuing isolation of Japan led to a bizarre incident in 1852 when a British ship wrecked on the coast of Japan. One dead sailor was salted and boxed at the crash site and sent 2,000 miles to the Nagasaki courthouse where he was examined then buried. The remaining sailors were taken in cages through streets of Nagasaki, then five miles to a jail. All the living were finally released and put on a Dutch boat in December.

But it was the China of the Qing dynasty that was suffering from rapid population growth, crop failures, massive governmental corruption, and incompetence in managing transportation and public service needs. The new Xianfeng Emperor, age 19 had inherited problems in south China that included a growing famine, great struggles between farmers and landlords, and recalcitrant and corrupt officials. Rebellion had been stirring for some time in the southern provinces, and the Governor of Canton province and the Governor-General of the two Kwangs were not managing the problem. In 1850 the Emperor sent rehabilitated diligent honest official Lin south again to take charge of the problem, but unfortunately this competent official died on the way to his new appointment. The people were ripe for a leader who could promise a better life, and under Hong Xiuquan (1814-1864) this unrest developed into a massive rebellion for a new government to be called the Great Peace Heavenly Kingdom (*Taiping Tianguo*, shortened to Taiping or "Great Peace").

In Canton Governor-General Sü was facing many problems. The rebels were gaining strength in his two provinces and Qing officials were fleeing. He was furious to receive an essay tossed into his carriage from a group of *literati* calling on him to work harder for the benefit of the people to control the rebels, and even more enraged to discover they had circulated it widely. They announced they would refuse to compete in the next round of civil service exams as a public act.

Scholars were expected to act with great propriety because their skills allowed them high status, and withdrawing participation in the examinations was regarded as close to treason. As Sü had to report this to the Emperor, he justified his situation by claiming the disaffected were just a bunch of whining malcontents whose Western Lake college had not received a government grant. He claimed that the year earlier the college had been given a special grant of moneys that had been collected for charity grain, when there was more money than needed. The following year a greater sum was needed for grain purchases so there was no excess to provide to the college, and this generated their fury. Sü was surprised to discover more than 80 of the city's top intellectuals were connected to the assertive essay, and decided on a pre-emptive strike of his own. He would forbid all college students from access to the exams as punishment to all the faculty and students of the colleges in the same district.

#### Taiping rebels in the first few years

In the early years the Taiping rebels had been quite successful across southern China, culminating in their capture of Nanking by 1853, which they established as their capital, complete with full civil service and even civil service examinations. Continuing vicious battles however, between the Qing dynasty and the Taiping rebels would keep China swathed in blood for more than a decade. Eventually tens of millions were massacred across a period of 15 years. During those years Qing officials would at times harass foreign missionaries and at other times would hire their equally foreign countrymen as soldiers to fight against the rebels.

In 1850 Ye Mingchen (1807 – 1859) was the Qing Governor of Canton province, and he quickly developed a reputation as a bloody tyrant in dealing with the rebels. They had captured Foshan, a small city southwest of Canton. As representative of the Qing and governor of Canton, Ye had the job of holding on to power, and he used mass executions as his main tool to punish and terrorize possible rebels and any villages that supported them. Every month across 1852 and 1853 he put hundreds to death, eventually beheading tens of thousands. Beheading was a bloody but particularly powerful tool because traditional Chinese beliefs held that when a body appeared in the

afterlife with some part missing this was evidence of bad behaviour, thus a headless spirit would be automatically sent to hell. Cases were known when a father committed suicide to punish his son knowing the courts would find the son responsible for the father's death and then behead him (Yates, 1868).

In December 1854 the Taiping had Canton under siege, destroyed the Imperial flotillas and controlled the whole length of the Pearl River, cutting off all supplies to the city and getting ready to attack the city. This destruction of civil life in Canton had the effect of sending many of the affluent Chinese fleeing to the safety of Hong Kong, where they established new businesses and bought homes.

The rigidity of the Qing dynasty thus had paradoxical effects on Hong Kong over time. Originally the persistent refusal of the Qing to follow through on the Treaty of Nanking and allow freer trade at Canton set Hong Kong into a decline. Over time the Qing's equally persistent failure to negotiate better conditions with its own people as internal problems increased, reversed the effects of the trade ban and set a great wave of prosperity in motion for Hong Kong. Prosperous Chinese merchants and their families fled there and established homes, businesses, and trade that began to fill up the streets with buildings and people, a new prosperity very visible to Legge.

The mission men were very interested in the Taiping movement but it took some time before they understood it, and their opinions went through a number of changes as new events occurred and new information became available. The Protestant missionaries had a natural sympathy for the hard-pressed Chinese people, were deeply aware of the corruptions of the Qing dynasty, and shared the European traders' frustration with the Qing government. In particular they shared frustration with its failure to honour the Treaty of Nanking's provision permitting Europeans to enter Canton. The LMS additionally represented a grass-roots egalitarianism that would normally distrust strongly hierarchical systems as represented by the dying dynasty. To top off matters, early in the rebellion it appeared that the rebel leader might be a Christian, or at least have some Christian ideas although the information was murky.

In late 1852 Medhurst wrote a brief history of the Taiping rebellion dating its origins to 1850. In an optimistic report he concluded that the rebellion was not a political movement against the Emperor, but was in support of religious freedom. He understood that the rebel chief Hong Xiuquan (1814-1864) had been reading an old Christian pamphlet that Liang Fa had written during his earliest days with the LMS mission in Malacca, and was happy to report that one branch of the rebels even called itself the *shangdi* society. Rev. Smith, the recently arrived Bishop of Victoria, Hong Kong, expressed great hopes for the rebellion because of its putatively Christian origins.

Rev. Muirhead wrote in June 1853 that the Taiping refused to allow Roman Catholic worship because it involved idols, they destroyed pictures of Jesus and Mary, and removed priests, and this encouraged the Protestant mission men to think that their competitors might be removed. Hong Xiuquan had some earlier connections with Protestant missions, but the influence of the missions on him was rather tangled.

### The rebels of Shanghai

Shanghai was faced with a different group of rebels in September 1853, and LMS man Milne reported on a visit to their camp in September 9-15, just days after they took power there. They were members of a local secret society who had initially been collected together by Shanghai's Taoutai (mayor). He had them armed and trained as a militia to protect the city, then ran out of money to support them. They had now become skilled fighters well aware of the weakness of the Imperial Manchu forces, and began to operate as a Triad, the "small swords society", fomenting riots in the city. Their leaders were known to have very bad reputations in the city and the Taoutai was unable to buy their loyalty, so prosperous Chinese began fleeing for safety despite the cordon the Taoutai had set up. These rebels had no fixed allegiances, sometimes claiming alliance with the Taiping and other times declaring their allegiance to the "Great Ming" dynasty. They were opium users in distinction to the Taiping, but shared a common desire to destroy the Manchu dynasty. They disarmed, slaughtered and dispersed the Shanghai mandarins in a fast surprise attack, then announced an amnesty. The Shanghainese at first welcomed these local rebels because they were so disgusted with the Taoutai's incompetence, and allowed them to carry on their usual pursuits, but soon loathed their new rulers as being equally bad. The Imperial forces made attempts to recapture the city

Around the time that Dr. Hirschberg arrived on Xiamen in June 1853, other insurgents had captured the island and there was initially mass slaughter of hundreds until the foreigners there made successful representations for peace. The hospital he set up was soon treating the victims from both sides of the conflict.

During this the LMS presses in Hong Kong and Shanghai went into massive printing operations with the new Chinese Bible, still using bullock power in Shanghai to operate their press. In addition Legge decided to send several Chinese Christians from his Hong Kong mission to Shanghai with the task of communicating with the Taiping so that they could arrange for a missionary to go to Nanking. He sent Keuh Agong and Ng Asow, who met with no success over six months and returned to Legge.

Independent rebellions were taking place around the same time, with various secret societies attacking and capturing Xiamen in June and Shanghai in the late

summer 1853. These rebels made an attempt to abduct Rev. Hamberg's wife but he "baffled" the attempt "by a large display of firearms". Kidnappers believed that foreigners loved their wives much more than Chinese men did, thus would be sure to pay high ransoms for kidnapped wives (Lechler, 1877). This episode prevented the abduction of Hamberg's wife but the stress of all the events shattered his health and he soon died in May 1854. It soon became apparent these raiders were not Taiping but were local opium users and "idolaters". Legge despaired that "the whole country is falling into great disturbance and anarchy". By September 1853 the PMs of the south China coast understood clearly that the Taiping rebels were not Christian.

In 1854 Legge concluded that nothing further could be done with the insurgents, and that the missions should not take sides in the rebellion but should simply wait for the Chinese people to solve their own disagreements. He wrote little more on the rebellion until late in his life in 1862, when he was disgusted with the British decision to fight on behalf of the Imperial dynasty. He regarded the Manchus as being equally as vicious against the Chinese people as the rebels. "We should not help the Qing do what it cannot do on its own". He predicted that the combination of British and French troops with the Qing army would lead to military victory but "the Chinese people will not be grateful", a general message still apparently not understood by other foreign military adventurers in central Asia in the 21<sup>st</sup>. century. To the extent that the British were now committed to aid the Qing army, Legge wrote, "we should insist on the Qing treating the Taiping and the Chinese people with mercy".

The rebellion was eventually beaten in 1864 and although it took five more decades for the Qing dynasty to fall, the seeds of its destruction had been nurtured in this vast bloodbath. By the time it finally ended through the addition of effective European mercenaries to the Qing forces, this huge and vicious civil war left about 30 million dead. During Mao's time the Taiping rebellion was viewed as a good thing, a heroic rebellion against the usurper Manchu Tartar dynasty in favour of a socialized ancient Chinese system and the precursor to the Communist party, but in more recent times the received view has changed to declare that it was founded on superstition and violence that disrupted social order.

### Hong Xiuquan and Christianity

At the outset it seemed that the rebellion had roots in Christianity. The leader Hong Xiuquan had met Liang Fa of the LMS in 1834 in Canton at a time when Hong had just failed the third examination toward his first civil service degree. In Malacca Liang Fa had been one of the earliest and most successful student Christians of the LMS

station, and he became one link in a long, jumpy set of connections to the bloody rebellion more than three decades later. Liang was ordained as an evangelist, the first Protestant Chinese ordination in China. He had written some Christian pamphlets in 1816 in Malacca, and in 1834 he was distributing them to the candidates including Hong Xiuquan, swarming Canton for their massive examinations. Liang and two friends were quickly attacked by the local mandarins, one friend was killed, and Liang and the other severely beaten, so Liang fled for Singapore and Malacca for many years. At age 24 Hong Xiuquan attempted the exams again in 1837 and again failed, which meant his hopes for a civil service career were ended.

Hong was so devastated by his final exam failure in 1837 that he seems to have suffered what amounts to a psychotic break, young adulthood being the age at which this disorder usually displays. Hong collapsed into an insensible state, had to be carried to his home village, and stayed in bed for some time where he had visions for 40 days that incorporated elements from Liang's old pamphlet. Hong mixed them into a complex and magical belief system that mingled Western ideas of equality and Christian ideas about the cleansing power of the Messiah, with his own mystical ideas about imperviousness to bullets and his literal brotherhood with Christ. He believed that he had gone to Christian heaven, had been washed in a river where he had his heart taken out and a new one put in. He saw the Creator there, an old man with a yellow beard wearing black clothes, who complained of idolatry. The Creator gave Hong a sword to slay idolaters and destroy demons, and Hong told his family the Creator had appointed him Emperor.

Across the late 1830s he, a cousin Hong Rengan, and a friend wandered in Canton province, writing articles demanding equality and creating a "Society for the worship of God". They smashed idols in Confucian temples and gradually collected followers. In 1847 he and Hong Rengan stayed in Canton for a few months with the somewhat primitive Tennessee mission man Rev. Issachar Roberts, returning to Hong's home village in 1847.

Starting in 1851 Hong Xiuquan, helped by a clan-member Feng, led a rebellion to draw attention to the problems facing the peasants. They organized men into an army for their Taiping Kingdom. Hong anointed himself the "Heavenly King" in 1851, said he was the younger brother of Jesus on the basis of his visions, and began attacking towns in Canton province. Shortrede in the *China Mail* asserted in 1852 that the rebellion was finished, but in fact by April 1853 Hong Xiuquan's army had conquered the ancient capital city Nanking west up the Yangzi from Shanghai, as well as Zhenjiang, a large city 30 miles downstream at the significant trade junction with the Grand Canal north. The



Taiping murdered all the 20,000 Manchus they found in Nanking, and Europeans and Chinese in Shanghai feared the worst.

The British were very interested in this new power. Hong Kong Governor Sir George Bonham went up the Yangzi to visit the rebels at Nanking for five days in April 1853, to find out their views of trade and foreigners. He talked at length with the senior of the five Princes, the eastern prince Tung Wang. Tung assured Bonham that the Taiping government was happy to have foreign trade and was not anti-foreign, and promised the army would not head downstream to attack Shanghai. They were opposed to opium and tobacco use, demanding the British throw their cigars overboard. The Taiping control of its members was a bit fragile however, as despite their assurances of friendship and the provision of travel passports, Bonham's steamer the *Hermes* was fired upon by Taiping irregulars as it headed back downstream, an attack followed by urgent apologies. The British were relieved to have assurances about the freedom of trade and the lack of intent to assault Shanghai. In time the Taiping government issued rules separating the sexes, gave women more power, abolished foot-binding, and did some land reform, trying for a period to recreate a lost ancient idyllic time when peasants worked the land communally.

Initially the *North-China Herald*, a new weekly in Shanghai founded in 1850 and the gazette for the British government, was pleasurably excited about the rebels. In early May it reported with approval that the Taiping had thrown out all the old Chinese calendars with their "lucky days" and fortune-telling, had abandoned the use of the Chinese term "barbarian" (*yi*) for foreigners, had Christian beliefs, and took the Ten Commandments as their moral code. Its main reservation was the discovery that the top leaders were allowed concubines. The editor was so thrilled with the "industry, power of self-government, capability of combined action, and really steadfast courage" of the rebels, that he confidently predicted the rebels would embark on a vast program of Asian conquest that would "gradually expel the present populations of the Indian Archipelago" and take possession of those regions "too tropical for the colonization of their only rivals the Anglo-Saxon race". The rebels gave the British delegation some of their religious booklets including a new Taiping version of the Ten Commandments and a copy of Gutzlaff's ancient and awkward translation of 28 chapters of Genesis, all of which had been sent to them a few years earlier by Rev. Hamberg.

The mission men soon began translating these Taiping texts and were less than comforted to learn that the Taiping ruler reported continuing revelations from God. He thought that his mandate was to exterminate the entire Tartar/Manchu race. The British were further discomfited to learn that the Taiping ruler had 36 wives, believed he had

been given seals of office and a holy sword in heaven by God, and that he and his princes practised polygamy, all casting doubt on any Christian basis for the rebellion. The beliefs of the Taiping leaders shifted across time, blending bits of Christianity with Confucian moral rules and a dream of an ancient communal golden age. At this point the British government was neutral on the subject of the rebellion, but there was general confusion among Europeans about the nature of the rebels' beliefs.

### Legge, the Taiping rebellion, and Hong Rengan

Legge had personal experiences with the Taiping rebellion that went far beyond simply hearing the news. With its rampaging insurgents and massive retaliatory Imperial executions, the rebellion was active on the coastal provinces just northwest of Hong Kong across a major part of Legge's life in Hong Kong. It had direct effects on him and deadly effects on some of the Chinese Christians who worked with him. Legge knew that the Taiping were opposed to idolatry and were smashing down Buddhist and Daoist idols and temples, but by early 1853 although they referred to Christian ideas he realized they knew little about Christianity and were killing Buddhist and Daoist priests. Further, although Hong Xiuquan was strongly opposed to Confucian thinking, Legge realized that some of its leaders were "proud Confucianists" who abhorred idols as much as Christianity did. About the same time Richard Ball, an Englishman who had created a Chinese Evangelization Society in the UK to raise money for Gutzlaff's Chinese Christian Union, was complaining in speeches that the Taiping rebellion was a Papist plot designed to throw all Protestant missionaries out of China.

By mid-1853 Protestant mission magazines were also concluding that this was not a Christian uprising and began feeling an urgent need to get the full version of the newly-translated New Testament to the rebels to remedy their confused version of Christianity. The LMS men and the BFBS decided to print and distribute a million copies. Richard Ball and the remnants of Gutzlaff's operation in the UK derided this as unnecessarily grandiose, but sent Rev. Issachar Roberts to the insurgents with copies of the old Medhurst-Gutzlaff translation of the Bible. Gentle Hobson described Roberts: "He's not polished, nor a man of much worldly wisdom", and noted that Roberts had never been able to get support for his mission from the foreign community after losing support from his home church in 1845. Roberts eventually sent a letter published in the *Christian Times* journal in May 1853 with a truly fantastical account of this trip, so bizarre in its descriptions of magical events that even the sympathetic editor was quite confused.

Roberts published another strange account in the *New Quarterly Review* that Shortrede excerpted in the *China Mail* in December 1853, describing a “heavenly king” (King Tienteh) taller than the Taiping emperor, carried in a silk palanquin by 16 officers, his chief aide carried by eight coolies, and his 30 devoted wives following in “commodious armchairs” in vermilion and gold, all followed by a long retinue of servants and a vast array of soldiers. Shortrede dismissed this, placing it alongside some of “Gutzlaff’s forgeries”, noting dryly that the Tienteh was known to have been executed on 15 June 1852 with no family. Roberts’ writings still agreed with his supporter Ball’s notion of the Taiping rebellion as a “Popish plot”, a thesis no other observer found convincing. The remnants of Gutzlaff’s Christian Union had lost considerable credibility by now so their critique of the “Popish” rebellion had little effect.

Legge studied a package of the Taiping writings and doubted both their Christianity and any Roman Catholic influence; in fact their religious ideas about Christianity were based on bits of the Old Testament and bits of Protestant theology. Legge wrote in June 1853 “it is very doubtful whether the insurgents have ever seen a New Testament, and of the Old Testament any other portions but Genesis and Exodus”. In one work, they expressly denied the divinity of Christ...”, ...yet they are a wonderful class of people... have a real faith in God, as the one Supreme Being.” He was sure they had broken an early alliance with some Triad secret society groups.

Legge’s distaste for the bloody work of both sides in the rebellion could not restrain him from trying to evaluate the validity of each side’s claim to righteous power. He was favourably impressed by the Taiping rejection of idols, by their belief in an afterlife, and their interest in studying the Bible, and was also intrigued by some of the social ideology of the movement. He understood from reports that the leader established the rebels as a communal society in which all resources were shared, and in which the women were equally allowed to be soldiers, to be educated, and to be protected in a separate encampment for some time. Legge reminded mission magazine readers in 1854 that early Christian communities similarly shared all resources in common, and considered that model might be the only way in which Christianity could gain a firm foothold in China. He was clearly hopeful that with some Christian revisions to their faith, the movement had the potential to improve Chinese life.

Legge’s hopes gradually diminished as events unfolded and as he learned more about their beliefs. He worried about these: “... the religion of the insurgents is running into a wild and blasphemous fanaticism; and ... they have assumed an attitude of

determined hostility to foreigners. From the first I professed my disbelief in the revelations to which (Hong Xiuquan), their chief, laid claim”.

Rev. Hamberg came back from a visit to the rebels in Nanking and wrote a book in May 1854 about the visions of Hong, a book that did not impress Legge. It included reports of men speaking in tongues, and magical healing that he thought “might be received if we accept the whole as a supernatural introduction of Christianity into the great East, but they are associated with other things of absurdity and ignorance which can by no means come from God. Altogether the phenomena described in the pamphlet excite much perplexity”.

By late 1854 poor Issachar Roberts had lost all credibility, and a critic in *The Patriot* of December 4 wrote derisively of “the loose, tautologous, and desultory style in which he writes, although affording scattered evidence of simplicity and fervour, is not adapted to impress readers with much confidence in his wisdom and judgement”. Roberts had been cut adrift by his home congregation of Tennessee Baptists, was stranded in Shanghai, reduced to begging for donations for his family and wishing to move to Nanking.

Legge was interested in the rebellion not only out of concern about the role of Christianity and the welfare of the Chinese, but because he had a strong personal connection to one of its leaders. Legge became caught up with the rebellion through his friendship in Hong Kong with Hong Xiuquan’s cousin, Hong Rengan (1822-1864), a man who became central to the rebel’s new government. In 1853 Rev. Hamberg of the Basel Mission had baptized a Chinese man Hong Rengan, and he asked Legge to help Rengan. Hamberg was a trusted mission man who had played an honourable role in Legge’s conflicts with Gutzlaff.

Hong Rengan was a Hakka and a member of the Hong/Feng clan of the Taiping king, probably the cousin of the “Heavenly King” Hong Xiuquan. Hong Rengan was 32, five years younger than Legge. He had learned some Christian ideas in 1847 when he and his cousin had stayed two months in Canton with the rash and erratic but devout Tennessee Baptist Issachar Roberts. Later he had tried to take clan members to join Hong Xiuquan in his attempts to capture Nanking before 1853. Twice he escaped after encountering Qing forces and losing his men to very bloody attacks. There was a hint that he had tried to commit suicide after the second failure, the honourable course for a failed leader. Forestalled, he escaped, became fugitive for weeks, then finally sought sanctuary in the small German “Basel” mission in China. They had no means of providing safety and his presence put them all at serious risk, so with their help he

finally escaped to Hong Kong by late 1852. Hamberg introduced Hong to Legge, hoping that Legge could give him a job.

Initially hesitant, Legge hired Hong Rengan to teach Chinese to new man Chalmers. Rengan quickly showed himself to be so skilled, knowledgeable, and helpful he was soon doing mission work in the congregation. Hong helped Ho preach in the new church in the Chinese bazaar, and helped Dr. Hirschberg in the new dispensary on Queen's Road West. In the absence of any remaining family life Legge began to develop a warm friendship with him.

Many of the expatriate Chinese who had fled to Hong Kong began to learn that Rengan was a cousin to the Taiping king, and sought him out hoping to have him lead them in an expedition into China to join the rebels. Legge was very upset at this because he knew how deadly the battles were, had learned enough of the Taiping religious beliefs to decide that they were not Christian, and he now considered the rebellion wrong. He treasured Rengan and urged him to resist these pressures, and the two men developed a strong friendship in a way Legge had never before experienced.

Rengan was the only Chinese man "with whom I ever walked with my arm round his neck and his arm around mine". In this lonely bachelor period they went on walks and picnics together with friends. Years later he remembered going on a picnic with Rengan and the Chalmers family, and hearing everyone singing the musical scale, do-re-mi. Legge had no musical talent but was pleased to recognize for the first time the different tones in this exercise, so he and Rengan sat down and practised singing the scale. Legge found this exhilarating because it was the first time he had ever been able to discriminate notes, and after much practise they strolled home arm in arm singing do-re-mi. Chalmers showed them the scale on the piano keys and Rengan learned to play the piano and sing. Legge began to enjoy singing as well and was very pleased to become part of this whole new world of music. Even though Hong Rengan later became intricately involved in the government established by Taiping rebels, their friendship continued across the next five years, disrupted finally when Legge returned to the UK in 1858.

### Chapter 35 Life in the missions during the turmoil of 1853

*In which illness and discord disrupts the mission. Hobson struggles when his landlord suffers injustice and worries about a new doctor, Legge learns of his daughter's death in Scotland and plans a public education system for Hong Kong.*

Hong Kong now had a population of 39,000 and would more than double in six years, filled with Chinese fleeing the rebellion and attracted by the visible prosperity of Hong Kong. Rising prosperity did not mean improving wellbeing for the missions, and illness and other risks to survival was a steady presence in mission life in Hong Kong and the other south China LMS missions.

Chalmers' wife had such a severe fever in January 1853 she almost died when she was seven-months pregnant, eventually safely delivered of a healthy child in March, but soon suffered a "slight case of smallpox". A schoolboy who suffered a severe case had been removed "so we hope no more get it". Legge noted that the Chinese took no precautions for smallpox and urged the LMS to ensure all departing mission families were vaccinated before leaving Britain. Visiting mission man Dr. Young from Xiamen was staying with them in the mission, but his wife was so ill she had been unable to debark and had to stay on board their ship in the harbour.

William Milne in the Shanghai mission, the same age as Legge, at 33 had suffered an episode of paralysis in 1849, then later a severe sunstroke from which he never fully recovered. In early December 1853 he tried to leave China to take his wife and child home but their steamer was battered in a terrible storm and ended up in Singapore for a long period of repairs. His wife and child suffered terrible injuries from the storm, thus Milne sought permission to take a fast steamer rather than a slow and cheaper sailing ship because of his wife and child's suffering on the sea. Despite this news, his colleague Dr. Lockhart was not sympathetic about Milne's situation, writing the directors noting that as Milne would still be on full salary, they should feel free to make use of his labours. By March 1854 the steamer was approaching Malta and Milne experienced less severe "attacks", but his baby had not recovered from the trauma it had suffered in the storm. He planned to drop off his wife and child to her family in Bristol and go to London the next day to present himself for duties at the LMS. There the Directors found Milne so weak they didn't want him, and he was forced to struggle the next three years to support himself by lecturing, preaching, and writing, including a book *Life in China*. His end came within a few years; after the LMS refused to let him return to mission service he applied to the British Government to work as an interpreter in the Chinese

service and left his family for a posting in Beijing in late 1858. He died of a stroke age 48 at the dinner table there in 1863 without ever seeing his family again.

In Shanghai in 1853 Lockhart was worried about his sick wife in England, left there on a trip years earlier. Struggling with the work of his hospital, he pleaded for another doctor to replace him because she had been left alone and sick for three years, and her condition was so debilitated he feared she would not survive to the end of the year.

#### Problems within the LMS congregations

In addition to their struggles with illness, the missions in south China made only slow progress in developing new Christians. Soolong, the young Chinese man sent to Legge by LMS Director Henderson, was still as problematic as he had seemed on arrival, and he wrote his sponsor that he had decided to quit school and go to work. He made almost no progress in learning Chinese, but Legge had some tenderness for the young man because he recognized Soolong was just generally hapless. Even his decision to go to work was not from mercenary motives, but arose more because he was incapable of benefiting from school.

Offsetting this lack of progress with Soolong, Legge was pleased to welcome the request for baptism from Jane Asha, about 20 years old. She had accompanied the Legges and amah Chang Ache on their 1845 trip to Britain, as helper with the children, and now sought baptism and marriage to a Christian man in the congregation. Her promised husband was absent, part of the huge Chinese migration to the California gold fields, but Legge and the congregation welcomed her, one small sign of progress in this difficult mission. Four men from the congregation left for California, and before long Legge began to realize that every operator in a long chain of migration contractors was mistreating these labourers. He soon took an active role in trying to protect them from the worst exploitation by Chinese and other labour brokers. Early in 1853 Legge took O Cheong, a rather difficult young man connected with the mission, to Dr. Hobson in Canton to work as an assistant, but there was great uncertainty about the stability of this plan as the boy's father was pressing him to take a good government job. Hobson was facing still more real estate problems. He had to abandon the house he had rented because the foundation was rotten and the landlord would provide no help. Next, it and an entire row of buildings were all demolished around his hospital, interfering with his medical work. Cheong only lasted a few months with Hobson then begged to return to study with Legge in September, a plan derailed when they both became very ill with fever.

More promisingly, Legge's new Chinese chapel and hospital in the Chinese lower bazaar had opened at the end of October 1852 and was proving successful, with three Chinese preachers plus Legge attracting good crowds. Chalmers helped out in the school by teaching mathematics but it was still a costly operation, and most of his work concerned the press.

The LMS press was now very busy. Chalmers had taken over supervision of the 2 Chinese printers and the press was now working at full capacity to produce the new Bible. Legge despaired that despite all the efforts put into the press it was still operating at a deficit, but was pleased when a new Chinese printer Huang Shing was hired to replace tubercular Li Kimlin who was sent back to Malacca in September with mission support for him and his family for one year. Huang was an experienced printer at the *China Mail* and had experience translating for the Hong Kong government. He had been a student at the Hong Kong MES mission school, had gone with master Rev. Brown to America in 1846, suffered illness there and returned to Hong Kong in 1848 without having attended university as in the original plan. More pointedly, Huang's printing and language skills were perfect for the LMS printing operation.

Legge hoped that London LMS would apply for a BFBS grant to support printing the new Bible at the Hong Kong press, which now had the best press among the missions. The Shanghai press was working from dawn to 3 PM daily still using bullock power to print the new Bible, and Wylie appeared to be contented working full time at the press. At the end of 1853 the Shanghai LMS men had given Legge and Chalmers a purchase order for Cole's wonderful small Chinese fonts, to aid in printing the one million bibles for which the BFBS had contracted. In addition, in March 1854 the London Directors approved a new printing press for Wylie at the Shanghai mission on the condition that it "shall at all times be held at the disposal of the (BFBS) for printing the Chinese Scriptures", but they refused a similar request from Legge and Chalmers that November, promising instead to continue to pay all operating costs.

The question of which term to use for God in these publications was finished. Anglican Bishop George Smith gave his clergy a charge in October 1853 in Shanghai in a speech published later, that *shangdi* was to be the term used for God in their Bibles and services. The German PMs had also decided on this term, and the old term question was pretty well settled for the non-American missions. Privately Legge wrote this "leaves Dr. Boone, Dr. Bridgman and one or two others in their solitary glory", and "the American camp are troubled".

Although the press was now operating well, across the early part of 1853 Hirschberg was still a source of torment to Legge, both in daily life and through affecting



Legge's relations with the LMS in London. Legge ended up paying all the building construction costs that Hirschberg had refused to pay out of the donation money he still held, yet the Directors in London were still mildly critical of Legge's actions. He felt the Directors failed to read the various letters and Minutes with sufficient care to understand that he had gone far beyond what was reasonable in trying to resolve the conflict. His pained and angry March 1853 letter concluded with a request to have certain critical LMS comments deleted from their letter, because "to be misunderstood and censured by men towards whom I have such sentiments is painful to me in the extreme". The money problems with Hirschberg had become so complex that each man was convinced the other owed him money, but Chalmers wrote London that Legge had acted correctly. This continuing conflict was partially resolved with the departure of Hirschberg in June for a new station in Xiamen.

#### Legge joins the public education committee

Legge's bilingual LMS boarding school had always been small, amounting to about 45 boys and 10 girls, and he knew that a broader system of public education was necessary as Hong Kong grew. For some time he had been advocating secular free bilingual government schools with a modern broad curriculum, and in 1853 the government invited him to join the Education Committee. Through participating in this he was eventually able to achieve his goal.

Legge's thinking about education systems had changed considerably from his early years in Huntly and Hong Kong. In Huntly the parish tradition meant that churches ran their own schools, which they considered to be the best way to ensure no domination from the state. Legge had retained this idea after he opened the Hong Kong mission, and when the idea of a government grant for the school was raised in his first year there, he and the local mission men were quite perturbed as to whether they should accept the money and thus open the school to possible government interference. Across his years in the colony Legge's thinking changed significantly, and he now believed that a government-supported free and secular education system was what Chinese children needed.

The small mission schools in the colony had many problems apart from their struggles for financial support, sometimes arising from the peculiarities of their operators. Gutzlaff's third wife had set up a school for Chinese girls, then after his death and her complicated battles in the colony over money, she left with her very large inheritance, placing the school in other hands. In February 1853 the girls in her school rioted one evening, with "shrieks, lamentations, female outcries", and in a state of open mutiny sought "by force of voice to recover that liberty of which they considered

themselves to have been deprived” according to the cool eye of editor Shortrede. He noted that they seemed to prefer clothing to instruction, and New Year’s holidays to the scrubbing brush. Sarcastically he concluded, “if ladies will keep Chinese female academies, the school mistress, when abroad, should leave someone at home to look after the scholars”. A letter to the editor joked that perhaps there was a need for a court martial for these members of the “refractory Chinese Union”.

#### Hobson problems getting stable premises for the hospital in Canton 1854

The Qing dynasty’s failure to cope with its internal challenges in south China and with changing international transactions meant that Canton was still a problem to the missions. Hobson was still having terrible struggles in establishing a stable set of buildings for his hospital and housing, and across the entire year of 1854 he battled with the local authorities. In February he found a suitable property for hospital and housing, signed a lease, paid the landlord and had an occupancy document; all seemed wonderful. Most neighbours wanted the hospital because they made use of its services, but one man, Poon, served as agitator. Poon was angry because Hobson had not agreed to rent properties that Poon three times had tried to force Hobson to rent from him, offering to ensure that the neighbours would give Hobson “no trouble”. Hobson turned Poon down three times because the rents were too high and the property was small and decrepit.

Out of vengeance Poon eventually organized a mob of 60-70 to go to the Magistrate’s office, and the builder was ordered to cease work on the buildings or be seized. The Magistrate’s document referred to Hobson as a “barbarian” in the traditional way, rather than as a foreigner. Hobson tracked down Poon who tried to hide, he showed Poon the rental agreement, and told Poon he had no authority to change it. Things settled down for a few days, then Poon began his agitation again. Poon threatened Hobson’s new landlord, who refused to pay extortion money, leading to Poon “from jealousy, rage, and disappointment”, combining with his brothers and using bribes, pressing the officials to seize Hobson’s landlord. Hobson sought the help of the police but they refused to enter the conflict, saying they were only following orders.

Across February Hobson suffered continual problems with his premises, with “injustice, deception, extortion, insufferable conceit, rude behaviour and direct hostility...” After renting the property to Hobson the landlord Tsai had been seized, grabbed from his sedan chair and jailed, charged with the crime of renting improperly. Hobson was indignant; the landlord was a highly respectable man whose brothers were officials. Hobson was told the landlord would not be released until he refunded the rents

to Hobson and evicted him. “But he doesn’t have the power to do this – and when that is eventually discovered, he’ll probably be released if he pays a bribe to the Magistrate’s Office”. Hobson was furious and sick at the injustice, even as he realized “the Chinese don’t react with any alarm about this because it is so common”. Hobson knew that Poon was again behind these problems.

The officials were very reluctant to defend the cause of a foreigner, and even went so far as to publish posters offering a reward for the capture of landlord Tsai’s distant relative Eep, and for the capture of Kwong the contractor who helped improve the property for Hobson. Kwong completed renovations on the housing for Hobson and his family, and taking advantage of Hobson’s problems added on excessive charges on the hospital work. Hobson had no money to pay these so that work had stopped; in desperation Hobson terminated the contract and hired another man. Total costs were now \$800, \$200 more than the original plan, but Hobson had been offered \$200 by helpful men in Canton, Dr. Dickson and Vice-consul Harry Parkes. Hobson soon expected to have to pay \$400 from his own pocket. Parkes was very ill with liver disease, but all the details were recorded in his office and presented to Ye Mingchen, now viceroy of the Two Kwangs, in a search for justice.

Hobson and Parkes had reason to hope for some justice from Viceroy Ye. Ye knew Hobson well, having been so thrilled by his Chinese physiology textbook that he pirated and published it himself, with an Introduction praising Hobson’s work. In the dispute with Poon, Ye gave private assurances to Hobson and Parkes that he would require a peace-bond from Poon, but in fact took no action and even failed to publish a poster proclaiming Hobson’s right to rent. The only solace for Hobson was the fact that other missions had encountered similar problems although none were as severe as his. The seizing of a highly respectable landlord had made Hobson’s situation far more public however, and there was great interest among the foreign community as to its outcome now that the British consul and Viceroy Ye had been brought into it. Other missions similarly working in the Canton suburbs feared that if Hobson’s hospital was evicted all other missions would similarly be forced out of their premises in Canton. All saw the problem as another example of Qing failure to honour the treaty allowing foreign access to Canton.

In early March the authorities began action against Poon, endorsing Hobson’s right to rent the hospital premises. Soon he was arranging rooms to provide 14 bedrooms for patients, a waiting-room area for 100 patients, rooms for a dispensary and for his native assistants and supplies. His landlord Tsai was assured of release by Ye although everyone knew this would not happen until Tsai paid “squeeze” to the corrupt

magistrate. For the time being he was being well treated by the magistrate, who with the benefit of hindsight and the decisions of Ye, was now angry at Poon. Yet things were still not settled, and in late March the magistrate again asked Hobson to delay moving into the buildings until the landlord paid the bribes. Poor anxious Hobson was outraged and refused any further delays, moving everything in and opening the clinic for patients that month.

After six weeks working there with no direct threats Hobson learned the authorities were now threatening his landlord with death. Under Poon's influence the subtle and clever local neighbourhood association the Kae-fung now demanded the authorities reimburse Hobson for all his extra expenses, knowing that the mandarins would not do this but would instead force Hobson to leave. Hobson understood the meaning of this manoeuvre, especially after the Kae-fung threatened his assistant and other staff, who quickly fled so that they could not be seized.

Landlord Tsai now suffered additional punishments in jail, being stripped of his official rank and threatened with serious punishments unless Hobson moved out. Every day Tsai's brothers came to Hobson begging him to vacate because they feared for Tsai's life. All their other relatives were afraid to help them because that would be seen as favouring a foreigner. Hobson was furious at seeing justice "bought and sold for a few dollars", and at the prospect of an innocent man being persecuted with even the possibility of death, all at the instigation of Poon, "a man without principles and utter disregard to truth or the slightest appearance of justice". Hobson recognized all these qualities were directly encouraged by equally corrupt mandarins. Even though Viceroy Ye had sent out proclamations to his officials and the neighbourhood association, he had taken no action to release the landlord or to protect Hobson, but just "allows this mean, contemptible plan of threatening" to continue.

Hobson would have been willing to abandon the whole project if it concerned only himself because he confessed he no longer had the heart for working for people so "unjust and heartless" after all his years of service to them, but he knew the issue was larger because it arose directly out of treaty obligations and affected all the foreigners in the Canton suburbs, thus could not be abandoned. He sought further help from consul Parkes. Parkes was an impetuous man who was outraged at the antics of the Qing officials and was determined to force them to comply with the treaty. He told landlord Tsai's friends that if Hobson gave up the premises, he Parkes would seize it and hold it "against all hazards", and that this action would not help their friend Tsai.

Legge wanted his friend Hobson's situation solved fairly but was perturbed that a British consul was taking such an active role in something that should be handled

instead by Canton authorities. Hobson invited Legge to visit and to consult with him and other mission men, all united in hoping for a peaceful and lawful resolution to the mess. March 27 was set as the date on which the landlord would be assessed a heavy fine or have his property confiscated and be moved himself into a rough jail. Parkes had threatened Ye that he would be held responsible if Hobson suffered any damage or injuries, but Hobson was only sick at the thought that an innocent man was undergoing such suffering only for being “bold enough to rent me his premises”. He understood the mandarins were trying to establish the principle that renting properties to foreigners would be punished, and shared Parkes’ view that this principle could not be allowed to prevail.

Legge visited Hobson in Canton in early April 1854 and saw that the new chapel and hospital buildings were excellent. Compared to the rents being paid by other missions, even the renovation costs were very good value. Wells Williams was paying \$750 per month for property down in the traditional foreign office factories in Shamian on the waterfront, a location not well suited to mission work with the Chinese and badly located because it became so hot in the summer that everyone had to flee to Macau.

During all these struggles in Canton Hobson was seeing large numbers of patients every day, happy at last to be working even though Ye still did not intervene to save the honourable landlord. Ye wrote letters both to Consul Parkes and exiting Hong Kong Governor Sir George Bonham confirming that Poon was the only person opposed to the rental and Hobson understood that the problems did not lie between himself and Viceroy Ye, but lay between the officials, the Chinese people, and the foreigners. In the excited political climate of Canton “it is utterly discreditable and impolitic to further the interest of foreigners... we are enemies, and woe to the man who dares to stand up for our defence”.

The landlord was finally released in May after help from two directions. The new Hong Kong Governor Sir John Bowring now exerted pressure, but in addition the corrupt Magistrate who had demanded such excessive bribes that they could not be paid, died and his successor was satisfied with a smaller bribe. Tsai’s friends paid \$1,000 then pressed Hobson so hard for repayment that Hobson withdrew \$1,095 from his wife’s bank account. Tsai’s friends promised gradual repayment via a rent rebate from Tsai in an arrangement that would not be completed for another two years. The landlord had lost \$2,000 during his imprisonment, and his decaying family could not afford this. Hobson explained to the LMS that Qing magistrates had to buy their official position (rather than being appointed on the basis of merit), thus the first task a new magistrate had was to extort money from his cases in order to recover his costs.

Buoyed by the news that the LMS was actively raising money for the China missions, Legge urged them to send another medical man to help Hobson in Canton, but in June the LMS reported they were having trouble finding any missionaries for China because of the political unrest of the insurgency. Hobson saw that in the area around Canton the people broadly supported the Qing officials because most of the insurgents were simply robbers, and each night the gates of Canton were locked and strangers were not allowed to lurk anywhere unchallenged. But to the north nearby there were 20,000 rebels in tents who often shot off their weapons. Because these had poor leaders and were short of money and ammunition, for the time being “no one felt the least alarm” in Canton.

The actual fighting between the Qing government and the rebels was low-key at times, and quite accessible, and a few of Hobson’s friends went to watch the fighting one day, reporting “it was most puerile”. Fighters rarely came to close quarters through fear, although “now and then a man would be wounded by a gun or an arrow”. Hobson knew the real suffering was taking place in the villages where families were extorted for huge sums, and faced beatings and death for failure to provide. Their condition was so desperate that several poor villages were banding together to expel or kill these plunderers. Hobson was busy receiving both wounded villagers and robbers even though the police periodically checked his beds for rebels. He learned that one poor man he had treated for terrible gunpowder wounds had been seized within days after discharge and been beheaded instantly. In Canton in September Ye was collecting huge sums of money from wealthy Cantonese and taxing all households to support his side of the battles. Canton’s situation was a mirror image of events in Shanghai where one group of rebels held the city, while Imperial troops surrounded it.

Not only were these repeated episodes of death and injury upsetting to Hobson, they were also costly, and for the first time he had to apply to the LMS for \$130 to help pay for medicines for the hospital. By the end of the year he wrote he had been doing medical work for 15 years in China “without complaining... (He) took a real pleasure in it” when his health and spirits were good, but he had suffered repeated attacks of malaria along with “a thousand discouraging circumstances” in the Canton mission work and he begged for someone to replace him. The hospital was working excellently and widely known for its “benevolence”. All the earlier months of misery over the mission premises arising from his landlord’s refusal to pay extortions to vicious neighbours, were now behind him. The building was handsome and in good repair, and the Chinese really liked it. For the last three months of the year his beds were full of injured soldiers, up to 130 at one time.

### Dr. Wong Fun will help Hobson

In November Hobson received news from the LMS that was simultaneously helpful and worrisome. He was cheered to learn that the LMS had decided to send him a medical missionary to help him in Canton, yet disappointed that they in fact had not yet identified any particular person. When later he received a letter from London recommending a Chinese Christian doctor who was completing medical training in Edinburgh in 1855, Hobson started to worry about this. Firstly he had heard that young Dr. Wong Fun was “conceited”, and secondly, he was worried that the Chinese patients would not view Wong with the same respect they showed to western doctors.

Wong had been one of the students taken to America by Rev. Brown of the MES school in 1847, going to Edinburgh for medical training after completing an American undergraduate degree. Hobson discussed this with the other mission men and wrote they also worried about this appointment on the basis of long experience suggesting that constant supervision would be required “or the most ordinary duties go unperformed, or only very partially done”.

In December Hobson and Chalmers changed places so that Hobson could spend a small holiday in Hong Kong with Legge. Hobson was a nervous wreck, depressed from all the housing problems and weak from repeated episodes of malaria. “My nervous system is much weakened by these frequent attacks of ague, my mind and spirits now fairly sympathize with the depressed state of my general health”, which could no longer be remedied by relaxation and quinine. Legge and Chalmers recommended a sea voyage for his health and Hobson knew that a stint as ship’s surgeon on the Shanghai run would be the only way he could afford to have a sea trip. He would move his wife and children to the safety of Hong Kong while he journeyed.

### The death of daughter Emma, and mission deaths

Legge received shocking family news in January 1854. He had been living alone for eight months when he received the news of daughter Emma’s death in Huntly on November 19, 1853, aged three. She had been living with his brother’s family. Legge wrote his friend Rev. Robert Troup there about his emotions on reading of her death.

“You express a fear that you might be opening my wounds afresh by your references to my darling Emma – her friendliness with you in life, and her loveliness when all her features were locked up in the repose of death. But the effect of your letter upon me was not painful. It brought indeed the tears afresh to my eyes, but previously, after the quiverings of nature,

pierced by the tidings of the sad event, had ceased, I was able to think of Emma, as now herself beholding the face of her Father in Heaven”.

Legge’s sister-in-law had written him that Emma had loved Rev. Troup, loved to play with him and sit on his knee. James knew that Troup had carried Emma’s small coffin on his lap through the streets to the bank of the Deveron River and the cemetery, and was touchingly grateful. Hobson wrote the Directors that James, the “dear good man”, was “greatly smitten by the sudden news of the death of his youngest darling”.

Legge felt guilty about failings in his own character that might have brought on this new test from Providence. He wrote the Directors “The news... of the death of my youngest child have plunged me into much grief. Regrets, however, are vain, and to murmur would be sinful. I must seek to bend the event with a spirit of submission and resignation. The two who are with Dr. and Mrs. Morison are now all that are left to me. May their health and life be precious in the sight of God”. The LMS responded off-handedly in May with a brief reference to “the sad news of the death of your little girl”. Legge had now lost Mary and five children to premature deaths. His own health was poor across the spring and he only hoped “by care, with God’s blessing, to get safely through the summer”.

Other missions also suffered losses from premature deaths in early 1854. Mrs. Lechler died just a few weeks after arriving from Sweden and marrying the courageous missionary who had contradicted some of Gutzlaff’s extravagant claims. Lechler’s co-pastor Hamberg died on May 13, days after writing up his account of his visit to the Taiping king, reporting the king’s visions. Hamberg was ill only a few days before he suddenly died. Legge honoured him as “the strongest Protestant missionary in China”, a man “with a mind as strong as his body”, and excellent skills in Chinese.

Rev. William Young from the LMS station in Xiamen had come to Legge in Hong Kong in the hope that his seriously ill wife might recover there, but even after two months in Macau she suffered such grave disorders the doctor prescribed a move to a colder climate where she could get the fresh vegetables and meat she required. Young wrote the LMS in May expressing great gratitude for the help Legge and the other mission men had given him. “And Dr. Legge especially from what he has recently tasted of the cup of sorrow, seems well-fitted to alleviate much of the burden that presses my mind here. His assistance and kindness I have found peculiarly valuable and comforting”. The Youngs decided to go to Australia because it was closer and cheaper to reach than Britain.

Wells Williams reports on missionary survival in 1855



All of the Protestant missions to China were still staggering rather than thriving, reflecting two main problems. The sanitary and climatic conditions were punishing to Europeans, and becoming fluent in Chinese was far more difficult than remote mission Directors ever imagined. American missionary Wells Williams of Canton reported in an 1855 Circular updating his earlier report on the fates of the 188 Protestant missionaries who had been sent to China since Robert Morrison's arrival in 1807 (S. W. Williams, 1855). The data showed a shocking mortality rate for both male and female missionaries, with 27% of female missionaries and 17% of the men dying in "foreign lands", either in China on en route home. Mission wives also suffered a high death rate, with 37 wives of 132 marriages dying prematurely. Of the 32 men who died in the field, their average period of service was only 5 years; when the five long-lived men ("outliers" in statistical terms) in this group were removed from the list, the remaining 27 who died did so less than four years after arrival.

Williams updated his analysis again in 1858, reporting that of those 213 arrived in China to that year, 39 died in the mission, 69 retired, and 23 were on furlough. Those who died had worked an average of 6.5 years but that included 7 long-lived outliers. Deleting them, the average survival in the field was 3 1/3 yrs. Of the 387 retired, on average they had lasted 5 1/2 years. Again, removing the few exceptional cases the remaining active 64 worked only an average of 4.4 years (S. W. Williams, 1858). Much of their time was spent either learning Chinese or on leave associated with illness of the missionary or wife.

The difficulties in learning Chinese also contributed to significant time lost to the actual mission work. Of the 60 who retired, many did so prematurely because they could not learn Chinese after years of effort; the more successful men took three years to achieve working oral competence. Of the 60 who retired, when the six long-lasting men were removed from the list, the remaining 54 lasted in the mission field only an average of 3.7 years. In sum, Williams documented the high mortality rates among missionaries and mission wives, and the very high rate of early retirements from the field. China was proving to be an extremely challenging mission field, and the high staff turnover rate created by illness and Chinese language problems was a huge impediment to mission progress.

#### The LMS press, and money 1854

In January the LMS refused to let the Hong Kong mission build a bigger building for the printing press, expecting that the mission would soon be moved to Canton, and Legge and Chalmers agreed with this reasoning. They knew that property prices were

rising in Hong Kong, and the sale of the Press building should involve no loss, nevertheless they strongly contested the LMS plan to move the Hong Kong press to Shanghai “to save costs”. Legge was extremely proud of the high quality of his press and quoted a recent letter from Medhurst praising the Hong Kong production of the New Testament. “Your octavo edition of the New Testament with the lines between, makes me weep every time I look at it. I return the specimens from our office (his Shanghai press), sometimes crying out “Abomination of desolation”.” The Hong Kong men were convinced that centralizing all Chinese printing in one location was not a good idea, whether it was in the north or the south, and were still hoping to turn a profit on the operations. Chalmers was training Huang Shing to operate the press and this was going well.

Under Chalmers’ supervision the LMS printing press finally had a year with a cash balance because income from selling a font-set to Shanghai generated a profit of \$502 for 1853. The new press was running night and day on the New Testament and by March it had nearly run out of printer’s ink. The press used British ink so Chalmers sent a frantic letter back to the LMS explaining the urgent need of 300 pounds of it within three months. He asked the Directors to either send it by clipper (the fast new sailing ships that were revolutionizing the duration of the voyage), or even overland, in order to have the ink reach Hong Kong before their remaining supply ran out. The Hong Kong press had printed 10,000 copies of the New Testament, and Chalmers hoped that the Bible Society would help pay for the ink. The printing operation expanded to additional rented quarters in order to bind the Bibles as they were completed, and Chalmers argued in July for a new and larger printing press to replace the rough original press more than 30 years old. Chalmers also needed the LMS to send him more type metal in order to be able to make more fonts, to fill an order from the American mission in Canton. By October no ink had arrived, and in desperation Chalmers was experimenting with making ink locally.

Other financial events were troublesome. The LMS directors sent out a crate of silver dollars that mixed in a batch of “good” Carolus dollars with others of less value in the Hong Kong exchange, so once again the mission men were faced with less cash than expected and needed even for their basic salaries. Two more problems arose. Major financial records that Legge sent on the ship *Douro* in late May were all lost when the ship was wrecked in a typhoon, ending up cast on notorious shoals four days out. Next, Legge lost a box of books when another ship the *Abergeldie* was wrecked. He asked the LMS to always send a copy of their bills of lading to him independently via the overland

route so he would know which ship was carrying his supplies. The wreck of the *Douro* had other more deeply upsetting features.

#### The Youngs and the wreck of the *Douro*

The *Douro's* wreck was the cause of even more serious problems affecting the mission because it was the ship carrying the poor sick Youngs toward help in Australia. Their ship was hit by a typhoon on May 24, its funnel blown overboard along with most of the sails, two cutters, and nearly all the livestock. Helpless in the violent rain and lightning, the ship was carried by a strong current all night. The next morning the captain rigged up bits of emergency sail intending to return to Hong Kong, and all expected to be safe within three days. During the following night they were wakened by a huge concussion and grating sound: they had hit a shoal in the night. Everyone expected to die as waves broke over the ship. After an attempt to burn flares to attract a distant ship failed, they cut away the sail remnants and everyone threw all heavy articles overboard in an attempt to lighten the ship and re-float it. The third day the captain was able to determine their exact location on the southern edge of the north shoal of the Paracels, a group of small islands and reefs half way between Vietnam and the Philippines. They knew that the nearest inhabited land was Hainan, only 36 miles away, but it was considered almost uninhabited and not a likely source of help.

The two remaining "jolly" boats<sup>30</sup> were unable to carry the 150 on board so the captain decided to send off the best boat and eight volunteer men, including the Young's family servant as translator. They left on 26 May with provisions for a week, with Hainan as their goal because it was the closest landfall. Two days en route a Chinese fishing junk came upon this boat but the fishermen would not agree to go for help unless they were allowed to plunder the steamer. Some men from the junk grabbed Rev. Young's Chinese employee and started stripping his clothes off; the British sailors only rescued him by the use of force. The hostility of the fishermen was so obvious the sailors quickly rowed off and decided to aim for Hong Kong instead. The weather was still so severe they narrowly escaped being swamped a number of times, but after eight days they reached Hong Kong on June 3.

On the grounded steamer the remaining crew built four rafts and a large boat in case they had to abandon ship, sent out numerous messages in Chinese and English in bottles, and ripped up sails to serve as signals if they spotted any ship in the distance.

---

<sup>30</sup> Jolly boats were small rowboats for 4-6 oars and capable of hoisting a yawl-rigged sail. They were carried on ships to be used for short trips.

Two Chinese junks came close and Rev. Young spoke with the men on one, which soon sailed away. The second junk accepted the steamer's Chinese interpreter on board then kidnapped and held him hostage for four days, demanding \$3,000 for each passenger on the steamer for the trip to Hong Kong. The steamer's survivors were outraged and ordered the junk's captain off their ship. He eventually returned his translator hostage to the steamer and sailed off.

The steamer was still trapped on the shoal at eight days and no other ship was spotted. The crew had estimated that it would take the jolly boat six days to reach help and a steamer two days to return for them, so all on board began to despair. Their main question was as to the manner of their probable deaths; would they die of "starvation, drowning, fatal disease, mutiny, or pirates?" The mixed crew and passengers included Englishmen, Chinese, Parsis and Muslims, and they all met together for daily prayers, which Rev. Young believed helped "to keep violent outbursts cooled off".

All on board suffered exposure for ten days on the wreck waiting for help, suffering from repeated huge storms. Finally on day ten in the late afternoon they saw smoke on the horizon. The passengers asked Young to lead them in prayers of gratitude for the steamer. They were rescued, and arrived in Singapore on 13 June. By the time the Youngs arrived in Sydney after another 25 days voyage, Mrs. Young was in such bad condition that doctors told them she would need two years to recover. Dutiful Young tracked down a local church with an interest in the Chinese migrants, and began preaching to increasing crowds within weeks of his arrival.

#### Training Chinese missionaries in surprising places

The training of Chinese missionaries in Hong Kong was still a fragile operation. O Cheong had returned from his job as a pastoral assistant to Hobson in Canton, having been such a disaster that Chalmers wrote in despair "this is the end of our attempts to train native ministers". The other two young Chinese Christians Keuh Agong and Ng Asow had gone earlier to Shanghai to try to contact the Taiping government in Nanking but had failed, and Ng returned to Hong Kong while Keuh stayed to keep trying.

The most encouraging part of this expedition was that they had both behaved well during their stay, and that encouraged Legge and Chalmers. In addition they learned that some of men from their Chinese congregation now migrants in the gold fields of California, were now creating new Chinese Christian churches there. Legge was thrilled, "Our small church here is now turning into a "Mother Church"". The five Christian migrants had included hapless Soolong. Legge was amazed to learn that one of them was even teaching Chinese to an American minister who wanted to become a

missionary to China. Poor tubercular Li Kimlin was recovering in Singapore and trying to work a bit in the old mission in Malacca. Chalmers explained the slow pace of baptisms in the Hong Kong mission; after students applied for baptism to Legge he would “hold them off” for a year to test the conviction of their decision.

The most interesting mission event of 1854 for Legge and Chalmers was the arrival and three-month visit of an old Daoist priest from China, a man who was well-educated and fascinated with the mission publications and their ideas. He was “a man of a higher style than generally comes under our observation”. He sent some interesting letters back to the men in Hong Kong before he died later that year. Another Daoist priest in Hong Kong brought his son to the LMS school and became an eager student of Christianity, eventually seeking baptism. In the colourful ceremony he relinquished the two yellow crowns that represented his Daoist profession as medicine salesman.

In line with most other Protestant missions the Hong Kong station made no attempts to parlay with the Chinese elites in the way that the Jesuits had in earlier times, believing instead that the Christian mission was intended especially for the poor and oppressed. This high-minded egalitarian approach slowed down the prospects of mission successes with the Chinese in the strongly hierarchical society of the Qing Empire, which mirrored the British Empire in ensuring that social status hierarchies were central to all activities. The mission’s Scots egalitarianism also affected the way the PMs were viewed within the similarly status-conscious British expatriate society.

#### Taiping theology and the missions

As the rebellion in south China continued, the mission men studied the activities of different rebel groups. In Shanghai the secret society rebels captured the city and put on public displays of throwing away their idols and “seeking Christian instruction”, though some westerners questioned if this was merely a ruse to attract western support. The faint hope this triggered among the missions was quickly undermined by more news from the Taiping government in Nanking. The overall ruler, the Heavenly King Hong Xiuquan had anointed the Eastern King Yang Xiuqing as having the Holy Spirit, and Yang was now calling himself “The Holy Ghost, the Comforter of the Church, the Enlightener of the World” and became despotic, even ordering his ruler the Heavenly King to be flogged on divine orders. Taking a cue from this, the Western King now named himself Saviour. In time fierce power struggles between them and the other Taiping kings led to chaos in their government.

A major change had occurred in the Taiping documents from June compared with those obtained in the earlier trip by the *Hermes*. The recent documents proclaimed

divine revelations of many fantastical sorts, and Legge wrote his father-in-law that “the Bible and only the Bible is the true Protestant principle”, while insights from any other source “propounded as divine revelations, are to be traced to madness, delusion, imposture, disease, or the devil”. Further, when the recently deceased Rev. Hamberg’s pamphlet about the Taiping rebel leader’s religious ideas was published in July, Legge concluded that the leader’s visions “would seem to indicate a partial and abiding derangement of the mental faculties”, especially because the leader repeatedly found references to himself within the Bible.

Legge deplored the Taiping’s practise of speaking in tongues and faith healing, but approved of the their eradication of opium smoking within their territory. He was only puzzled by the Taiping government’s continuing printing of Bibles, and doubted that such a mixture of errors and confusion could lead to rebel success because it lacked any “high patriotic principles”, which could not “coexist with degrading fanaticism”. Their friend William Milne, now in England, did not know of this shift in Taiping beliefs, and in early May was giving spellbinding talks about the Christianity of the rebels, urging his listeners to support the printing of more copies of the new Bible so that the rebels would have the most correct version in Chinese and not stray into errors through ignorance.

Rev. Issachar Roberts published a fantastical account of his influence on the Taiping Heavenly King, an account so strange that Hobson and Legge were convinced it was a complete fabrication. Both knew that Roberts’ Chinese skills were very limited. They also knew that the two Hong cousins had spent less than three months studying Christianity with Roberts in Canton many years earlier, at a time when Roberts’ Chinese skills were even poorer. Roberts now claimed to be receiving regular letters from Hong Xiuquan, addressed to himself as “Lo Ho-sun”, but Legge and Hobson knew that the American missions in Shanghai believed that the Taiping leaders called Dr. Hobson “Lo”. It was also clear that the Taiping knew that “Lo” healed the sick, which Roberts never had done. Apart from this confusion, Roberts’ writings about the various Taiping leaders were so peculiar that they were entirely suspect within the colonial community. The PMs were divided in their views about the rebellion, but old preacher Liang Fa was convinced the Taiping represented a force that was Christian and good, and prayed for their success on the grounds it was a duty he owed his country.

Legge’s Chinese congregations grew as Chinese refugees fled battles nearby in the districts around Canton where a secret society the “Clouds of Triad” had captured many big towns. Rebels now occupied Foshan, a city of 500,000 near Canton, with a force of 7,000 men, and the Manchu forces were not able to dislodge them. Many middle-class

Chinese families from Canton were seeking refuge in Macau and Hong Kong. Legge was struck with sympathy at meeting sweet old ladies with bound feet, so helpless they had to be carried.

In early July Hobson moved his family to the safety of Macau for a month. His wife was happy because she had been born there, and they had good friends who offered accommodation. The Canton mission was left in the care of Josiah Cox, soon to play a crucial role in Legge's translation work with the classics. The insurgents took Canton for a while but left in September. Sea battles raged off Macau that summer, easily viewed from the city, and by December there was a military agreement between Governor Ye and the British and American naval authorities to share the defence of Canton from pirates and rebels. Rebel and pirate fleets were enormous, with more than 200 vessels counted in one of the encounters. Hobson's hospital was close to two large forts near Canton that would be automatic targets for rebels, so he was pleased that some kind of naval alliance might help protect his hard-won mission buildings.

Ye was continuing his vicious system of mass decapitations to all villagers suspected of any rebel sympathies, in a classic terror campaign. "Decapitations of hundreds of prisoners seem to produce no effect. The locals in Canton considered the rebels no better than robbers because their only goal seemed to be destroying the mandarins". There were significant numbers of Triad secret society men in both rebel and government forces, so Hobson had no doubt that eventually "these large bodies of disaffected men will succeed... leading to wretched scenes of misery like those at (Xiamen) and Shanghai." He feared that in the general anarchy and confusion, China "will probably be dismembered".

Legge similarly had no sympathy for the militants on either side in the conflict. "...the misery inflicted on tens of thousands by the cowardly suspicions and cruelties of the mandarins and their soldiers on the one hand, the lawless rapacity of the insurgents on the other, is indescribable". He understood that eventually foreigners would be brought in to regain order, but "to try and bolster up the Tartar dynasty would be folly; to give help and sanction to Taiping (King) and his party is rendered impossible by their own acts". Legge was prescient, for Western governments eventually entered the conflict on the side of the dynasty, effectively shoring up its fragile and often vicious hold on power for another four decades.

#### The world, China and the LMS missions in 1854

Several crucial events took place in 1854 that changed the world in permanent ways. In January 1854 an Anglo-French fleet sailed into the Black Sea as war broke out

between the Ottoman Empire and Tsarist Christian Russia, with the British and French siding with Muslim Turkey to protect their interests in the eastern Mediterranean. This was the early stage of the Crimean War, and news of it was more plentiful in Hong Kong than news of the Chinese rebellion. Legge called the times “full of excitement. Nations are whirling on with unexampled rapidity”. Florence Nightingale would eventually earn a reputation as a fierce critic of British Army medical care of the Crimean wounded in its hospital on the Asian bank of Istanbul. Her careful documentation and very creative use of graphical displays for statistics as part of her struggles to improve outcomes eventually led to massive reforms in military medical care. The fateful Charge of the Light Brigade took place in late October with a loss of 472 of the 670 horsemen who rode into an impossible trap valiantly following impossible orders from incompetent officers. From the bitter cold of the Crimean winter the army began growing beards for warmth and their style was copied across Britain when they returned as heroes. In Australia that year in December there was a huge strike by gold miners against extortionate fees and vicious undemocratic colonial regulations denying them the vote. After a short bloody battle a reform movement grew up that transformed the governance of the colony.

In London, 1854 was the famous year in which brave Dr. John Snow stopped a cholera epidemic by removing the handle from the water pump in Broad Street in September, in the correct belief that contaminated water was the vector transmitting the disease. At the time sewage had been removed from communities to clear up the air in the incorrect belief that cholera was spread through the air, but the filth had been moved out into the Thames, rapidly enhancing the ability of the water-borne bacterium to infect and kill vast numbers. While the disease had already peaked at that specific water source, in preventing the community from drinking any more deadly tainted water Snow forestalled a second outbreak there and convinced public health authorities that clean water was the way to prevent cholera epidemics, a message that altered world health for all time.

In March the Tokugawa shogunate in Japan signed a treaty with American Commodore Perry, opening up that closed country to new trade and new ideas, a move completely modern and opposite to the efforts of the Qing dynasty.



Chapter 36 Alone, working for a public education system, and helping Che  
*In which Legge living alone, helps found a public education system, meets devout Che, and suffers in a court case. Li and Liang die.*

Across 1855 Legge lived in Hong Kong without any family, and the year began badly with the news that his student Li Kimlin had finally died of tuberculosis in Singapore. Although he did desultory work in the Malacca mission from Singapore during his illness, he had never shown interest in training for Chinese mission work. Over time Legge took on additional religious duties. In 1852 he began to visit prisoners on Stonecutter's Island, holding Bible study discussions with the men and preaching every Sunday. He took a personal interest in the prisoners and at times became an advocate when he believed an injustice was being done. Later he was appointed as the Presbyterian chaplain to a regiment.

Hobson in Canton had been disabled and depressed from frequent attacks of malarial fever across 1854. Eventually he found a ship's captain who would take him and his family on a sea voyage to Shanghai at a reduced fare, to try and regain his health. This respite from the ructions of Canton was helpful, and from Shanghai he sent encouraging reports. First, relations among the men of the Shanghai mission were now cordial. In addition, the political unrest from the rebels meant that all Shanghai mission men were staying closer their home base, and this led to an outpouring of publications at the LMS press on topics including language, science, and religion. Visits to nearby villages were met with a respectful response, which Hobson marvelled at as such a contrast with the fractious settlements around Canton. He was pleased to discover that some of the American missionaries in Shanghai were now using *shangdi* as the term for God, "relaxing their prejudice"; Canton was the last redoubt for those favouring *shin*.

#### Canton LMS operations 1855

Josiah Cox stayed in Hobson's Canton house while he was away, and their close friendship eventually led to a wonderful event for Legge. When Hobson returned to Canton he was very pleased with his new premises for the hospital, the mission, and for his family. Across 1854 he treated 21,000 direct patients and another 7,000 who sought treatment after leaving Sabbath services. Many of the patients were wounded from the battles raging between the rebels and the Qing government, including soldiers, militias, and villagers, all crammed into his hospital. His wards were designed to care for 60 inpatients but he often had 90 plus their family members, packing in more than 130 Chinese dwelling in the hospital. The wounds were usually from small iron balls with

rough surfaces that did a lot of damage to tissues, and many wounds were a result of a soldier's own ammunition blowing up when he tried to use it. Hobson and another British doctor worked exhaustive hours even when fighting their own malarial fevers. He was quite critical of the local "insurgents" who waved the flag of the Taiping but in fact were just local bandits and pirates, cruel and opportunistic as disorder spread. Now that he had functioning buildings, Hobson's worst fear for his Canton mission was fire. His trip to Shanghai helped him recover from his fever and depression, and Hobson was happy to report his family were all well in February.

### Liang Fa dies

The mission to the Chinese in Canton suffered significant loss that year, when stalwart Liang Fa, died there early in 1855, at about age 66. He had moved to Canton with his family in 1843 after following the LMS mission from Malacca, and died of a malaria episode that Hobson had been unable to relieve. Liang had been the first Chinese convert to Christianity, responding to the earliest Protestant missionary Robert Morrison. Liang's efforts were dutiful and his behaviour steadfast, but he had never succeeded in being an effective preacher across more than 30 years because he had learned to speak childish Cantonese as a child in Canton, then grew up in Malacca with Hokkien-speakers without developing an adult vocabulary and style in Cantonese. Hobson paid Liang credit for his faithful work, expressed sympathy for the persecutions he and his family had suffered for his faith, and regarded Liang's son Tsintih as a fine young man although "not as Christian as he claims to be". There was only the question of an LMS pension for Liang's widow.

### Dr. Peter Parker in disgrace

The other Canton news concerned Dr. Peter Parker, who was returning to America in 1855 in public disgrace. He had been in China 20 years but had early set aside his medical mission work for a more lucrative private practice for expatriates and Chinese officials, moving into diplomatic posts for which he had no training, starting in 1847. In Hobson's view "... owing to the indulging of an unholy ambition (and a disappointed ambition) he leaves this country leaving very few friends behind him. His whole energies for some years past have been employed in furthering the interests of his government, and he had aspired to be appointed the Commissioner. He has been lately acting for Mr. Maclean (as Acting Charge d'Affaires), temporarily absent, and owing to some bad strokes of policy he has got a hornet's nest about him, - and excited strong animadversions upon his ministerial character etc. which have been published far and wide. This... has annoyed and vexed his spirits, and has brought on an impairment in his

health” for which he “ostensibly returns home”. Modern historians conclude that Parker’s incompetence as a diplomat led to his recall “for his overly zealous advocacy that the US seize Formosa” (Harris, 1991).

Hobson added “It is painful to think that such distinguished men as Gutzlaff and Parker should have been so far drawn aside from their high and noble calling, to... procure mere earthly fame and wealth.” The hospital that Parker had founded with great hyperbole in 1835 “is scarcely now heard of. His patients here dwindled to a few and of the poverty class. He leaves no abiding record in China in the shape of a single tract or book”, and had never had “one Chinese sincere inquirer after Christ”.

#### Legge works alone: family news, Rengan, Baker’s text, and Ho translations

In January 1855 there was more troubling family news for James with the illness of his beloved father-in-law John Morison, now caring for James’ two surviving children, Eliza and Mary. By late summer Legge was grieved to learn that Dr. Morrison had suffered a second heart attack in June and remained gravely ill. The family news was not all miserable however, for his teen-aged daughters spent the summer in Huntly and wrote James of the visit, “a sunny memory” in which the girls were thrilled to report the rumour of Rev. Troup’s possible marriage. James hesitated to send congratulations before any official announcement “from my bump of Scotch caution”, but was relieved by the formal good news from Scotland.

Alone in Hong Kong, Legge’s solitude provided an opportunity to strengthen his friendship and translation scholarship with Hong Rengan. This friendship quickly turned warm, their translation studies became very productive and their connection thrived until Legge left Hong Kong three years later. Legge’s friendship with Chalmers also warmed with their close connection, and when Chalmers’ wife had a son in January 1855 they named the babe James Legge Chalmers, “in remembrance of the uninterrupted and cordial friendship which has subsisted between us and our dear brother in the mission for upwards of two years, and which we pray may last for many more”. The new child also meant an additional child allowance, which Chalmers was also looking forward to, as the escalating costs in Hong Kong were a huge problem for the men.

Legge’s new isolation from all family demands also left him time for vigorous work at the mission. In daytime work for his school and congregation he was working with Ho in writing and publishing Christian texts in Chinese. In addition he began translating a basic British reading text into Chinese for his students. Baker’s *Graduated Reading* consisted of 200 lessons in small paragraphs using simple sentences on topics ranging

from play, to newspapers, meteorology, cosmology, history, and physics. They often incorporated Biblical stories or morals. The style of this book is charming, and in a design that he used later. It was similar in style and tone to American reading primers of the era, such as *The New England Primer*, which began “In Adam’s Fall/ We sinned all...” By 1836 McGuffey’s *Eclectic Readers* began to displace it, eventually selling 122 million copies, with lessons such as “The Bible, the Best of Classics”, and “Religion the only Basis of Society”, lessons that continued to include simple moral and Christian contents. Legge published his Chinese version of Baker’s text in December 1856, and the little book was so useful that it was reprinted in a second revised edition in 1864. Legge was also active in the basic work of the press, and was pleased to receive a ton of type-metal in April, plus paper, files, and a new furnace for the type foundry.

Pastor Ho was also becoming an accomplished author of works in Chinese that helped explain the Christian mission, and in March Ho published his Chinese commentary on the New Testament, a scholarly work that made use of English reference books. Legge reported that Ho was “a sound theologian and a clear vigorous thinker” who was also an excellent preacher.

Legge used the time relieved from family life to take on new and more radical initiatives beyond the mission, taking on the job as editor of a monthly magazine in Chinese that had begun three years earlier. *Strings of Pearls from Far and Near* published articles on topics of broad popular culture, news, and science. It started in 1852, intended for the enjoyment and education of literate Chinese. The most important thing Legge did as editor was to invite his friend Dr. Hobson to write articles about basic anatomy and physiology in Chinese. These were hugely interesting to their audience because so much of basic anatomy and physiology was largely unknown to educated Chinese adults. In particular the readers were fascinated to learn of the peripheral nervous system, which was unknown, and to study the illustrations of the developing foetus. The articles must have been excerpted from the very important books Hobson had published starting in 1851, already popular with the Chinese officials and military leaders.

### Classics: Yijing into Latin

In his translation work on the Classics Legge was working on a maddeningly difficult task, trying to make sense of the Book of Changes (*Yi King, Yijing*), and finding its terse style elusive. He found an old Latin translation and was temporarily buoyed with the hope that his fluency in Latin could help him with the enigmatic ancient text. Both Latin and the ancient Chinese of the book shared the elegant compact style that

attracted him, but the effort was not as productive as he had hoped. Next he tried doing a direct translation from Chinese to Latin, to see if that would be a better tactic, translating the entire book into Latin using his Latin skills, hoping then to create English text. Unfortunately when it was all completed he decided it still was not very good or very helpful in getting at the real meaning of the cryptic Chinese text. His self-criticism intruded even when it was to his own disadvantage; he was now back to the beginning of the task.

### Legge and a central school for Hong Kong

Legge and Ng Asow were still teaching in the mission day school for young Chinese boys, with 30 students now meeting in the Chinese bazaar hospital abandoned by Dr. Hirschberg. Legge hired a Chinese scholar to teach Chinese language and literature to 50 senior students, but he was close to giving up on the Theological Seminary, “after years of frustration”. He began to think that day schools were a more effective way of providing education to Chinese students, being much cheaper to operate than boarding schools, thus much more accessible to students.

Legge soon took this insight into the community beyond his mission and became involved in a new venture in Hong Kong, helping to create a school “for all” with public support. In March 1855 *China Mail* editor Andrew Shortrede convened a meeting of interested citizens. They quickly agreed that a central public school open to students of all nations and religions should be established for education in English, with low fees and supported by public donations. Legge was not present at that meeting but he shared this vision, adding that a European master should be hired as head of the school and Inspector of the feeder schools (Bickley, 1997).

Mr. Lyall, chairing the meeting, explained that there was a necessity “for providing some means of education for the numbers of children now growing up in the colony, and who might some day become dangerous members of society if not properly cared for either by the Government or their wealthier fellow-citizens”. Shortrede added that the colony had existed for 12 years without any English schooling for its children, a situation worse than found in the Chinese community. More than \$1,500 was quickly collected and all expected substantially more from the community. Formal resolutions creating a governance structure, electing officers and rules were done in that meeting, and a small committee was formed, elected by donors of at least \$25. They were to hire a teacher, collect useful textbooks, and find school premises. Students would have to pay a small fee and no one would be admitted without some fee payment, because the mission

schools had learned that parents and children did not treat schools seriously unless some token payment was required.

In the meantime Legge lacked support to continue operating the LMS Theological Seminary and closed it in 1856. Although the ACC had served as a preparatory school for over a hundred students in the years 1844-1856, the Seminary only attracted seven students and none of them became pastors in Hong Kong or in China (M. K. Wong, 2000).

### Legge, Hobson, and the LMS on opium

The opium trade was becoming a hot topic in Britain, and Legge and Hobson became involved in the public debates with an attitude more complex and modern than most. Legge wrote Rev. Troup that much written in the English newspapers about opium's horrors was exaggeration. "The evils of the traffic are bad enough; to misrepresent them only damages endeavours to make them less or remove them altogether". Against newspaper claims of 15 million smokers in China, Legge estimated the number was more likely 3 million. And of abusers, analogous to drunkards, he estimated closer to 1 million. Most users take "a whiff now and a whiff then, as people drink a glass or two of wine a day & do not appear to get any harm from so doing".

Legge agreed that the Chinese government (i.e. Commissioner Lin) in 1839 had been "perfectly sincere" in its attempts to stop opium use and the trade, and lamented the continued British trade. "But the use of opium is just like that of spirituous liquors. Perhaps it is more apt to run into abuse, though... I am not sure." He was not convinced that a law to prohibit either drinking or opium smoking was founded on reason, but was unsure about the best method to use to reduce the problems arising from excessive use. Within 70 years the American attempt to prohibit alcohol use showed the problems arising from an extreme policy on the consumption of recreational drugs.

In the summer of 1855 the LMS asked Legge to write an opinion about opium use, the scale of the trade, and how it could be diminished. Britons learned that Hong Kong Governor Sir John Bowring proposed legalizing the trade out of despair that its trade was actually increasing despite treaty agreements against it. While the Qing Empire had outlawed its trade in 1796 and its use in 1813, Canton officials had abandoned any enforcement of their laws after Commissioner Lin's disgrace, and the trade thrived. Medhurst thought that any change in the Chinese laws was unlikely because the prohibition had been decreed by the previous Daoguang Emperor (1782-1850), and his son the Xianfeng Emperor (1831-1861) would be unlikely to change it because of the need to observe filial piety.

In October Legge, Hobson, and Chalmers prepared a long article for the LMS answering a series of questions about opium. Legge added to this in a November letter, and sent further comments in 1857, in 1860, and as late as 1871. The three men reported that opium use had significantly increased in China since the 1830s, responding to intense demand from all levels of society including the officials and the gentry. The mission men did not use bombastic language about opium use or its remedies, and stressed the need for officials to use facts and sound statistical information rather than theories. They distrusted the effectiveness of punitive legislation and hoped that moral suasion could be more effective. Finally, they noted that the three “great mercantile houses” of Hong Kong (including Jardine Matheson) believed that there would be no losses to British trade if Chinese traders were truly prevented from importing opium because their interests in profit would soon turn them to other products. From the point of view of mission work the three LMS men concluded the opium trade created a moral barrier in allying the mission men with the British government in allowing the trade, but they considered there were other more significant barriers. Chalmers concluded “If suppression be practicable, let it be suppressed, if not let it be legalized’.

In November 1855 Governor Sir John Bowring asked Hobson to write an opinion on the effects of opium and he replied, referring to his original article in the 1840 *Chinese Repository*. His opinion had not changed across the ensuing 15 years, that it was a “great and growing evil, and not a matter of no consequence”, but he balanced that by noting that many of the charges against British traders were not true. The Earl of Clarendon had published an essay claiming that opium use had a “more appalling mortality than slavery” which Hobson knew was not true. It was “not so fatal to life as spirit drinking is with us”, good quality opium taken regularly could “be compatible with longevity”, and there was no deadly disease from opium corresponding to delirium tremens from alcohol. Instead of the drunken brawls of alcohol-soaked men there was no crime but rather quiet repose while the drug worked. Even though the Chinese did not enforce any of their laws against opium use, Hobson estimated that 96% never used it, about 1% of Cantonese were occasional users, and perhaps 3% were habitual users.

Dr. Hobson tried to help his patients to stop using opium on both moral and physical grounds, but he had seen that with the daily use of a small quantity “a man can still do his duties, and be clever and attentive to business”. He reported short-term success with treating opium addiction, but problems sustaining that within the Chinese communities where the trade flourished. He noted that the slave trade that the British had long abandoned, had been much worse on all grounds. While he wanted Britain to stop the opium trade, he argued it was driven by Chinese demand, believing that

Chinese captains would be doing the trade with India themselves if they had sufficient confidence in their ships and crew.

Finally Hobson explained that it was not the opium trade that made life difficult for mission men. The difficulties were chiefly in Canton and arose from the “unfriendly character of the people” in that specific city, because missions in Shanghai and Ningbo were freely accepted in the population there despite high levels of opium use. While he sympathized with Sir John’s interest in legalizing the trade in order to generate tariff income for China and to improve “the honour of our flag”, Hobson still considered legalization a poor remedy. He reasoned that even unenforced laws led to some restraints in use, and legalization would release those restraints. The best remedy was for China to raise the price and inhibit demand in that way, while Britain should also increase the price and reduce the production of opium. Stronach also wrote the LMS about opium, noting that the local mandarins in Xiamen were so enmeshed in the trade that one even proposed setting an import tax on it as a way of raising government revenues.

In late November Legge noted that “most just smoke it as one pipe a day – just as we drink a glass of wine”, but he deplored the hypocrisy of the trade. The merchants defended it by arguing that “the Chinese law prohibiting it has fallen into disuse, and we have no law against it so it’s not contraband, and our Government sells it to us in India”, but Legge regarded this as all casuistry, defending the status quo by backward argument rather than facing the truth of the harms it generated.

A young British aristocrat Sir Chaloner Alabaster (1838-1898) was sent out as a student interpreter in 1854 and in his 1855 diary he railed “The Opium Trade is truly a gigantic evil and one which will if not stopped in time ruin first China then India and damage England... If we continue the trade we dishonour ourselves, disobey our God, impoverish and demoralise China and India which we are doing rapidly”. He believed that large trading houses would put up a huge battle, and recommended that the British reduce the trade gradually over 10 years so as to allow firms to adapt (Alabaster, 1855).

#### Legge struggles with LMS over money and worries about his children

By late in 1855 Legge was seriously overworked and exhausted. He had taken on many new tasks in his bachelor life, but also had problems in the mission. Chalmers had withdrawn £20 from the LMS accounts as allowances for his two children, understanding from Legge that he was entitled to £10 per child per year as a standard benefit, but the LMS refused to pay Chalmers the additional child allowance and demanded that he reimburse the Society for the funds he had drawn. Legge was also



upset at the attempt of the LMS to charge him £30 for the payment of the return trip from Britain of the Chinese woman who had accompanied his three motherless children to Britain. The LMS had promised to pay her fare if she was unable to find another mission family to hire her for the return trip, and as she had been unsuccessful Legge expected them to honour that promise. He was also worried about Dr. Morison's lingering illness because his two daughters were being cared for by the Morisons. Legge began to fret, seeking an early trip to see them, possibly in early 1857, noting he had been working continuously since his return in 1848.

#### Canton and Shanghai uproar with insurgents

Across 1855 Canton was in an uproar, with battles and beheadings, fantastic rumours, and frequent movements of Imperial troops and rebels who included both local Cantonese and the Taiping in the interior. By late in the year the insurgents were mustering at Lintin island in the Pearl River delta, expected to attack Canton. In the ebb and flow of the battles in the summer of 1855 Governor Ye decapitated 75,000 people. Yung Wing, school-friend of Huang Shing during their American education in 1848 and later a reformer in China, walked to Ye's nearby execution ground and found the ground "perfectly drenched in human blood. On both sides of the driveway were to be seen headless human trunks, piled up in heaps, ... exposed to the burning sun" because no provision had been made for the vast numbers of bodies to be removed. "The atmosphere within a radius of two thousand yards of the execution ground was heavily charged with the poisonous and pestilential vapor that was reeking from the ground already over-saturated with blood and... the heaps of corpses... which showed signs of rapid decomposition" in the 90 degree heat (Wing, 1909).

In Shanghai the "Small Sword" rebels had taken over the Chinese city in 1853 (holding it until expelled by joint French-Qing forces in February 1855), and the British traders in the Foreign Settlement decided they did not need to pay any more duties to the Chinese since the Qing officials were gone. This outraged Governor Bowring in Hong Kong because Britain had signed a provisional agreement with the rebels to continue paying duties in order to retain some semblance of honour and law. In return, the British traders were furious with their Governor, but newly-arrived student interpreter Sir Chaloner Alabaster considered them mostly "confounded fools and scamps" because they were too stupid to recognize it was in their own interest to pay and maintain a British trade reputation for honest dealings; without that all future trade was doomed. In the south wealthy Cantonese continued to flee to Macau and Hong Kong to avoid being extorted by both sides, and by November thousands of Chinese boats were

moored off East Point in Hong Kong, including 4,000 rebels. The Hong Kong police were trying to keep order, armed with swords and bayonets.

#### Tidman criticizes the Hong Kong mission

At the Hong Kong mission in January 1856 Legge received another cool letter from LMS secretary Tidman. He scolded Legge for letting Chalmers believe the allowance started with the first child while the LMS Board order of 1848 only allowed a child allowance to be paid after the birth of a third child. Tidman sniffed that Legge's assumption was wrong, and instead awarded Chalmers a specific grant of £20 and warned Chalmers that there was no child allowance until a third child was born. Legge had intervened to describe Chalmers needs and actions to the LMS, but the upshot was that the LMS was stingy, claiming a need to control its expenditures. The unfortunate truth was that it was not consistent in applying its child allowance policy, and had given Shanghai printer Wylie £25 for his single child in 1853. Although Tidman huffed about the standard rules for the China missions he apparently was highly partisan with decisions favouring some men. More interesting is Legge's role, for he clearly had not understood the LMS child allowance policy himself in giving guidance to Chalmers. In later years Legge's ignorance of the policy in combination with the bias in London's payments resulted in significant underpayments to Legge.

Tidman also rejected Legge's request to return home to see his own children in early 1857, because Medhurst in Shanghai was so ill he was returning home and the LMS did not want their two senior men in China to be gone at the same time. Further, the Board had questions about Legge's having sent two young Chinese boys to Christians in Australia to secure their safety from the nefarious coolie trade, and about having sent a Chinese Christian to work with Chinese Christians who had migrated to California in that trade. The Board wanted to know what value these migrated Chinese Christian groups meant for the missions in Canton and Hong Kong. About the only item Tidman expressed any appreciation for was the essay on opium that Legge, Hobson and Chalmers sent late in 1855.

Early in January Legge sent in the accounts for 1855, reporting that the school and churches were working well and the press had made a profit of \$630 from selling types. He asked the LMS to write to Pastor Ho to congratulate him on the publication of his Chinese Commentary on the New Testament. Less happily, he reported that Ng Asow had "to be separated from church communion because he had turned to worldly things"; before long these problems were solved when Ng died. He had returned from his unsuccessful attempt to visit the Taiping rebels in their Nanjing base, had moved to

Canton to teach Chinese to a new American mission man, then returned mortally ill to Hong Kong.

Arising from the changed political situation in Canton, Legge hoped that the LMS would now reconsider the question of a new building for the Hong Kong mission because the big news was that the colony was again thriving, with the influx of 60,000 refugee-migrants from China. That meant the LMS decision to keep the Hong Kong mission open and not move it to Canton had been fortuitous. Tidman's tone improved somewhat in April after he learned of the printing profit, but he still chastised Legge for the greater expenses at the mission school even though Legge had obtained donations locally to help with these.

#### LMS and Chinese migration to the gold fields; death of Jane Asha

The mission was losing Chinese members to migration and death. Tidman and the LMS Board started to complain about the migration of Chinese Christians to the gold fields of Australia and California. They were annoyed about this dispersion of converts to "far lands" where the LMS China men could not help them, where they could not be protected from temptations and could not be supported by other Chinese Christians. Tidman viewed these migrations as a failure of the Hong Kong mission, seeing Legge's work as being weakened by these movements. Tidman briefly acknowledged that he should not be objecting to something over which Legge had no control, but complained that he should not expect additional missionaries to help in China if he was not "keeping the ones you have". Tidman did not want to send missionaries to a station that did not have a stable population. These cool critiques ignored the fact that Legge had been describing the hugely fluctuating movements of Chinese through Hong Kong for years, and they should have been no surprise to Tidman or the board. Legge wrote an assertive reply to Tidman's criticism. He pointed out that the Chinese in Hong Kong were highly mobile men who had left their families in China, looking for work. Hong Kong "is an emporium and asylum to which thousands resort for ... trade and security". In such a situation those who came to the Chinese chapel and became believers were still affected by trade and access to jobs, and left whenever opportunities presented.

Other losses to the mission included the death of Jane Asha, the young woman who had gone to Britain with James and his family in 1845. She married around age 24 then soon died, hoping to meet Mary Legge and the dead Legge children for whom she had cared, "in heaven".

The best mission news of the year was a small harvest of baptism to 10 men, including several well-educated teachers and a wealthy man whose estate in Foshan had

been destroyed during the military actions there. Educated converts were rare in the China Protestant missions.

### Mission buildings need repairs

The Hong Kong mission buildings were suffering from the usual tropical problems, and began to need significant renovations. Heavy rains and nearby road works created huge cracks in the foundation of the building that housed Ho and the boarding school's dining room in late 1856. The LMS refused to approve Legge's request to build a new print office, but the more pressing problems were now for \$800 to shore up the damaged building as soon as the dry season began. Legge wrote urgently for money to help demolish the damaged structure, arguing that rebuilding would be a better investment than renting, as the costs would be recovered within 4-5 years of rental costs. He hoped that he would not have to borrow the money in Hong Kong, as the interest rates there were very high. In response Tidman primly advised that Legge's sudden call for money "has come upon us unexpectedly, and therefore cannot but be somewhat unreasonable"; he didn't acknowledge that heavy storms also came unexpectedly. Nevertheless Tidman had to acknowledge that the Board approved \$300 to rebuild "the Native Pastor's" house.

Legge missed his children, and by mid-summer 1856 London approved his persistent request to return to visit them in Leicestershire in early 1858; the LMS carefully ruled he would have to pay the extra costs of a steamer trip. It had recently been relieved to learn that Dr. David Livingstone, one of the anti-slavery LMS mission men in Africa, had finally, after "painful and protracted suspense" arrived at Mozambique in east Africa in March, having left the Angola on the west coast at the end of 1854, traversing more than 2,000 miles in his historic walk across the continent.

### Che Jinguang seeks Legge: a singular engagement

In the two years leading to his departure for Britain, Legge became acquainted with an old Chinese man with whom he later became involved in dramatic and deadly events. Late in the spring of 1856 Legge was temporarily distracted by an interesting meeting he had with Che Jinguang (Ch'ea Kimkong), a keeper at a Confucian temple at Boluo, a town of 15,000 lying 60 miles east of Canton up the East River. One day a Bible society *colporteur* passed through that town and gave Che a New Testament. He became so interested in the book that he resigned his job because he now believed it represented idolatry, used a chisel to deface the wooden tablet honouring his ancestors that he now believed was inappropriate worship, and went to Hong Kong. There he found Legge and asked questions that showed his great interest in understanding the text.

Across these conversations Che decided he wanted to be baptized, but Legge was reluctant because of his conservatism over quick conversions. He knew that Che planned to return to his village without staying for the thorough education in Christianity that Legge considered was needed, and was concerned that Che's ability to represent the religion in Boluo might not be adequate. Che was as determined as Legge often was in achieving his own plans, and finally convinced Legge to baptize him in June 1856, then returned home to begin teaching about the ideas in this new book. Legge planned to write regular letters to Che, recognizing that he would be isolated in his beliefs in the distant town. Five years later Legge went to help Che under extreme circumstances. In the meantime Legge became an unwitting victim in a contentious court case in Hong Kong in the summer of 1856.

#### Legge in a contentious court case of extortion

During the hot July of 1856 Legge became embroiled in another highly contentious criminal case before the court, again merely through agreeing to serve as a translator. His miserable experience this time echoed the similar public controversy he endured in 1848. In the new case, the Sheriff William Mitchell sued Attorney-General Thomas Anstey for libel after Mitchell (who was part Indian) was accused of trying to extort money from condemned prisoners in exchange for their release as a "Queen's Birthday pardon". Some Chinese prisoners had claimed that the Chinese jailer had heard some extorting conversations, so the Sheriff asked Legge to question the jailer, the key witness for Anstey's accusation. Legge interviewed him and reported to the court that the jailer had not heard such conversations.

In court the prosecutor handed Legge a Chinese letter written by a scribe and purporting to come from Sheriff Mitchell. The prosecutor asked Legge to translate it on the spot, then compared his translation with the official one done by court translator Mr. Dick. Legge identified problems with this official translation. He described the Chinese letter as a "product of a poor scribe and a poor composer" with strange grammar in which the writer shifted from the third person to the first person in a way that muddled the issue of who raised the question of a payment of ten taels (of silver, each of about 1.3 ounces). In court examination of translator Dick he was shown to be incapable of reading much Chinese, with poor grasp even of basic money characters, casting significant doubt on the accuracy of his translation of the letter.

Dick's translation had been approved by the official translator Thomas Wade (1818-1895), and it indicated that Mitchell had said he "must" have ten taels, while Legge explained the scribe was making his own suggestion and using a word (*yao*)

meaning “want” rather than “require”, In response Wade, (later contributor to the Wade-Giles system of transcription of Chinese into the Roman alphabet), soon backed off the translation and denied he had approved it. Instead he claimed he had only agreed with the translation of one “word” which he decided represented the Chinese name for Mr. Mitchell, the accused.

The translation problems posed by the letter drove Legge to consult with Huang Shing after the trial. Huang, age 50, was fluently bilingual having been educated in English and Chinese from the age of 13, and now overseeing the LMS printing operations. He assessed Dick’s entire translation as only “approximate”.

The jury acquitted Sheriff Mitchell, and Shortrede’s *China Mail* once again attacked Legge for testifying in a case where the jury would think he was acting “as a friend of the defendant”. Legge responded in the *Hong Kong Register* defending his translation of the letter, explaining that a key phrase came from the scribe and did not represent words from Mr. Mitchell. Wade wrote the court a defence of Dick’s translation, arguing bizarrely that the letter had not actually promised release, the writer had simply mentioned the pardon and the sum of money in an “unconnected” way. Wade wrote another defence of Dick’s translation two days later in the columns of the *Mail*, commenting somewhat sarcastically on Legge’s status as “one of the soundest, if not the soundest, of our English Sinologues”. Scot Shortrede still apparently harboured resentment against Legge for his old grievances against Union Church events in 1847-48 during Legge’s absence.

In early August Robert Strachan, the editor of the *Overland Register* monthly published in Hong Kong, wrote a strong defence of Legge as a translator. The editor attacked the competence of Wade, and contrasted Legge’s *pro bono* work with Wade’s financial gain from his translation work. Wade “has made one or two lamentable failures as a Chinese translator in court, so he has not been of much use to the Colony; with regard to the lucrateness of the study Mr. Wade has been more successful”. Wade’s significant income from the government was contrasted with Legge’s: “As to the money Dr. Legge gets, ...we suppose it does not amount to the pay of a raw boy of a second or third clerk in the Superintendency or a Consulate”. “...there must be some principle (that keeps men like Medhurst and Legge) from following the example of the Gutzlaffs and the Parkers, and that principle must be ... superior to the mammon principle”. Legge’s knowledge of Chinese had not gained him much money, “but his bearing as a missionary, minister, and man has gained him the respect and esteem of every one whose respect and esteem is worth having”.

Editor Strachan commented that the criticisms of Legge by “one journeyman editor and one editor not present all the time” at the trial (undoubtedly Shortrede), who claimed that Legge was acting as a partisan, even missed observing the cross-examination of Legge. The cross-examination showed that Legge’s additional testimony was “neither ...expected or desired by the accused”. Strachan ended by explaining that Legge spoke the Canton dialect perfectly, which “anyone can see by attending him at the LMS Chinese Chapel”. The *Overland* editor summed up: “All right-minded people, by the end of the prosecutor’s case – will have concluded the prosecution was mean, contemptible, malicious, & vindictive”. Once again Legge had been dragged into a court case centring on the accuracy of translation work, and his testimony had won the day for the accused but brought a stream of invective from influential editor Shortrede. In his private letters Legge made no comments or complaints about his treatment, apparently bearing it with stoicism.

Chapter 37 Canton rebellion disrupts the mission, and Legge works on the Classics

*In which Legge receives a promise of support for the Chinese Classics, Canton turmoil affects the mission, Dr. Wong Fun arrives, and Che suffers.*

In the spring of 1856 Legge and the Hong Kong community were experiencing volatile direct effects from the rebellion in Canton. The city, the province, and all of south China was in an uproar, and the Qing Governor Ye issued an order for all Chinese in Hong Kong to return to China or their family members in China would be put to death. This sent a wild exodus of Chinese back to the mainland, seriously depleting the island's population. Tensions increased between China and Hong Kong leading to open conflict by late autumn. In Hong Kong there were several attempts by rebels to set fire to the town, and threats against specific areas such as Taipingshan where the LMS mission had its Chinese church. Troops were patrolling the streets all night and all the British men-of-war ships were anchored close to shore.

Mission families in China including the Hobsons fled from their inland stations to the relative safety of Hong Kong, where mission work was now also disrupted. Through fear of Governor Ye the boarding pupils of the ACC all had to leave with their parents, the college had to be shut down, and Legge was unable to teach or preach because of the loss of his Chinese students and congregation. The ACC did not survive this blow, and by the time the emerging second treaty war was finished in 1860 the ACC was unable to recover, finally closing completely in 1864.

The Classics: Political turmoil allows Legge to experience the joy of Chinese, 1856

With Legge's time now free from the demands of teaching and congregational work, with characteristic intensity he put his tremendous energy into his translation work on the Classics. Rather than anxiously ruminating about dangers, he concluded that the war "was favourable to retired and literary work", and sank into the luxury of the massive Chinese Classics that so captivated him.

Legge was beginning to plan how to get his books published. By 1856 his work now included scholarly essays, extensive notes, and a complete concordance and meaning-index to all the Chinese characters used in each of the works, in addition to the translations. He needed to raise money to buy paper and ink to print the work at the LMS press, and more to send it to Britain to have it bound. His plan was to publish the "Four Books (the books of the four philosophers), the "Five Classics" or canonical works of Chinese literature, plus the remaining books of the classical collection Confucian scholars called "The Thirteen Books" / the 13 *Ching*.



Legge was now 40 and had been working on the translations, notes and historical essays since he was 25 years old. He discussed some ideas about publishing the work with his mission friend in Canton, Josiah Cox. The books were being written for an educated audience interested in Chinese culture and ideas, but Legge had special hopes that missionaries would use them to help understand the people of China. Because these mission men were largely poor it was important to him that the publication receive subsidies. Legge had worried about this in discussions with Cox, explaining that he planned to go to the community and seek subscription money for his first volume in 1861. They decided he should do this fund-raising in Hong Kong.

Legge was saved from having to do this when a wonderful coincidence emerged that provided him with an “angel”. While Legge was struggling to figure out how to pay for the paper, ink, and binding in the UK, without his knowledge Josiah Cox went to Joseph Jardine to explain the problem. Cox explained the extraordinary nature of Legge’s work and Jardine remembered the boat journey they had shared in 1852 and the fluency with which Legge and the boatman talked. Without any fuss Jardine offered to cover all the costs of the entire series, saying, ““If you are prepared for the toil of the publication, I will bear the expense of it. We make our money in China, and we should be glad to assist in whatever promises to be of benefit to it”. Legge’s hope to have the books available at low cost to the missionaries could now be realized without an energy-sapping campaign of fund-raising.

Joseph Jardine, a few years younger than Legge, was a devout merchant in Hong Kong who was grateful to Providence for having allowed him to prosper in the China trade. He was a nephew of the tough old China trader Dr. William Jardine (1784-1843) who had prospered until his retirement to Britain in 1839<sup>31</sup>. William had started as a ship’s surgeon for the EIC, and had then become an independent trader in 1834 after the EIC lost its trading monopoly in China. He immediately set up a company to buy tea for Britain and was extraordinarily successful, building a giant firm Jardine, Matheson & Co. that owned 75 ships at its peak. The firm traded tea, silk, cotton, and opium, and rapidly expanded into many other significant commodities.

---

<sup>31</sup> The giant Jardine-Matheson trading company William Jardine had created in 1828 is still active today in East-West trade. Its assets in China were nationalized in 1949 but it reconfigured its operation and moved its headquarters to Bermuda in anticipation of the 1997 transfer of Hong Kong to China, maintaining its position as the largest Asian-based conglomerate. A 1970 merger created Jardine Fleming, a separate investment management group.

Long before Legge arrived in Hong Kong the Qing Emperor had declared all the opium trade illegal, but the British needed tea import duties and tea could only be purchased in China if the traders had some other commodity to sell to offset the purchase costs and balance the trade. Karl Marx wrote in the *New York Daily Tribune* (Marx, 1853) explaining the problems with the Chinese long-standing refusal to allow the sale of foreign goods in China, creating a massive imbalance of trade that favoured China and required “an uninterrupted importation of silver from India, Britain and the United States into China” starting in 1830. In 1853 Marx explained that this severe trade imbalance created the opium trade, and predicted that eventually this would lead to a revolution in China that would harm the trade interests of all parties and would lose Asian markets for western manufacturers.

The Hong Kong authorities ignored enforcing any Qing trading ban, and opium was managed through smuggling by small firms and independent captains up along the “north” coast. The major firms that had replaced the EIC, such as Jardine, Matheson did not participate in this illegal smuggling. Ironically, similarly modern trade barriers to the Chinese importation of ginseng have now led to its being smuggled up the Pearl River to Canton, echoing the route of the old opium trade. By 1860 the opium trade had gradually diminished as the large merchant companies turned to trade in a wide array of other goods once the legal rights to sell European merchandise had been won in the two main treaties, and Jardines finally ended its opium trade entirely in 1872.

As a businessman William Jardine was regarded as being both tough and honourable, with liberal and altruistic sympathies outside his business life. His nephews David (1818-1861), Joseph (1822-1861), and Robert (1825 – 1905) worked in Jardine’s company in Canton and Hong Kong and were close in age to James Legge. In the end, both Joseph and his brother Robert supported the publication of early volumes of the Chinese Classics. Although Joseph died after making his commitment and before the first volume was even published in 1861, his brother Robert honoured it posthumously. Legge was now assured of support for the costs of creating books out of all his work on the Classics.

#### Hobson and a new doctor in Canton, Dr. Wong Fun

As the military situation stabilized around Canton in early 1856, Legge and Hobson were relieved to discover there were now “scores of villages” in the districts around Canton where they could walk without any fears for their safety. Hobson was finally optimistic “after so many years of discouragement”. More exciting was the news in April that the LMS was now sending out the new doctor to help Benjamin Hobson in Canton.

Dr. Wong Fun (1828-1879) was new in interesting ways, being both newly-qualified, and a Chinese man originally from the Canton area. He would be sailing out in July with Hobson's son, young Benjamin.

Tidman's September letter explained that Wong Fun's Letter of Instruction was being sent ahead by steamer to Legge, who was told to read it to Dr. Wong. Tidman's letter then set the stage for two years of nasty struggles, when he mentioned that he had "intimated" to Wong that his salary would be £150, payable through Legge. Tidman confessed that Wong was "less known to us than we would have desired", and the board "wished we knew more of Dr. Wong", but he had good recommendations from the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society concerning his Christian character and professional accomplishments. Legge and Hobson were exhorted to welcome Wong with "frankness and cordiality", and he was to be housed on the hospital premises.

In Canton Hobson and his family had enjoyed a brief stretch of health in the weeks leading to 1856 and his spirits were somewhat buoyant although it was his nature to worry about future problems. He was soon outraged to discover reports in the newspapers suggesting that Dr. Parker might return to Canton as US Commissioner to China, railing to LMS Secretary Tidman that "you must feel a deep sense of indignation and regret, that he could forget his position and his antecedents in China and return hither charged with a political and entirely secular mission! Nothing but love of fame and money could have induced him to accept of this long-coveted appointment".

Hobson knew that Parker's rumoured appointment would harm all missions in China because it would make the Chinese suspicious of the motives of all the mission men, and make a question of their sincerity as religious men. In addition it would set a very bad example for young missionaries and to Chinese converts "who so easily long for the good things of this world". A Chinese paper in Canton had just printed an issue denouncing Parker's character and conduct on the grounds that he had favoured the rebels; it ended by warning him "not to shew himself in this city."

### Unrest in Canton

After a small armed encounter with Chinese police that was later known as "the Arrow incident" turned into open war in late 1856, Canton refugees again fled to Hong Kong. Consul Harry Parkes and his wife initially invited Hobson's family into the safety of Parkes' house in Canton, but the Hobsons left for Hong Kong at the end of October to "be out of the excitement and perils of a siege". They were cramped but comfortable in the Hong Kong mission, where they were grateful to be among friends and living in "peace and comfort". Other Canton mission families had their premises burnt, and Sir

John Bowring had to send out a small force to rescue a German missionary after robbers expelled him from a Cantonese village. The missionary was extorted for \$240, which he had agreed to pay from his own money, understanding that the robbers and the villagers would share the proceeds.

At the time that Hobson left Canton his hospital was in the best condition it had ever been, and the mission premises shared with Josiah Cox and other missions, had survived the unrest. Hobson decided to take a temporary job as ship's surgeon on a trip to Shanghai while his work in Canton was interrupted, taking his son Robert and leaving his wife and two other children with the Legges in Hong Kong. Son Benjamin was expected to arrive in Hong Kong from England in the company of Dr. Wong, adding to the housing pressures in the Hong Kong mission arising from the moves of the refugees to Hong Kong.

#### Dr. Wong Fun – a new kind of mission man; Hobson worries

Although Benjamin Hobson was grateful for an additional doctor to help in his busy hospital, he was quite anxious about the LMS sending Dr. Wong to his hospital, and he outlined the problems in a letter in April. Hobson explained that the Canton mission needed more mission workers rather than more medical workers. He understood that Wong's mission placement had been forced on Wong, and was not the kind of medical practice he had wanted to establish. If Wong really did not have interest in mission work, then "his superior education will fail to supply... the motivation he will need here. It's too self-denying and difficult." This was Hobson's fear, "but I won't be dogmatic and pre-judge the case". He reviewed all the mission placements, identifying the scarcity of help in the Canton mission compared to the stations in the north. Hobson worried that when Legge returned to Britain at the end of 1857 as planned, he would be left alone in the south with an untried man. In such a situation a very close relationship and a completely shared sense of mission was necessary.

Hobson planned to return to Britain in February 1857 then return to Canton later in the year, so he recommended that Dr. Wong be given responsibility for the entire hospital from the outset rather than working as Hobson's assistant for a short period. He urged the LMS to ensure that Dr. Wong knew that the LMS did not allow its mission doctors to do any private practise, and recommended that Wong present himself in Canton as Chinese rather than as an Englishman "or foreigner" because of the touchiness of the Cantonese about foreigners. Over the next months letters passed in which Hobson feared that Dr. Wong would not have sufficient experience to take over the whole hospital and also do the mission work, which was an integral part of the whole

mission. “The Hospital here is the Mission, - not an appendage”. Some letters from London praising Wong helped to reassure Hobson for a while, but by the summer of 1856 he was feeling that his entire career in China had been a mistake. He no longer wrote, “when I return to China”, but “if I return to China”, and discussed his interest in doing only mission work and no medical work if he did.

Legge learned of his friend Benjamin’s worries about Dr. Wong and held a meeting of the Hong Kong and Canton men in mid-April to plan an effective integration of Dr. Wong into the Canton work. The committee agreed that even during his training period under Hobson, Wong would be a full member of the mission, equal, and not just an “associate”. After Hobson’s departure for England, Chalmers would move to Canton to do the mission work while Wong ran the hospital.

In this the LMS and its men in China were behaving in an egalitarian way significantly different from the racism that was part of the American missions even decades later. Charlie Soong, later the father of Mme. Sun Yatsen (Sun Yixian), and of Mme. Chiang Kai-shek, was a young Chinese man who had been sent to study in the US in 1858 for ten years. When he went back as a missionary to Shanghai in 1886 for the American Methodist Church, he was a fluently bilingual graduate of the theology program at Vanderbilt University in Tennessee. In Shanghai the mission insisted on paying him a salary that was significantly lower than the other missionaries on the grounds that being Chinese, he was “only a native preacher” and thus only worth \$15 per month (Y. Zhang, 2004). Not surprisingly Soong soon left that work.

While the LMS men in Hong Kong regarded Wong as an equal in the mission, they were aware that others in the Chinese and European communities did not share their attitudes. Chalmers wrote that many in Hong Kong expected Dr. Wong to fail in Canton on the reasoning that it had always been a volatile location with sudden explosions of anti-foreign sentiment. Many feared that any foreign-trained Chinese missionary who worked in Canton trying to promote Christianity would receive a much worse response from the people than a European Christian would; in fact “he would not be tolerated”. To make things worse, the European community in Canton “would not give a Chinese missionary the sympathy and support which a European missionary usually gets”. Instead he “will be looked down upon as a mercenary Chinaman, and not one in a hundred will yield him the position which he deserves, or which every agent of the Society ought to have”. The fear was that both Chinese and English communities would reject Wong for their own reasons.

Chalmers recognized that Hobson had become obsessed with the problems he imagined would develop, and Chalmers wrote that “So strong is the influence of these

views upon Dr. Hobson's mind, and so little able is he to bear the anxiety which the presence of a Chinese colleague would cause him, that to associate them together would be a most hazardous experiment". Meanwhile, Chalmers now had a third child, and although now finally getting the benefit of the child allowance, was having severe financial problems with his low salary.

The Hong Kong mission men did not share Hobson's anxieties about Wong, and Hobson did not want to appear a dissident, so in May he wrote the Directors trying to assure them of his acceptance of the appointment. Anything else, such as leaving the mission, was too painful to contemplate. He mused about his nearly 20 years of struggle in Canton "giving the best part of my life... to the missionary cause". He was grateful that the LMS approved his return home to solve problems with his aged mother and sisters in Britain, and the need for two of his three children to go to England for schooling. Nevertheless he feared that if he left Canton soon he might never return because he feared his role in the Canton station would change with the arrival of Dr. Wong. Hobson knew he would never accept the various offers he had to join the government service or to establish a private practise in either Canton or Hong Kong, and he was consumed with worry about his future.

In September "I am resolved however to do everything in my power to render (Dr. Wong's appointment) a happy and successful" one, hoping that he will be "thoroughly imbued with a missionary spirit". Hobson's health was now improved, with fewer malarial headaches and palpitations, and this improved his spirits. Summarizing his work over the year he quoted Sir John Bowring's comments on Hobson's annual hospital summaries: "I am always struck with the truthful simplicity of your reports, so unlike many documents that China produces". Hobson had refused a number of applicants for baptism, suspecting their motives, and was able to report that one of these rejected men had now proven himself to have had "mercenary and insincere" plans, another had become a Daoist priest, two had moved away, and two had become indifferent. Genuine conversions to Christianity were still a huge problem in Canton in all the missions.

Governor Ye was demanding and collecting large sums of money from the wealthy of Canton for defence, and the province was still unsettled with bandits roaming freely and much destruction from heavy rains and floods, but at least Canton had been settled for a few months. Within two months all Hobson's late-gained optimism about the mission evaporated as small maritime incident turned into open war between Britain and China.

### More conflicts within China and with Britain

The Treaty of Nanjing that had ended the first trade war between China and Britain in 1842 had included the provision that the treaty be freshly negotiated in 12 years, but by 1854 the Qing dynasty was busy dealing with Taiping rebels and relations with foreign traders were complicated. In the revision of the treaty the traders hoped to gain a number of new privileges, including additional trade opportunities inland, legalization of the opium trade, and removal of customs taxes on internal trade goods. The British government wanted freer trade and residence in Beijing for a British Ambassador. All of these were being resisted by Beijing.

In addition the British traders in Canton were terrifically aggravated that the local Cantonese governors had never even fulfilled the original 1842 treaty provisions for free access to the city, and instead continued to keep the foreign traders confined to a narrow piece of waterfront land in their factories on Shamian. All treaty ports had complied with the treaty condition except Canton, and years of attempts by the foreign traders and Hong Kong officials had been unsuccessful. For its part, the Qing had the problem that it was increasingly losing the capacity to control what was happening. Canton in particular had an actively hostile gentry that agitated mob action whenever officials attempted to enforce the greater access required by the treaty. Governor Ye of Canton preferred to avoid open warfare with the British, but instead fanned the embers of the traditional Cantonese resentment of foreigners by allowing a steady stream of harassing incidents against the British traders. In response they were becoming increasingly truculent, furious and frustrated with the failure of the Canton officials to honour the 1842 treaty. Both sides were edgy, and minor incidents always presented the possibility for violent responses.

In Hong Kong there were new attempts to burn down the town in February 1856, apparently in aid of a plan to plunder once the fire was under way. The robber-arsonists struck at midnight, the bugle at the barracks sounded out the alarm, and the whole populace was roused to fight off the thieves and the fire. Sir Chaloner Alabaster's diary provides a magnificent free association account of the drama of the night. While the residents gossiped that it was not as bad as the fire of 1851, the fires were eventually brought under control through blowing up a number of houses, creating a fire break and killing the thieves inside who were busy plundering. Although 200 Chinese houses and substantial food stores were lost, the town was saved through the army's use of explosives.

There were other conflicts farther north in China. The Qing dynasty was Manchu and it paid its Manchurian soldiers twice what it paid Chinese soldiers. As the Qing

began to run out of money in their conflict with the Taiping rebels, they decided to cut Manchu military pay in half. When the Manchu soldiers discovered this on payday they were furious and in the resultant fray three were killed by Chinese. The Manchu General was outraged and demanded ten Chinese in recompense. When the region's Governor-General went to adjudicate the dispute he ruled that the soldiers of both ethnicities were of equal merit so the Manchus killed him. In response the Chinese killed the Manchu General and treasurer/paymaster. In turn the Manchus killed the Chinese judge of the criminal courts (Alabaster, 1855). This uproar threatened the integrity of the entire imperial operation just at a time when it needed unity to fight rebels in the south, and a small event near Canton soon triggered a new war.

A second trade war started at Canton arising from the Arrow incident. On 8 October 1856 an event triggered the second armed hostilities between China and Britain. The trouble started near Canton when four Qing officers and 60 soldiers boarded and seized men on a ship at anchor, the *Arrow*. It was a lorcha, a sailing vessel with a Western hull but the rigging of a junk. It was built in China and was Chinese-owned and operated, but it had an Irish skipper, flew the British flag, had British papers, and its Chinese owner lived in Hong Kong. A year earlier the Hong Kong authorities had begun the practise of granting official "sailing letters" to such native boats to provide them with some British protection against the Taiping rebel fleets around Whampoa, and to protect the vessels used by those Chinese who traded with them. Problems arose because the Canton authorities were not searching British vessels for opium, so enterprising opium smugglers used the British flag of convenience with these small vessels.

According to the rules agreed by the British and Chinese, the Hong Kong registry of the boat meant that the Chinese Navy should have asked the British forces to board the *Arrow* if there was any suspicion of smuggling or piracy. Instead, on October 8<sup>th</sup> Qing forces boarded it and seized all the twelve crew except the Irish skipper, who was having breakfast onshore. The boarding party claimed that the ship contained pirates and smugglers, a plausible explanation in that pirates and smugglers were known to use the lorcha registration system to make use of the protection of British law. High feelings in the colony were aroused on the grounds that the Qing marines should not have boarded a British ship, and were further inflamed with rumours that they had been violent.

Once the skipper found out what had happened he complained angrily to the British Consul in Canton that the Chinese marines had also torn down the British flag. British traders were incensed by this "insult to the flag" and pushed newly appointed



Canton Consul Harry Parkes to show a tough response to this direct but rather minor incident. Parkes had only been appointed as Acting Consul in June but he had already suffered in encounters with Governor Ye and may have been too hotheaded as events unfolded. He now demanded return of the prisoners, an apology from Governor-General Ye for the violation of the rules, and wrote an account to Governor Bowring in Hong Kong.

Ye refused to apologize but four days later returned the captured sailors with an explanation of the reasons they had been arrested. Parkes was under great pressure from the traders to take stronger action, so rather than accepting Ye's explanation and the return of the men, Parkes angrily advised Governor Bowring that a vigorous response was needed in order to obtain an apology and restitution.

In response, the day after the British received the prisoners Bowring ordered military retaliation. On October 22 Parkes ordered the seizure of a Chinese war junk as redress, and Admiral Seymour with the help of a French force and three war steamers, bombarded and captured forts in the suburbs of Canton. His forces spiked 170 guns, some forts were burned while others were held by artillery detachments, and 21 war junks were destroyed. Despite these major sudden losses Ye still refused to apologize about the seizure or to talk terms, but after some days he did send the British 12 men with chains around their necks, purportedly the marines who had seized the *Arrow*. Everyone knew these were merely wretched prisoners from the local jail and not real marines, so the British returned the men to Ye, and began further military actions.

Hobson was in Canton during these events and sent back long alarmed accounts of the activities and rumours swirling in the city. American sailors joined the British ships on October 27 in a limited bombardment of the walls of Canton. Over the next two days the British fired on the walls, breaching them. Early on the morning of the 29<sup>th</sup> the Admiral and Consul Parkes held loud discussions with a mandarin and the Howqua, the Chinese leader of the Canton foreign trading firms.

The British threatened a direct attack on Ye's official quarters if he would not agree to let foreign representatives at Canton have the same access to the Chinese authorities at Canton as at the other treaty ports. Ye responded by opening fire on the British at 11 AM, but by early afternoon Captain Elliot led a storming party of British and French through breaches in the city walls and occupied Ye's palace. At 6 PM Admiral Seymour withdrew all his troops as he had no plan to capture Canton and he didn't have enough troops to hold positions. During the night fires spread in Canton, and by 2 AM on October 30<sup>th</sup> Governor Ye's house was on fire. The fire opened up the southern (waterfront) wall of the city, with much destruction. Over the next two days there was

massive looting by Chinese in Canton, with rumours that Ye's treasures, mostly gold, had all been stolen.

On October 31 Admiral Seymour sent another urgent message to Ye asking for negotiations, explaining "I've tried to prevent loss of life except when my men were assaulted, and have respected your property", but also pointing out that the lives and property of Canton "are now at my mercy". He explained out that the fires had not been deliberately set by his forces but were accidental outcomes of the military actions with firearms, concluding "I can now destroy the city – it is all up to you; you can consult with me and everything can be stopped".

Ye wrote back arguing that his men had not known the lorch was British because it was not flying any flag. He complained that the British often took down the flag when at anchor, so he could not accept Consul Parkes' demand for an apology for an insult to the British flag as his men had not known it was a British ship. He argued that he had offered the men of the boarding party to the British but they had been rejected. "I'm baffled at this military action after years of peace".

The two men quarrelled about the rules governing access to Canton over November 1-3, the Admiral arguing the terms of the 1842 Treaty, while Governor Ye tried to claim that different rules governed access to Canton. Ye finally explained his problems by blaming the Cantonese "...it has been found that the people of (Canton province) are extremely fierce and violent, differing in nature from the people of other countries", ... so we do not want foreigners." Concerning access to Canton, "As of 1849", Ye wrote "there was not a Chinese or foreigner of any nation who did not know that the question was never to be discussed again".

Parkes posted Chinese notices in Canton explaining that all the fighting arose from Ye's obstinacy, that the Admiral had repeatedly tried to protect the Chinese people and tried to negotiate peace, but had been refused. Canton officials have "always hidden from foreign officials and instead written months of correspondence instead of a simple meeting". The gentry of Canton wrote Admiral Seymour explaining that all the problems were the fault of the *Arrow* captain who had dishonestly bought the British registration and was using it to smuggle salt. They explained that Canton's police were correct to board the ship of a smuggler, and the British were attacking "contrary to the treaty; is there any love or reason in such conduct?" Soon the British learned that Ye had put a price on the heads of all foreigners, and placards were being posted in the city explaining the different bounties for British of different ranks.

After Ye ignored the call for a meeting in early November, Admiral Seymour waited three days then put on a small show of force, shelling the walls of old Canton on Nov 3<sup>rd</sup>

and 4<sup>th</sup>. A few days later 23 war junks were destroyed and a small fort was taken. The Admiral paused again hoping for negotiations that he insisted must include Consul Parkes in direct meetings with Governor Ye. The only issue was British insistence on the 1842 treaty being enforced both in relation to the *Arrow* and in terms of traders' access to Canton. When nothing happened after 8 days, on Nov 12 the British attacked and captured then left some forts in "the Bogue". Seymour still had no means of holding territory and was not interested in gaining it, and within days the Chinese returned to these forts.

The Chinese then brought the Americans into the conflict on November 15, firing on an American steamer from the forts at the Barrier beside Macau, using British guns left there from a previous occupation. The American Captain wrote Ye demanding an apology, announcing he would wait 24 hours. Receiving no response, on Sunday 16 November while still under heavy firing from the Chinese forts, the captain began a return bombardment that lasted less than three hours. Five days later an American ship ran aground as the tide left, Consul Dr. Parker ordered the American ships to stop firing awaiting news from Ye, and a small shallow-draft American ship towed a larger one close to the shore, which was protected by stakes in the water. Americans landed on 21 November, attacked and captured  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the forts, and spiked the guns. The Chinese responded with rockets and arrows. The next day American ships captured more island forts, and in December Ye wrote them an apology "for the mistake". Scraps involving the British also continued, and on 14 - 15 December after a British sailor was killed in a village near Canton, the British set fire to it in retaliation. In response Cantonese began setting fire to the British offices and warehouses in Shamian on the waterfront, and they were all destroyed including those of the Americans and other traders. Parkes' assistant Henry Lane died in the fire. This huge fire was a very significant event and triggered the final battle of Canton, December 28-31.

Inside Canton the Chinese merchants and mandarins wanted Ye to settle the problem. The people began to get restless as they ran short of food, while disaffected rebels watching in the nearby rivers and hills waited for signs of imperial weakness "ready to pounce upon Canton in its weakened condition" even as they robbed the small villages around them. In the absence of negotiations, Canton was entered by British and French forces starting on 29 December 1857, ending with occupation on January 5, 1858, but the political problems were not solved.

Beheadings of Europeans on the Thistle, a mail boat to Canton triggered further alarm. Hobson and Legge had planned to visit Canton in late December when a horrible

event intervened. On December 29<sup>32</sup> some Chinese on the *Thistle* mail-steamer beheaded all 11 European passengers en route to Canton from Hong Kong. During the trip Chinese soldiers disguised as passengers helped the crew to mutiny and murder. After saving the heads to use them to collect the \$100 bounty from Ye, the attackers grounded the steamer and set it on fire. It was found drifting near Canton with the headless bodies in the hold.

Hobson thought Ye was simply too rigid to negotiate. "... his obstinacy and proud unbending spirit... has brought all these troubles and dangers upon the turbulent people of Canton". Hobson thought that old Admiral Seymour showed "a merciful spirit... united with great firmness and determination", although there was some question of what the British Government actually wanted to achieve and what kind of support it would provide the Admiral.

A new company had just completed a telegraph line from China to London to handle such urgent news as this small war, and England was in an uproar upon hearing of the *Arrow* and *Thistle* events. History has generally concluded that Consul Parkes was too impetuous and unduly influenced by the excited traders, goading Governor Bowring, Palmerston's government, and the Admiral into major military action that was not justified. The Qing military was unable to defend its positions effectively, in part because it was also fighting rebels in the interior.

Hobson returned to Hong Kong on December 31 from his convalescent trip to Shanghai, where he had enjoyed his visit to Lockhart, soon leaving for England. Dr. Lockhart jokingly offered Hobson a new setting: "if you want a house and a hospital, mine are at your service". People in Shanghai were unaware of all the events taking place in Canton, and when Hobson learned the details when he rejoined the LMS men in Hong Kong, Lockhart's offer began to look like a good plan.

#### The affair of the poisoned bread; Legge survives

In Hong Kong several Chinese attempts to poison the British had further inflamed local feeling. The first incident in mid-January 1857 involved three Englishmen who had gone into "temporary stupefaction" after eating soup that turned out to be poisoned. Fear increased on January 15 when there was a massive terrorist poisoning in Hong Kong in which Legge was probably the first victim.

He wrote of "a most villainous endeavour to poison the largest portion of the English community by means of our bread... Arsenic or some other poison appears to

---

<sup>32</sup> Or possibly on January 13, 1857 according to Endacott 1964

have been introduced into the dough that was to supply today's bread by the principal baker... I was perhaps the earliest sufferer, but the effect has passed away with nausea and vomiting. I just mention this". Someone in the Yi Shing Bakery in Wanchai had tried to murder the foreign colony through poisoning the fresh morning bread from the bakery owned by Zhang Yalin (known locally as Alum), with a huge dose of arsenic.

In the household he was now sharing with the Hobsons and the Chalmers, Legge ate this bread as part of his normal early routine at 3 AM and soon became violently sick without knowing why. At breakfast with the families later on, one child refused to eat the bread and butter at breakfast while the others ate their normal meal and Legge again ate the bread. As the meal progressed all except the difficult child became nauseated, and an urgent note was received from the Judge, advising "Do not eat the bread; it has all been poisoned". Hobson and his family were living with Legge and were also poisoned. The poisoner, however, had been over-enthusiastic in the dose of arsenic he used, so rather than becoming ill over a matter of hours people became ill while they were still at table.

All who had eaten the bread became suddenly and violently ill, including Legge and the Hobson-Chalmers families, so quickly vomiting up enough of the poison that no one died. Legge wrote of his "violent paroxysms of sickness. Never was such a day of excitement in the Colony; and had Alum been caught at once, he would have been lynched beyond a doubt; but he had gone off with all his family by the early steamer to Macau." Lady Bowring, wife of the Governor, nearly died, and many others suffered lingering effects long after the eventual trial of the baker. The dose of arsenic was discovered to be .92 % in every four-pound loaf (Stokes & Stokes, 1987). The British community in Hong Kong was in an uproar and the police rounded up hundreds of suspects before arresting 52 of them.

The townspeople soon discovered that baker Yalin and his family had left for Macau early that morning, so merchant Robinet immediately chartered the *Spark* to get to Macau so he could do a "citizen's arrest" of Yalin. It was rumoured that Yalin owed huge debts to some mandarins and risked major punishments, and may have decided to poison the British as a means of currying favour to these creditors. Robinet arrived in Macau around six and quickly found Yalin and his family still on board their steamer the *Shamrock*. To complicate matters, Yalin, his wife, servant, children, and some crewmen had all eaten the poisoned bread during their voyage, all had become very ill and they were still on board because they had not recovered. Yalin was anxious to return to Hong Kong because he realized the bread was poisoned and was desperate to return to find out what had happened.

Evidence confirmed that in Macau he had immediately tried to get the captain of the *Shamrock* to return to Hong Kong to investigate the poisonings, but the ship's crew was too sick to travel and no other boat was willing to leave that night. When Robinet apprehended him Yalin did not put up any resistance but instead asked if there had been any deaths in Hong Kong. He was eager to leave immediately to return to Hong Kong on a police boat that had been chasing across to Macau for him.

Yalin was a wealthy businessman with extensive estates and substantial businesses in both Hong Kong and Canton. His large bakery in Hong Kong had modern machinery and fed bread to 400 British households every day. He also supplied biscuits to both the British and American navies in lots of 100,000 pounds. Much of this work was done on an honour system, with credits handled rather casually even for very large orders. The evidence suggested that although a few men had commercial problems with him, most, including those placing massive contracts for his biscuits, found him honourable and reliable.

Testimony in his criminal trial two weeks later showed that days before the poisoning Yalin had put in more large orders for flour for months worth of work, suggesting he had no intention to leave town. Further, he had mentioned he was taking his family to Macau because he feared for the safety of his family from Canton-inspired mobs. Yalin had been told there were 63 mandarins in disguise in Hong Kong to spy on Cantonese businessmen there and stir up trouble for those who did not return to Canton as Ye had ordered. In the trial it was determined that the mandarins in Canton were persecuting his family there for his work in Hong Kong, threatening them with arson, imprisonment, and punishment if Yalin failed to return to Canton as Ye had ordered. Yalin had also been warned in a letter from his grandmother not to return to Canton, as she knew a bounty had been put on his head, and this letter was provided to the court. More directly, in one of the local Hong Kong riots stirred up by Ye's agents, Yalin's property had been damaged when he refused the mob's order to close down, and he realized his family was at risk if they stayed. His plan was to move them to stay with friends in Macau, pending a major move to Singapore.

In the trial of Yalin and nine others, it was determined that two of the bakers, Alun and Wong Ata'oi were men who had been crew on the *Thistle* during the December mutiny and beheading of foreigners while it was taking the mail to Canton. While 39 bakers were arrested after the poisoning, these two men had not been found. Yalin told the jury that he believed Cantonese enemies in Hong Kong had bribed his workers.

Matters were complicated by other facts that came out in the trial. Yalin had chartered the *Thistle* for its fateful and murderous trip in December. A friend of Yalin's

tried to bribe juror Mr. Sutton, was rebuffed on the grounds that he was “sworn” (to tell the truth), and the briber was eventually sent to prison for 6 months for contempt of court.

The prosecutor in the trial was the Attorney-General Thomas Chisholm Anstey, an “excitable Antipodean” who had become enthralled by the intensely devotional and moralistic Oxford Movement and converted to Roman Catholicism as a young man. Anstey had been sent to Hong Kong as AG, probably to get rid of his troublesome ways after a tempestuous parliamentary career in Britain. In the trial he dismissed evidence that Yalin’s family also became sick after eating the same bread, arguing instead that they were simply seasick. He also argued that Yalin and his nine staff should all be hanged whether they were guilty or innocent, “better hang the wrong men than confess that British sagacity and activity have failed to discover the real criminals”. However the judge, Chief Justice Hulme, had a stern belief in the impartial administration of justice. Yalin told the court that if he was found guilty he wanted his whole family to be beheaded along with him in accord with Chinese tradition.

The next events reveal Legge’s capacity to be open to the moral complexities and ambiguities of individual character. Legge met Yalin while he was in prison awaiting trial, with all the British in Hong Kong in a state of fury against him. Legge described Yalin with respect. “He was a tall, imposing-looking man...and had been well educated. The respect and deference shown to him by all the prisoners were wonderful. On the Sunday, when I went to conduct a religious service with them, he quite took me under his patronage, had the books ready, and maintained perfect order among all who attended”.

In the end Yalin his nine co-accused were acquitted at the end of a five-day trial after the jury considered the evidence for one-half hour. The suspicion then shifted to evidence suggesting that the bakery foreman Alun and an accomplice Wong had done the poisoning then had fled, and their actions were attributed to Ye’s hostility. For many years after no Chinese baker was allowed to serve the English in Hong Kong, and the trade was turned over to Parsis from India who shared the British habit of eating bread rather than rice as a staple.

Although Yalin and his staff were acquitted, they were immediately re-arrested because of local outrage. Governor Bowring wanted to deport them but the British government explained to him that there might not be grounds for deportation. Instead Bowring could “allow him to leave the island, and return to China, on the understanding that he will not be permitted to reside and trade at Hong Kong again”. Yalin accepted this “voluntary banishment”, left Hong Kong to live in Macau for four years running a

successful store, made a contract with the French to build several dozen junks for use in Vietnam, and personally delivered them in 1862. He was very pleased with Vietnam, established kilns to make bricks and tiles to improve the local housing, and lived as a prosperous businessman there for another 40 years. There he was widely fêted for his business and charitable work, and was awarded a French medal on his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, three years before his death. Yalin's coffin was taken on a final voyage to his native village near Canton in what was close to a royal progress.

#### Hobson's hospital threatened, he retreats to Hong Kong

Just days before the mass poisoning Hobson had written the LMS fretting about his next actions, because operating his hospital in Canton was now impossible. In early January 1857 he had learned there had been a great fire in Guangli in the western suburbs of Canton where his hospital was situated, and he worried that it and his house had been destroyed. Within a few days he learned that although his hospital was still standing, rebels had looted it of all its contents, and he was sure his home had suffered the same fate. By late January the news was worse and he learned that the hospital was burnt down, along with all the English houses. A region deeper than one mile had been destroyed after being looted.

"I feel at times very low and despoiled... at the sudden suspension of all that was good". He mourned "It took years of anxious and laborious effort to raise that missionary hospital... and it is with no little pain and discouragement that I have to record that it exists no longer". His congregation and hospital staff were all dispersed. It was devastating, particularly so because he had only just succeeded in getting a safe and good hospital operating in Canton after years of battles with greedy landlords, corrupt officials, and endless harassment from a jealous neighbour. Hobson had spoken with Admiral Seymour about the fire; Seymour was "sorry about the Hospital, but his fleet had been attacked day and night".

Now there was no work for Hobson in Canton or Hong Kong, so Legge, Chalmers, and Hobson decided that Hobson should take up Lockhart's offer and move his family and medical work to the Shanghai mission. Hobson should wait for late spring as the family had no winter clothes, and he could spend the intervening months studying mandarin and working on a surgery textbook in Chinese to use in teaching.

#### Wong Fun's arrival

Everything was in a state of anxious speculation when Hobson's son (also named Benjamin) arrived from London with Dr. Wong Fun the same day as the mass poisoning, January 15, 1857. Wong reported that the trip would have been "only tedious



except for one very serious accident 300 miles from the Formosa Channel". Strong winds ripped off the foremast, the main mast, and the mizzen topmast, ripped all the rigging, and broke the main mast close to the deck, bringing all the rigging down with it. Without the sails to stabilize the boat it rolled violently while the crew struggled to get one small mast up. They took 12 days to reach the nearest port. The trip in fact had been quite an ordeal, with extremely cold strong winds as they headed east from the Cape of Good Hope toward Australia, then all winds were lost and extreme heat debilitated everyone. Wong was seasick the first two weeks of the 166-day trip.

In Hong Kong Dr. Wong was welcomed on board by Hobson, then taken to his quarters in the mission house. With Hobson's Canton medical mission destroyed by vandals and fire, the men decided Wong should open an outpatient clinic in Hong Kong in the mission schoolroom above the Chinese chapel. Hobson gave Wong \$200 from the Canton hospital fund to use in buying medicines and instruments, including lithotomy instruments for kidney stone removals, a practice unknown in Chinese traditional medicine. The men wrote London asking for quinine for the ubiquitous fevers of the town.

Hobson and his family and a native nurse comprised a party of seven heading up to Shanghai at the end of January, Hobson paying all the fares himself in order to use his time best in Shanghai rather than sit around useless in Hong Kong awaiting any ruling from the LMS in London. He was deeply dispirited by the violent events, both the "diabolical" poisoning in Hong Kong that poisoned his children and wife, and the open war in Canton that had destroyed his hospital. The hostilities with China reminded him of his arrival 14 years earlier with Milne just in time for the first trade war in 1839. On arrival they had found that all foreigners were driven out of Canton and Macau and forced to live on ships near Hong Kong, soon to be blockaded in an effort to starve them, followed by attempts to burn the fleet. The only good thing about the current events was that "almost every plan to destroy us and our soldiers has been hitherto mercifully frustrated".

Legge shared the general opinion in Hong Kong that the hostilities were "founded in justice". In April he wrote a long account, explaining that the system of giving British flags to Chinese vessels had helped relieve Canton from sieges by the rebels, and helped maintain an open route for supplies to reach Canton, all helpful to the Chinese authorities. He reported that whenever Governor Ye had complained that some of these ships were smugglers, the British authorities had immediately removed the British flag and its protections, and Ye should have done the same thing this time. Legge thought Governor Bowring was right to demand reparations and enforcement of the treaty, and

after this was refused, to resort to the services of Admiral Seymour. Legge believed that the only other option was referring the question back to London, suspending all trade, withdrawing the British from Canton, and waiting for a larger fleet to come. It was understood that Admiral Seymour would not have agreed to this.

Nearly the whole Hong Kong community agreed with what the Governor and Admiral had done. If they had not acted this way they would have been subjected to “a storm of indignation and abuse. In the end, justice had to be sought through power in the force of arms” because the treaty rights had been violated for so long by the Cantonese that it was still unsafe for the British to live in Canton. In Legge’s view the hostilities had nothing at all to do with the opium trade, but instead arose solely because of the “arrogance and stolid obstinacy of one man – the Viceroy Ye... I am bold to say half a million of people have perished miserably during his government, without one truly generous expression of sympathy coming from his pencil or one generous measure of policy being initiated by him”.

A Chinese friend told Legge that if Canton were not taken by the British before May 8 (a widely-anticipated deadline), then half the people in Canton would be dead because food supplies had been depleted through the rebellion, bad crops, drought, and finally, war. “All this is known to the Viceroy, represented to him by his people, but nothing moves his flinty heart, or makes him yield one iota of the fixedness of his purpose”. Such determination might be noble if it served some purpose, but it seemed to arise only out of Ye’s nationalistic vanity. “China is the country, the Heavenly Government, the home of civilization, the rightful Sovereign of the earth. The people of other nations are outsiders, barbarians, beasts in human form. They may be more powerful than he, and may devour him, destroy him. But he will not yield to them. To get a complete picture of him, takes in addition, the fact, and no supposition of mine – that his reports to Beijing, of his troubles with the barbarians, are a tissue of lies, positive fabrications, self-glorifying falsehoods”. All the while, the Chinese government is actually “weak as water”. The rulers are “so unable to manage, that I suspect all of China will come under foreign rule”. Ye was sending highly sanitized reports to the Emperor, downplaying the severity of the conflicts.

Dr. Wong opened the LMS Hong Kong clinic in early February 1857, seeing about 60 patients in the four hours he was open daily. While there had been a mass exodus of Chinese back to China under Ye’s threats, some remained in Hong Kong, often those seeking asylum from the Chinese government. Wong was doing surgery and this was quickly earning him a good reputation among the Chinese community, where surgery was not part of traditional medicine. Wong’s main assistant in the clinic was Hong

Rengan, whom Legge had befriended and hired, cousin of the Taiping rebel “king”. “He is a man of great intelligence and of very considerable fluency of speech”, so he did most of the mission preaching while old helper Ashun explained things to the families of patients while they waited.

Some surprising new Chinese arrivals began hanging around the clinic and attending services; they were young men back from the gold fields of Australia unable to return to China. Wong discovered they believed that the Christian God was a god of riches and they hoped to gain his favour when they returned to seek gold. He was discovering that although his patients appreciated his care, there was a strong Chinese prejudice against Englishmen, who were considered to be “high-handed”, and this worked against mission efforts. The latest news from Canton suggested that Hobson’s hospital had not been burned after all, one of the few buildings to survive the fires.

The LMS wrote Wong in April commiserating with him over his fearful voyage and the drastic losses in the Canton mission, but encouraged that he was able to open a clinic in Hong Kong. They were happy to send him medicines worth even more than he had requested, £20 rather than £15. They were also sending big cases of silver bullion valued at £531.15.6 and insured for £440 on a P. & O. steamer to Legge for forwarding to Shanghai to cover mission salaries there. By November Wong had received three welcomed chests of medicine from the LMS, although he still needed much more chloroform for all the surgeries he did because he had not been able to find any substitute in the colony. Fever cases had significantly increased during the summer so he also needed much more quinine, an “indispensable medicine here”. He was interested to discover that his Chinese patients were helped with lower doses than the Europeans needed, an observation about racial differences in drug response that is finally being recognized as a significant phenomenon in modern research. Wong began to understand that the main interest of his poorer Chinese patients was raw survival and fending off starvation, leaving little room for any interest in religion of any kind.

#### Legge, the mission, and the political events

Hong Kong was effectively under martial law with all the unnerving events of 1857, and Legge told the LMS that he expected large military operations, with “every prospect of a general war”. Even if the Chinese “submit early, British troops will probably occupy Canton, and the scourge of war will be inflicted on the neighbouring district”. The mandarins again ordered Chinese to leave Hong Kong or their families in Canton would suffer, so business in Hong Kong was declining and prices were rising.

Legge had already closed his boy's boarding school because he couldn't afford to feed the students, and all the operations of the Hong Kong mission except the day school were now suspended. He had no fear for his own safety because of the increase in guards, although "incendiaries and thieves" remained a problem and there were many rumours that Cantonese planned to set fire to European buildings. Legge feared more that his schoolboys might be recruited into the gangs of arsonists. He recognized that if the war spread to Shanghai the LMS men there would also need sanctuary in Hong Kong.

Even though Legge's children were gone, the mission house in Hong Kong was becoming a busy place of refuge for mission families in 1857. Legge hoped the LMS would approve his trip home in summer 1858 (having refused him for 1857) to re-join his children and move them from the care of his aging Morison parents-in-law in London, to a school in Leicester recommended by his brother George. George was now well established there in a good congregation. In April Legge learned the good news that Dr. Hobson's house in Canton had not been burned, and the LMS men planned to reclaim the house as soon as peace was restored. In working with Dr. Wong as he set up a clinic in Hong Kong Legge had come to the opinion that while Wong was a good doctor he was not capable of running a mission, so new staff would be needed for the Canton mission. The mission was affected by the dynamic refugee arrivals, and an angry letter to the *China Mail* in March complained that brothels that the government left to operate freely now surrounded respectable places like the Union Church, "thus keeping respectable Chinese families from moving alongside Europeans".

In April Legge and Chalmers learned of Medhurst's death, aged 61, within two days of his having reached London 22 January. The LMS wrote that Medhurst was "utterly debilitated by the ravages of disease". It realized that his vast work on his publications in the last few months he was in China "contributed in great measure to precipitate the final result". The LMS held a large funeral for him, honouring him for being "mainly instrumental in preparing a version of the scriptures possessing in the opinion of competent judges far higher merit as to general correctness and adaptation than any translation previously completed". Medhurst had gone to China as a printer and typesetter in 1816, became ordained there, developed great skills in written Chinese, and worked there for more than 40 years. His translation battles over the Chinese term for God lasted 8 years, his views prevailing in the end, and the Board was glad that Medhurst had lived long enough to see the entire new Bible published, as "the Delegate's Version". Legge had first met Medhurst in 1839 in Jakarta, briefly studying Chinese with him.

The LMS asked Legge to speak to Governor Bowring about an old shipwreck, as rumours had surfaced that the Englishmen on it had been captured and kept as slaves mining sulphur on Formosa (Taiwan). The ship *Kelpie* had been wrecked 9 years earlier off Formosa and everyone assumed all were lost. But Thomas Smith's seal ring had been offered for sale in Hong Kong, and one of the slave owners reported a captive "Tommy". Tommy's brother and friends in Manchester were eager to pursue these leads and the LMS was going to ask Stronach in Xiamen (closer to Taiwan) to seek information. The LMS asked Legge to ask Bowring to get Admiral Seymour to "do everything to gain the release of Mr. Smith and his companion" Nye. Legge pursued this query and in August reported that there was no evidence of the missing men, disappointing the families in Manchester.

As part of his pastoral duties Legge presided over a marriage of notables in the colony in April, when he married Antoine Bliss Esq. the Netherlands Consul and Jane Morton, daughter of the Superintending Surgeon of the EIC. This suggests the non-conformist community included people of some rank and importance.

#### Che returns to Legge

Che Jinguang, the old Confucian man who had begged for baptism from Legge a year earlier, fled to Hong Kong from his home in Boluo arriving in May 1857. His relatives had been furious with him for his change to "the foreigners' religion", and had thrown water on him. They stirred up his neighbours against him, stole his chickens, reviled him in public, and created such a fuss that he told Legge the whole town was in "a state of excitement about me" for more than 10 days. They saw him leave his job as keeper of the Confucian temple, take down idols and abandon ceremonies honouring his ancestors, and decided he must be "crazed".

They went farther, complaining to the magistrate that Che was indoctrinating the people with heretical ideas and needed to be put in the cangue (stocks) or in chains. When the magistrate jailed Che and left his office, these neighbours then tried to extort money from Che as a way of getting them to stop their complaints, "but were disappointed to find I was poor, so after a great display of rage they left me". Some reasoned that the disorders in the country drove him mad, and after three days in custody he was released. Three educated men of the town urged him to take revenge, not sharing the ethnocentric rage of the others, and Che explained that Christians do not take revenge. He was the centre of controversy for three months before leaving to walk to the nearest town with Christians, to discuss his problems. They wanted to go to Hong

Kong to be baptized but were afraid to leave their villages, fearing their neighbours would steal their property if they left.

Che ventured to another town to the north to preach, and although the people complained that foreigners' books were illegal and should not be discussed, he did not come to any harm. Other treks to other villages including his ancestral village brought similar results. Although Che gradually created a small community of Christians who wanted to come to Hong Kong for baptism, all but one were afraid because of the political unrest. Che brought Hot Ayuk, and after a careful investigation of his beliefs and his understanding of the Christian books Che had given him, Legge baptized the student in late May, and Che and Hot returned to Boluo. But Che's story was just beginning.

#### Mission health Hong Kong

The Hong Kong mission suffered more health problems and deaths in 1857. Chalmers' wife suffered severe dysentery for three weeks in the winter of 1857, and almost died in a second episode before finally recovering in March. Chalmers' youngest child, a daughter, died of fever and brain inflammation on 14 July, and he wrote that Legge also suffered illness with a severe attack of fever in July followed by dysentery. Legge's physician "was alarmed" by a severe attack of kidney stones and told him he must immediately return to England, but he recovered and hoped the LMS would approve his request for a short trip home. In an August letter the LMS finally approved this trip for the costs of sailing so that he could "arrange for the disposal of your children", as long as events in China did not mean his services were still needed in Hong Kong. Legge intended to pay the difference for the shorter quicker steamer route.

#### British politics, Lord Elgin, and the bombardment of Canton

The murders on the *Thistle* in December 1856 and the attempt at mass poisoning in Hong Kong in early January 1857 directed political debates in Britain to the defence of the colony and led to a short military action by Admiral Seymour in mid-January 1857. British troops landed in the western suburbs of Canton, shot at looters in the 13 districts used by foreigners, then retired. The looters retaliated by setting these districts on fire then fleeing. The British had reason to believe the arsonists were gangsters from outside Canton, and this view seemed supported when the *Times* reported that 9 of the 12 hong factories owned by Cantonese merchants allowed to trade with foreigners were also destroyed. The British fleet was withdrawn from the upper river around Canton and Ye responded by posting notices of a bounty for the heads of either British or French "red-haired foreign dogs", for the capture of these foreigners, and for the burning of the British steamers. All Chinese in the employ of foreigners were ordered to return to their

native villages. Late in January the Chinese navy launched a flotilla of fire ships full of gunpowder against Seymour's anchored ships, and although they did little damage he removed to Macau.

British critics of the actions of Parkes and Admiral Seymour called the actions a "disgraceful and dastardly attack", and were outraged that they "so quickly turned this small and dubious incident into total war". They wrote, "a more rash, overbearing, and tyrannical exercise of power has rarely been recorded", specifically referring to Sir Michael Seymour, Mr. Consul Parker, Dr. Bowring, and all others. Opinion was that the Admiral is "unpardonably active".

Lord Derby, chief of the aristocracy, told Parliament that Bowring, a physician prior to becoming Sir John and Governor of Hong Kong, had abandoned his formerly humanitarian policies, and described the naval actions against Canton as "miserable proceedings" and "inglorious operations". The opposition Tories were outraged at Governor Bowring's aggressive military response to the problems with Canton, won the Radical party to their views, and together they defeated aged Lord Palmerston's Whig government in March.

Karl Marx, writing in the *New York Daily Tribune* from London reported that there was great criticism of Bowring for thinking that he had the power to declare war. Bowring's instructions were to avoid hostilities with China, but he decided to work with Parkes and use more force. Bowring refused to meet with Ye's merchant chief the Howqua, stubbornly sticking to an extreme version of diplomatic etiquette that left Marx suspecting that there was a secret hand in Whitehall who was actually directing Bowring to take such aggressive steps (Marx, 1857). In a later article, after the Commons voted to censure Lord Palmerston's government and Palmerston responded by dissolving parliament, Marx concluded that Palmerston was this secret hand, noting that he had been supportive of military action against China since 1847 even though successive British governments had been opposed.

The *Times* argued that the real fault was "on our side for having allowed the Chinese to so systematically violate the treaty", and noted that Ye, claiming far more rights than the treaty had allowed, not only refused to comply with the treaty but had already killed more than 70,000 in Canton and was thus no model of diplomacy. The paper added that all the British and foreign residents in China approved of the British response. In the end the supporters of a moderate response were stifled after the country learned of the mass poisonings in Hong Kong, and Palmerston won renewed power in an April election. He appealed over the heads of the cautious parliament

directly to the more aroused country, on the grounds of obtaining redress for the “insult to the British Crown” in the *Arrow* incident.

Palmerston’s new Parliament decided that a major military response was required to force the Canton officials to enforce the provisions of the 1842 treaty for trading access to Canton, and for the establishment of an embassy in Beijing. On 12 March 1857 Lord Elgin (James Bruce, 1811-1863) was appointed as plenipotentiary to deal with the Chinese, over the head of Bowring. He was ordered to China to lead a military action to enforce the trade treaty even though he found the pretext for the war scandalous. Elgin was even more disgusted by his eventual discovery of the role that opium played in the Hong Kong trade (Inglis, 1975).

In March the LMS wrote Legge that they believed the *Arrow* incident was actually a pretext rather than a cause of the terrible events of 1856. The recent “disastrous occurrences at Canton were rooted in the “violent prejudices” held by the Cantonese, and open war was “not really a surprise”. They hoped that the problems would be resolved with “as little suffering as possible on the part of the Natives” and were relieved to have Legge report that neither he nor the Hong Kong mission were endangered. The suspension of mission activities was more a matter of regret than surprise. The LMS accepted Legge’s plan to reopen the school only as a day school when circumstances permitted, accepted Dr. Hobson’s plan to move his family and mission activities to Shanghai, and mourned with him his loss of his hospital and home in Canton, “the fruit of his long and persevering labours”, not realizing they had both been spared.

The 8th Earl of Elgin left England on a P. & O. steamer on 26 April 1857, his mission strengthened after Palmerston’s renewed mandate in Parliament. En route Elgin reached port in Sri Lanka on May 11 to discover that a mutiny of Indian infantry (sepoys) had broken out in India. Reviewing what he understood of the situation in China he concluded China was more important and decided to continue to China rather than join a fleet heading from Bombay to Calcutta. Elgin reached Penang at the end of May, while in Canton Admiral Seymour began attacking Chinese war junks in the creeks off Foshan. Many of the shallow-draft junks were almost resting in soft deep mud, while the attacking British gunboats with deeper drafts became stuck in the mud and easy prey for Chinese fire. The battle lasted one day, and although the Admiral reported destroying 100 of the junks, many British lives were lost. When Elgin reached Singapore on June 3, urgent diplomatic letters from Britain led him to decide to divert most of his troop ships north to Calcutta instead of on to China, but he waited to join the



steam frigate HMS *Shannon* and its troops to Hong Kong to consult with Admiral Seymour and Governor Bowring.

News of the Indian mutiny reached Legge in June, and he suspected that its widespread nature would probably lead the British government to defer any further attention to the problems in China. Over the summer all was calm at Canton. It seemed the Qing government was still in no hurry to negotiate to settle the trade problems there, but there were no more hostile acts against the British or by the British against the Chinese. The opium trade was still thriving among Chinese traders along the coast and the Taoutai (Mayor) of Xiamen even published his official schedule of tariffs on opium at \$48 per chest. This tax was a value high enough that the *China Mail* predicted it would lead to increased smuggling.

Legge saw Elgin arrive in Hong Kong on 27 June 1857 on the *Shannon*, watching the ship move into the harbour and exchange gun salutes with the Admiral. Legge realized that a mighty confrontation between China and the rest of the world was forming up in which “There is the knell of the past on China. It can do nothing against these leviathans”. Elgin was joined by Baron Gros on a French frigate, Mr. Reid of the United States on the *Minnesota*, and Russian Admiral Count Poutiatine.

While Elgin’s mandate from London was to deal directly with Beijing, the local merchants in Hong Kong contended that it would be more effective to have a sharp and short military action against Canton as a means of forcing Imperial attention, rather than risking total war by an aggressive move directly against Beijing. The leading traders made their views clear in a forceful memo on 9 July but their proposals were trumped by the problems in India, and within two weeks Elgin left Hong Kong to go back to Calcutta with the *Shannon* and its troops. He arrived there in early August for a temporary stop to provide troops to help the British forces. Legge thought Elgin’s trip to Calcutta was about the best action under the circumstances because there was no military force in Hong Kong to help him. Legge was convinced that the Emperor would not agree to any talks until forced to by a capture of Canton, and thought perhaps Elgin would return with enough Indian troops to do that. While Legge was shocked at the mutiny in India, he hoped that it might lead the British government to stop the government monopoly on the growth of poppies and the traffic in opium.

Elgin left the *Shannon* and its troops at Calcutta and arrived back in Hong Kong on 20 September. His instructions from Foreign Secretary Lord Clarendon gave him the authority to take Canton by force. It was a large city of one million, about 1/3 the size of London then 2,800,000.

Legge described Lord Elgin as “bold prudent, far-seeing, conscientious”. He was the son of the “Elgin Marbles” Earl, and had recently served for seven years (1847-54) as the Governor-General of Canada. There he had shown progressive thinking and effective leadership, approving an Act compensating rebellious French-Canadians that improved relations with Quebec even though it angered conservative members of the English community.

In Hong Kong Elgin found himself forced to be part of a combined British-French bombardment of Canton. Initially he made proposals to Governor Ye for direct talks, but this only led to a resumption of the memo wars that had so infuriated Parkes and Governor Bowring earlier. Traders and diplomats from other nations were joining the British in trying to get direct treaty talks, including American, Russians, and French. The French had been outraged by the imprisonment of a French priest Father Chapdelaine in a small iron cage in the interior in Guangxi in February 1856 and his subsequent death from fierce beatings, and were keen to join forces with Britain in military action.

Across the autumn months of 1857 the Allies kept trying to get direct negotiations with Ye, now also to include reparations for the destruction of the traders’ factories in Canton. Delhi had been recaptured in September and troop ships were now available to Elgin for use in China. On December 14, after yet another refusal to talk, joint French and British forces commanded by Admiral Sir Michael Seymour moved the *Coromandel* up the Pearl River where they captured a point and an island, and landed troops near Canton by December 19. An ultimatum was sent to Ye on December 24 requiring direct negotiations; if no satisfactory reply were received the Allies would use force. Ye ignored this call and after waiting four days, on December 28 the Allied forces began shelling Canton in a bombardment that lasted 38 hours, ending with troops scaling the SE walls of the city and taking it on 29 December. The British had 96 deaths and the French army led by Gros, lost 34.

Canton was placed under Allied occupation at the end of December 1857, with Consul Parkes, the only Chinese-speaker, leading an allied tribunal that provided advice to a new Governor, formerly Ye’s assistant. The Governor of Guangdong province was allowed to retain his post to ensure stability in the province, and Parkes virtually ran Canton for the next three years.

#### Legge and the Chinese Classics: LMS learns the scale of the project

Since the death of his wife, the departure of his children, and the disruption of his mission work with the loss of so many Chinese families with these dramatic political

events, Legge had been able to spend much more time working on his studies and translation of the Classics. In September 1857 he wrote somewhat diffidently to the LMS. "I beg to send you a few pages of an edition of the Chinese Classics with a Translation, &c., which I have thought of publishing. The work would extend to 8 or 10 large volumes. This specimen I had printed to get an estimate of the expenditure that the whole would require. I shall do nothing more in the way of printing, till I have conferred with you in England".

This was the first time that Legge had so explicitly explained the massive scale of his publishing project. Tidman had last written snide comments about the translation project in 1851, and it appears that from that time onward Legge kept rather quiet about his daily early-morning translation work in his letters to the LMS.

Legge would be able to use the wonderful Chinese fonts created by his mission press for these publications now that the new Chinese Bibles were all published. These beautiful fonts were also beginning to be known by European scholars. In October Chalmers sent Prof. Julius Mohl (1800-1876) senior Oriental scholar of the Academie Française, a description: the main characters for text were in two sizes, medium (3 line diamond) and large (3 line bourgeois), and a full, matched set of characters was available in both sizes. In addition there was a partial set of smaller characters that could be used in Notes. Each character of this small size had been made up just as it was needed, and to complete a full set would require £1,000. Legge noted, "As far as I know, there are no other Chinese types cast from matrices in China besides ours. The types with which Dr. Morrison's Dictionary was printed, were cut (i.e. cut in wood). They were destroyed last year in Canton. The specimen of Chinese characters cut in steel and cast in matrices by A. Beyerhaus, Berlin, is very good". That month Legge told the LMS he had also sent two sets of his first specimen pages of his Classics translations to Europe, one copy to Mohl, and one to his mother-in-law Mrs. Morison.

Chapter 39 A year with the Classics, and a Chinese friendship

*In which Ye is banished to India, and Legge spends much time on the Classics, forming a friendship with Hong Rengan.*

Governor Ye surrenders

Political events moved briskly ahead in Canton in 1858. With the capture of Canton at the end of December 1857 the allies were quick to establish themselves there to capture the attention of the Emperor, and Governor Ye was their first specific target. Consul Parkes was one of the first men to move into Canton on 5 January 1858, a week after the walls had been stormed. He went directly to arrest Ye in his official quarters and had him taken on board a gunboat.

In short order a steamer took Ye to retire to a villa in Calcutta, a voyage described by a special correspondent from the *Times* who accompanied the banishment trip (Author, 1858). The *Times*' man was greatly interested in Ye's behaviour during his capture and on board. When Ye was seized by Capt. Key, Ye's "vast carcass shook with terror and he completely lost all presence of mind", surrounded by "50 blue-jackets dancing around him like madmen, flourishing their cutlasses, throwing up their hats, and cheering at the top of their voices". A man who had caused so many deaths might be "expected to meet his own fate with dignity. Ye was not equal to this. He shook, he made gestures of submission, he denied his identity, he would have fallen had not Capt. Key held him up". He "trembled violently going up the stairs to the ship, eagerly asked if he was to be killed, and when he found out it was not our custom to put prisoners to death he seemed quite contented".

Despite his capture, once Ye realized he would not be killed he quickly reverted to his usual imperiousness and played "mind games" with his captors. He refused to speak to any official other than Lord Elgin, and refused to write his signature for Sir John Bowring on the grounds that "every word can be distorted to some hidden meaning". He treated his British interpreter with "infinite rudeness and contempt". In answering Lord Elgin's message announcing Ye's deportation to India, Ye was "magnificent and theatrical". He had been sulky after his capture when Governor Bowring came to see him, trying to avoid being seen by any Chinese because he had lost so much face. When Bishop George Smith asked to visit Ye before he was sent off, he asked that Ye be not told of his title, joking that "if there is any profession for which a proud Chinese *literati* entertains a supreme contempt, it is for that of the priesthood of all faiths, Buddhism emphatically included".

Ye was housed in Captain Brooker's cabin, and for the first three days out of Hong Kong Ye was violently seasick with huge groanings and vomitings, making a mess of the cabin. After he realized that he would not be killed and he would not have to face any Chinese, he became increasingly chatty, and by Singapore was spending much time in interpreted conversations with the *Times*' reporter.

Tough Viceroy Ye, the "second most powerful man in China" according to the reporter, had left office after more than 25 years of ruling as an absolute despot over 30 millions, in different official positions. He boasted to the reporter of his great success in putting down the rebels around Canton, claiming they were only common criminals interested in robbing and rape. He was proud that he had "himself sentenced to death 100,000" of his countrymen. "He boasts that the estimate must be quadrupled if we take into account the towns and villages destroyed by his orders". In 1851 Taiping rebels had destroyed his large estates near Hangzhou, leaving him with a violent hatred of them and of any forces of change. Concerning those he had killed, Ye expressed regret only that he was unable to kill all the rebels. When asked about Europeans rumoured to have been poisoned in Canton he refused to answer, other than describing where they were buried. In general Ye had "a fantastic talent for lying about any important matter – is trustworthy only on "indifferent" topics".

Ye was tall (about 5'11") and very stout, with a heavy face and jowls; he wore a long thin moustache and beard, and a short queue. His usual expression was of "shrewdness and cunning", but "I've seen him glare with terror and fury at times". Despite "a successful career of ruthless energy" Ye's behaviour on the ship was now only "sloth and insolence". Despite Ye's coarse laugh and his despicable boasts and character, the *Times* man was clearly intrigued by Ye's abilities; he was extremely well-educated in "all the learning of China".

As the voyage progressed Ye discovered that neither Elgin nor Capt. Brooker were interested in talking to him other than to find out if he were comfortable, and he gradually relaxed his imperial ways. He was astonished at the size of the *Times* newspaper that the reporter showed him, but was even more interested in getting substantial meals. These included six pounds of pork daily cooked for him by his own Chinese cook, who was master at producing huge quantities. Ye gave the rotten oranges from his supply as gifts to his servants and carefully kept the good ones for himself.

Ye was prim in the Confucian tradition and considered the lavish open necks of the dresses the European Victorian women wore to be atrocious in revealing their throats and more. Their ball-gowns were the worst; he was scornful that women should have their portraits painted in such gowns, which should instead be used as bedclothes.

The reporter found Ye's personal hygiene lacking. His teeth were very black which Ye justified, claiming that "it never has been the custom of his family to use a toothbrush", although many Chinese did. When captured he still had the long fingernails of his rank, but they were soon gone, his explanation being that he was "too busy". On the voyage his hands were as black and unwashed as his teeth. His personal habits were also filthy, with spitting, belching, and blowing his nose with his fingers. "A more undesirable messmate for the commander of a ship can scarcely be imagined". He did not wash his body, had a horror of fresh air and kept all the portholes and doors closed to protect the fug in his quarters. Ye boasted that he had worn his outer coat for ten years and "it looked it", being stiff with grease. When the ship entered tropical waters Ye shed many layers of clothing and lay about sweating in a long filthy yellow undershirt, "wet and discoloured – a most disgusting object". When it was discovered he harboured bodily vermin there was "considerable alarm" that such a great man encouraged "a class of parasites not usually tolerated by a great man". Ye finally asked for a bath and a very fine arrangement was offered him on deck, but he refused it and instead used a small amount of hot water in his cabin then re-clothed himself in the same filthy clothes he had been wearing. Ye was accompanied by his own servants, including the cook, a barber, two personal servants and an orderly who was a military mandarin. The Captain forced Ye's servants to wash their clothes and bodies after the vermin were spotted, but did not force cleanliness on Ye. In the opinion of the *Times* man, southern Chinese were very clean about their persons, but northerners were not, and Ye was a northerner.

Ye did not smoke opium although he occasionally used "sam shu" (*samsu*, triple-distilled rice liquor) as medicine. He meditated daily facing east in a "Taodi" ritual he explained was older than Buddhism, Daoism or Confucianism.

Although he was an educated man with four degrees achieved in the imperial civil service examination system, Ye never used his time to read, and had a scornful attitude toward information that could be found in British books. By the time of the Qing dynasty the civil service exams had become demanding but corrupted and ossified in terms of structure and content. They covered nothing of the history of any country other than China, did not include any kind of science, river management, trade, biology or other aspects of nature, or anything about foreign lands. The exams did not even concern more directly useful topics such as Chinese law, and Ye had never even read the Chinese Code of Laws although he had served as a judge in major parts of his career.

More genuinely intellectual mandarins had recognized this problem in the Chinese educational and examination system for some time, and Commissioner Lin with Wei

Yuan in 1842 had already devoted themselves to publishing a 20-volume Chinese book of geography and world history as gleaned from European texts to try and improve the general knowledge. But Ye was not such a natural intellectual and had no curiosity about the world beyond his own career. Although he had pirated and plagiarized Hobson's two medical texts and published them as his own, he explained that no Chinese physician would study anatomy because "the people would never tolerate dissection for the purpose of learning about the body". Ye was also scornful about geography, refused to believe that England was 45,000 li away (about 3 li in one mile), and refused to acknowledge the ubiquitous nature of the British presence in ports all along his route to India.

Ye had never bothered to learn to speak Cantonese across his 12 years in the province as Governor, and had learned no Manchu during his northern years, thus was deeply dependent upon his secretaries, themselves failed exam candidates who made most of their income from "squeeze". As the ship followed the Indian coast north and reached the Ganges at Calcutta, Ye was completely uninterested in the river or the country that was to be his new home, and stayed below in his cabin. After arrival he showed no interest in the lovely parks, the handsome buildings or the circumstances of the villa that was his new home, claiming to need a leisurely three days to prepare to disembark. He finally came up for landing with no sense of occasion, still personally dirty and wearing his filthy clothes. The *Times* man noted with dark humour that Ye would be very surprised to learn that his total indifference to India would be equally felt by all the people of Calcutta for all things Chinese; "this will be a new experience for him".

Ye died a year after his arrival in Calcutta, age 52. Cantonese friends told Legge they were disgusted with Ye because he had failed to behave in the honourable way tradition required and commit suicide when he was on the brink of capture, thus making himself the equivalent of a traitor after his military defeat.

### Treaties of Tianjin in 1858

Once it was clear the Allies held Canton, negotiations began again in 1858 because Beijing definitely did not want to suffer a similar fate. The Qing government agreed to pay reparations for the destruction of the foreign factories at Canton, and most of the allied forces withdrew to Hong Kong. The new ruling tribunal set up several hundred units of joint Cantonese-Allied police to march in matched columns under joint officers that were quite effective in preventing looting in the city. Chinese criminals were turned

over to the Chinese justice system and Europeans to the European. By February the allies lifted the blockade on the river and trade resumed.

Still, there was little progress on starting the main treaty talks in Canton, and this led to continued political pressure to force negotiations. In March allied forces that now included British, French, Americans, and Russians decided to sail north with an expeditionary force to hold treaty negotiations directly with the Imperial government in Beijing rather than endure more stalling with officials in Canton.

Elgin and French Baron Gros arrived at Tianjin in mid-April and tried to negotiate entry to Beijing with the local governor, to no avail. He claimed he had no power to permit their passage. The British and French troops with American and Russian envoys arrived at the Dagu coastal forts on May 20. These forts protected access to the Beihe (North River) coming from Tianjin and Beijing. In light of the negotiation deadlock the allied forces bombarded the Dagu forts in a brief battle that was lightly defended and lasted less than two hours. They moved troops inland on 26 May to occupy Tianjin, and in early June the Emperor responded by sending two diplomats to negotiate with the four powers.

The old British favourite Qiyong, now 71, was sent with the diplomats, and Elgin expected that this canny diplomat would use his old methods; he had boasted to the previous Emperor of “caressing” the barbarians in order to stall talks. Elgin knew that Qiyong had described these tactics in an 1844 memorial to the Emperor, so Elgin sent skilled translators, officials Horatio Lay and Thomas Wade to intercept Qiyong and remind him that his tactics were known. Qiyong was upset when the men laughed at the exposure of his document, and fled the negotiations without the Emperor’s permission. For that he was arrested, taken in chains to Beijing, tried, and sentenced to death by suicide, a terrible end for a skilled Manchu diplomat who had always tried to do his best job for the Qing dynasty.

Elgin wanted Beijing to take over all foreign relations, taking this job from the imperial commissioners at Canton because they were constantly placed in a double-bind situation in which their careers suffered if they reported the truth about local unrest. On June 11 Lay warned the Qing negotiators that if an agreement were not reached the allies would march on Beijing. The Emperor was outraged at this report so his diplomat Kuei reassured him that any treaties were just pieces of paper that meant nothing but would allow the foreign ships to leave. Within days the Qing officials signed treaties with Russia (June 13) and America (June 18), but not with Britain. On June 26 Elgin’s brother, diplomat Frederick Bruce (1814-1867) told the officials that if a treaty were not signed with Britain by nightfall the allies would march on Beijing and force the Emperor



to sign it there. In panic at this possibility the Qing officials signed with the British that day, and with the French the next day. The British were the only nation given the right to a permanent embassy in Beijing but the others expected they would soon be granted the same. The Emperor had resisted foreign embassies in his capital in part because he was alarmed by the thought of a tall foreign building from which men might spy on him with magical binoculars.

News of the signing of these treaties with the four European nations was taken by a Russian horseback courier via Siberia, announced to the world from St. Petersburg, and sent across the Atlantic by the new submarine telegraph cable, in one of its first uses (Author, 1859). Chinese opposition to telegraph based on *feng shui* had interfered with the development of cable lines, with locals outside Shanghai using the death of a man lying in the shade of a telegraph pole as evidence of their deadly influence. The mandarins were so opposed that the Shanghai – Hong Kong cable had to be anchored offshore on a boat, and all other telegraph lines at Chinese ports used by the British companies had to be similarly anchored on boats. The telegraph from Hong Kong to Shanghai was finally laid in April 1871 and connected to London in June, but it was more than another decade before China developed internal telegraph lines after a political crisis in Xinjiang dramatized the Chinese problem. In 1879 the Chinese ambassador wanted to cable his government from St. Petersburg and the telegraph route to Shanghai took one day, while getting the message north from Shanghai to Beijing took 10 days. This triggered a change in Qing policy, and by 1881 a Qing telegraph system was set up with its first cable running from Shanghai to Tianjin on the coast near the capital.

The 1858 treaties in Tianjin had five main points. They opened up eleven additional ports to foreign trade, the British were allowed to establish a permanent embassy in Beijing (until then still a city closed to all foreigners), trading vessels were allowed to use the Yangzi, foreigners were allowed to travel into the interior of China with special passports, and China was required to pay compensation to British traders for their destroyed property in Canton as well as general reparations to the French and British governments.

These provisions affected the missions, as both Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries were allowed free movement in China. Wells Williams, the aggressive American missionary-cum-diplomat from Canton, managed to insert an extreme clause into the American treaty that effectively placed missionaries and their converts above Chinese law (Harris, 1991), effectively linking the missions with imperialism. Elgin did not press for any treaty item about opium and was disgusted by the trade, but its trade

was regularized and brought into control through general arrangements for simplified tariffs; in effect the opium trade was allowed as a legal item subject to tariffs. A Hong Kong Ordinance legalized the opium trade in 1858 as part of these agreements.

Formal ratification by each central government was to be completed within one year, and detailed tariff talks were to take place within months in Shanghai. The allied fleet left, heading south, Frederick Bruce returned to London with the treaty, and Elgin went on to Japan to sign a treaty for mutual recognition. Karl Marx, in newspaper columns, was scornful of any British claim that the treaties would open trade for British goods, one of the traders' arguments. Marx pointed out that the original treaty of 1842 was supposed to do that also, but British traders preferred the easy opium trade and in fact British commercial interests in China had significantly faltered by 1847, with false dreams of unlimited markets for vast supplies of ridiculous British goods including knives, forks, and pianos (Marx, 1858b). Marx pointed out that the Chinese would have more money available to buy useful British and American manufactures if they weren't wasting so much on opium, and the new treaty would help nothing (Marx, 1858a).

#### Canton and Hong Kong after the treaties

Canton and Hong Kong were still restless in the 1858 summer after the treaties. In Hong Kong rumours were flying about the behaviour of the young Emperor. It was said that his concubines were learning how to ride horseback in case they needed to flee, possibly north to the Manchu homeland. Canton was becoming increasingly unruly during this hot summer and the allied tribunal knew the provincial government was encouraging this. There were many violent incidents, including one in which a British doctor was beheaded while trying to care for two soldiers wounded in an assault. Each night there were bomb attacks on the city from beyond its walls, and the allies finally stopped Chinese river traffic beside the walls. By late June the situation was serious enough that the British, French and US consuls all withdrew from the city, and in high summer there were open assaults on the allies in the city. The GG of the two Kwangs called for complete annihilation of the foreigners, many Chinese were fleeing the city, and Elgin no longer trusted Pih Kwei (*Pokwei*), the Manchu the allies had installed as the Governor of Canton, although he had cooperated in many useful arrangements. In late July there was a major Chinese assault on Canton's walls, but the allies defended vigorously and this encounter was followed by a period of relative calm.

All the British traders left the city as did many Chinese, and trade again came to a halt. The British were holding the city with 4-5,000 troops with small additional numbers from the French, and everything ground to lethargy in August because of

extreme heat. News of the Tianjin treaties helped calm Canton, and Chinese officials proclaimed peace, but now the Emperor was trying to divide the British and French by special side offers. By the time of the Shanghai conference on trade details in October his officials had persuaded him that this would not work. Elgin was feeling optimistic because his trip to Japan had gone well, and he compromised about the location of the British embassy. The Qing officials bargained that if London sent back a ratified treaty, Elgin would agree that the British embassy could be located in Shanghai to protect the Emperor. The treaty was due to be signed in June 1859 in Beijing.

Through all these negotiations Elgin was trying to hold the line against the British traders, who were eager for the use of force and for the vast expansions of trade that they imagined would follow a new treaty. Elgin had become well-informed about the realistic limits for British exports into China, recognizing that north-south trade within China made it quite self-sufficient (Blake, 1999), and he did not want European military actions to cause the collapse of the Qing dynasty.

Ironically the disorder of this second trade war and the disruption of the tea exports from China forced the British East India company to develop tea plantations in India in order to maintain its lucrative trade in what had now become a British staple. Tea bushes had been discovered in Assam, and the decline of the Chinese tea trade triangle with Britain and India began with this Chinese trade war of 1858.

#### Legge visits Canton and the examination hall in early 1858

In January 1858 Legge wrote the Hong Kong LMS mission report for 1857, noting the profits of the printing office, describing promising new Chinese members of the staff, the May visit from Che, and faithfully recording some of the souls lost to “backsliding, and walking with us no more”. He recognized that most Chinese in Hong Kong were men without their families, men who readily moved back and forth from China depending on the political situation, and this created great instability in congregations and mission work. There was still an Imperial Edict ordering all Chinese to leave Hong Kong and return to China. On the positive side, Union Church had raised £300 to make repairs, and the capture of Canton and its three leaders, Viceroy Ye, the Lt.-Governor, and the Manchu General, generated a feeling of optimism.

That January Legge led a small mission visit to Canton, just after the city had settled down under its new allied administration. He went with mission friend Cox and his great Chinese friend and helper Hong Rengan. They wanted to see a famous Buddhist temple on Honan, a small island up from Whampoa and close to the city, then to visit Canton. They arrived when the Chinese New Year was being celebrated. As they

visited a temple, they realized that the men gambling in the yard of the temple were viewing them with hostility, and a priest then warned them of danger. The men were talking of stoning the foreigners. Legge decided they should leave but in a way not suggesting fear or flight, so he asked the priest to let them into the temple and lock the doors behind them.

The crowd rushed around to the back door expecting to find them coming out, but Legge instead reversed and led his little group out through the front gate. The frustrated crowd spilled back from both directions around the temple, and hundreds began shouting at them and throwing stones. Within minutes a rowdy crowd shouting “strike, strike” surrounded them, and soon stones came pelting. One man was so carried away in his enthusiasm that he picked up a small boy and threw the child against Legge’s chest. Legge and his friend tried to stay calm but made a rapid retreat back to their boat surrounded by the shouting mob and a hail of stones. They made it to the boat and out into the channel without serious harm even as the crowd howled in frustration. Such incidents seemed to arise from purely local feeling, as Legge and Rengan did a bit of preaching in another district without any problem. There Legge had a heart-warming encounter with a Scots soldier from Huntly, a man who had been a hero in the Crimean war and who spoke in the broad Scots accents that reminded James of his home.

In February 1858 Chalmers, Legge, and Wong went to Canton again to determine the condition of Hobson’s hospital in Guangli. They found the buildings intact but all the furniture stolen. Work began immediately and Dr. Wong was able to open a dispensary within a week, working out of a house rented from a Chinese Christian. This quickly drew thousands of Chinese patients, and by April Wong was able to move back to the hospital buildings Hobson had established with so much pain and drama. In early June Wong was able to re-open the full hospital although by the end of the month further political unrest forced him to close it again and flee to Hong Kong. Dr. Wong finally reopened the hospital in September after the June treaty signed in Tianjin (F. Wong, 1860). More help was needed there with the LMS mission work however, and it came in the person of Josiah Cox, the English Wesleyan with a long friendship with Hobson and Legge. He offered to run the Canton mission working with Wong, and the LMS men accepted this very helpful offer, as Legge was soon to leave Hong Kong for Britain. By May it was clear to Chalmers by that Wong was essentially a medical man and was not going to be doing regular mission work.

As part of the 1858 trip to Canton Legge was especially interested in the giant examination halls used for the Chinese civil service triennial provincial examinations,

which represented an even more forbidding task than the rigorous Huttonian Prize examinations that he had written so many decades ago in Scotland.

These provincial examinations in Canton were part of the vast four-layered hierarchy of examinations used to identify scholars who would be capable local, provincial, or imperial officials.<sup>33</sup> In one building Legge counted up more than 7,000 distinct individual “cells” for young scholars to live in as they wrote the tough examinations over periods of up to nine days, typically in a format of 24-hours of exam followed by a three-day gap before the next 24-hour exam, with two more cycles. The selection ratio was brutal; of 6,000 candidates in 1832, only 72 would receive degrees. In May 1858, 25,000 candidates wrote the literary examinations in Canton. In the rear of the hall containing the examination cells there were additional rooms for 3,000 officials, copyists, police, and servants, with elaborate security precautions (Kerr, 1866).

At the time of Legge’s visit, the common method for ensuring test security was for each candidate to be sealed into one of the 7,242 individual mud-walled cells for the multiple days of the exam. Candidates were allowed to take food and drink in with them, but it was usually a physical ordeal because of the extreme August and September heat of south China. As a result it was not rare for the officials to discover many dead scholars when they unblocked the cells, with some killed with heat stroke and others dead by suicide. Legge’s granddaughter Domenica wrote years later that “it is said that every morning numerous corpses were dragged out, of those who had killed themselves during the night in despair”, concluding that the Scottish examination system seemed more humane because it moderated the tough examinations with the drinking of port (D. Legge, 1951). Legge found that his own examination experiences with the tough system of Scotland provided him with an easy connection with the Chinese *literati* whom he came to know, all sharing the camaraderie of their memories of examination hell as a bond of similar miseries overcome.

Legge, never one to fuss over hardship, was impressed with this evidence of the high value that Chinese culture placed on education. He wrote,

“It is true that their civilisation is very different from ours, but they are far removed from barbarism. When we bear in mind that for four thousand years the people have been living and flourishing there, growing and

---

<sup>33</sup> These examinations ended in 1911 with the new Republic, then were re-instated in modern times as university entrance exams, with vast numbers (10 million in 2007) taking the annual tests.

increasing, that nations with some attributes perhaps of a higher character – the Assyrian, the Persian, the Grecian, the Roman, and more modern empires, have all risen and culminated and decayed, and yet that the Chinese empire is still there with its four hundred millions of inhabitants, why, it is clear that there must be among the people certain moral and social principles of the greatest virtue and power”.

Legge added with the admiration we might expect of an educated son of Scotland, the country that then had the best education system in the world, that “in no country is the admiration of scholastic excellence so developed as in China, no kingdom in the world where learning is so highly revered”.

### The LMS in Canton 1858

Unfortunately, by late June 1858 there was such trouble in Canton that Dr. Wong had to suspend all the work at the mission and hospital. Despite the occupying allied government, the city was filled with posters promising cash rewards to citizens for the heads of foreigners. Common criminals used the unrest to destroy shops and houses and even to murder, so the mandarins set up a system in which they would hold neighbourhoods responsible for the safety of foreigners in their streets. This upset the citizens who were already afraid of the “braves” whose actions harmed everyone, and everyone understood that the mandarins were subtly working with the braves to sustain unrest in a manner in which the responsibility would be offset onto the regular citizens.

The new Governor-General of the two Kwangs, Huang Zonghan, and the gentry issued proclamations that were so aggressive in nature that many Chinese fled Canton until it became nearly deserted. Dr. Wong had been warned that some braves were specifically going to try and behead Josiah Cox so they decided he should leave the hospital and move to the safety of a nearby village, Honan. Following his departure the hospital continued to suffer daily threats until Dr. Wong realized he had to close it and hire guards. He met with the neighbourhood committee and reminded them they were responsible for the safety of the hospital, then he and the other mission men moved to Macau. The staff took most of the equipment and supplies with them to Macau so as to limit the losses if the hospital were attacked again, and a month later he understood the hospital was still standing. Even in Macau the mandarins were warning the Chinese to return to China and further trouble was expected.

By October Wong learned that arsonists had prowled around the hospital but had been deterred by the vigilance of four staff who had remained, along with the

neighbours who feared their own properties would burn if the hospital was set alight. Wong did not open any dispensary in Macau across his stay from July to September, initially because he did not know how long he would be there in exile, then eventually because the Chinese were fleeing Macau. Things settled down in Canton and in early October he returned, finding the city still very depopulated. The hot and unresolved issue for the city was the scale of reparations that China would be required to pay to the allies.

#### Legge works on the Chinese Classics and prepares to leave for Britain

Late in the spring of 1858 Legge was visited by two Europeans who had heard of his vast plan for the Chinese Classics and of the progress of his LMS press in creating moveable metal type Chinese fonts. Gustaaf Schlegel (1840-1903), an eager 17-year-old Dutch student of Chinese came, noting that Legge was “already renowned as a first-rate Sinologue”; Schlegel himself later became famous for the same reason. Later a Russian scholar came, eager to buy a set of the metal matrices with which to create a set of metal type fonts for a complete set of Chinese characters from the LMS press, to use in his homeland.

Now close to the end of his work on volume I of the Classics, Legge was alarmed at the initial price quotation from the local commercial printer Shorter & Co. They calculated that the paper, ink, and printing for each book would cost \$4.00, plus binding, for a total cost of \$32,000 for 1,000 copies of the eight projected volumes. Jardine thought this seemed excessive, so Legge considered what the costs would be if the LMS did the job on its own Hong Kong press. These costs were estimated at one-half those of Shorter, and the plan was set to use the LMS Press. To get the job done Legge had to return to England to present the project in full to the LMS for its approval, and to buy the type-fonts for the English text, ink, and paper.

Apart from these pleasant and surprising scholarly visits and the completion of volume I, Legge suffered intrusive health problems. In March he suffered two major attacks of kidney stones and terrible bouts of malaria, and realized he was going to have to first use his time in Britain to recover his health.

The night before Legge left Hong Kong for Britain a group of his friends visited him and gave him 30 guineas to have his portrait done while he was in England. They wanted the original painting to be given to Legge’s daughters after an engraving was done so that many copies of it could be enjoyed in the homes of his friends. Although the *London Illustrated News* had been using photography for 16 years by this time, there were still significant technical problems and it was not yet in wide use for individual

photographs. Legge left for the UK on 22 May, planning to be in Britain for 18 months. He was worried about leaving his friend and assistant Hong Rengan.

### Hong Rengan is seduced into the Taiping rebellion

Legge was worried about leaving Rengan in Hong Kong because Rengan was still being urged by other Chinese to lead them into joining the Taiping rebellion. Legge had managed to keep Rengan employed and happy in mission work since 1852, and he feared that once he was without James' moral support, Rengan would capitulate to the pressures of these friends. Before leaving in May Legge "laid strict injunctions on Rengan to remain in Hong Kong, and not to go to the Tai-Ping king".

Despite the allied occupation in Canton Chalmers was worried about the restless situation there and about the allied expeditionary force headed north to force a treaty with Beijing. Once the news came that the allies had captured the Dagu forts in May 1858, Hong Rengan came to Chalmers with a proposal. Rengan brought his wife, child, and brother Hong Shifu to Chalmers for protection. Shifu had been working as a watchman for the mission since he and Rengan arrived in 1853.

Rengan wanted to go to Nanking with a friend. He had the idea that if he could get to the Taiping court he could educate it both in religious and political terms, and persuade the leaders to make an alliance with foreigners. The trip from Canton province into rebel territory would be very difficult and dangerous, but Chalmers realized that Rengan had such a strong ambition to help the Taiping that he would be hard to deflect, and Chalmers shared Rengan's wish to correct the fanciful and error-filled version of Christianity that the Taiping king was preaching. By 1857 reports had come to Hong Kong that the Taiping king had taken 33 concubines, although he did not allow polygamy among his followers, excepting the "Princes".

Apparently setting aside the major reservations that Legge had about this plan, Chalmers only obliquely referred to Legge's views by noting "I've told James of this", and in June agreed to Rengan's proposal. Chalmers promised the mission would pay Rengan's wife and a 15-year old son \$7 a month for ten months "or until I hear from him", and sought permission from the LMS for this support. By September Rengan was gone. When Rengan did not return over a long time, Legge and Chalmers personally paid support to Hong's wife and child until they returned to their home village that December.

Rengan disguised himself as a peddler and headed into China. Rengan later wrote he was captured by Imperial troops on October 16 but after they found only medical books and money, they eventually decided he had "got into trouble among the long-



haired people (the rebels) and had lost my way”, so did not behead him. He escaped three days later and by mid-November had added deserting Qing officers to his party, who took him to a nearby rebel camp. There Rengan was told of rebel successes: they had taken two cities and 30 camps, killed 10 mandarins and 10,000 men under the leadership of the Taiping “Prime Minister” Chin Teen Yun, known as “the four-eyed monster”. By December Rengan had reached friends, was completely disgusted with the behaviour of the Imperial soldiers, and welcomed the sight of four British-French steamers in the Yangzi river about 75 miles below Hangkou. These steamers were part of an excursion taken by Lord Elgin up the river to Hangkou after the November treaty signing, a trip that December that was intended to consolidate the newly gained rights. Rengan finally succeeded in reaching Nanking in 1859. It seems that the connections of family and perhaps naïve idealism prevailed. Events over the next few years confirmed Legge’s worries about Rengan.

In Nanking Hong’s cousin the Taiping rebel king recognized Rengan’s intellectual and organizational skills and awarded him the title of Prince Gan (*Gan Wang*), in effect appointing him as Prime Minister at a time when the rebels had broken into bitter infighting. In Nanking Rengan was an effective leader over the nine years of the Taiping rule there. Faithful to his promises, he prepared large wall-posters of the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mountain to educate the people in a more accurate version of Christianity. A skilled administrator, he began to impose a more Protestant cast over the rough Old Testament style of the rebels, and made many administrative reforms supporting the development of railways and banks in trying to modernize China.

Over the years Hong Rengan met many foreign delegations in Nanking, all of them very impressed with him, and he sent letters and Taiping documents to his friend Legge. These included sermons that Legge remembered Rengan preaching in Hong Kong, and copies of booklets he had published. He was trying to remedy the confused mixture of Christianity with other Taiping beliefs that he considered idolatrous, and reportedly had 400 printers working to produce both Bible texts and other religious pamphlets to provide the essential messages of Christianity. Legge found some of the contents of these “of a doubtful character” but overall found they put forward the key ideas of Christianity quite well. “If the insurgents held only these principles, we could not refuse to them a large measure of our admiration”. By 1860 Legge realized that although Hong Rengan had become a major leader in the Taiping government, he was disillusioned about any effects Rengan might have had on the Taiping.

In the dying days of the Taiping rebellion Imperial forces captured Hong Rengan and took him to Beijing, where he defended his loyalty to the Taiping ideals and was beheaded in November 1864. The rebellion collapsed.

Legge later remembered Hong Rengan as “the most genial and versatile Chinese I have ever known, and of whom I can never think but with esteem and regret. Had he taken my advice, he would have remained quietly in Hong Kong, ... and might have been living with his head on him to the present day” (J. Legge, 1872b).

### Bowring and Anstey struggle in Hong Kong

Dr. Bowring, Governor of Hong Kong during this period, was a liberal and humane man who became bogged down in the squabbles and hysteria developing in the colony as the troubled relationship with China festered. The Attorney-General T. Chisholm Anstey (1816-1873) had been sent out from Britain and soon became a source of problems in the colony after he began an aggressive series of persecutions of both Chinese and British whom he believed were engaged in criminal activities including running brothels and piracy.

Anstey's actions fed on the fear in the community about the role of saboteurs from China, and with pressures to improve security he developed draconian ordinances that were so extreme they could not be enforced. One required all Chinese to be registered, and another challenged their rights to set up housing on crown land. When he over-zealously prosecuted Chinese for building code infractions the Chinese merchants went on strike. In 1858 Anstey became so over-wrought about enforcing his impossible regulations that he began patrolling the streets of the Chinese districts accompanied by police, requiring them to issue summonses against every Chinese considered illegal in some way. The courts became full of angry men, the magistrates levied major fines, and in protest all the Chinese merchants closed their shops and went on strike, an event later called “the Anstey riots”.

When Bowring worked out a compromise with the Chinese, Anstey was furious. He was suspended from his office in January 1859 and was further made furious when he was not chosen as the next Governor of the colony when Sir John Bowring left office in May 1859, unable to manage all the squabbling factions. When Sir Hercules Robinson was appointed in September to the job, Anstey wrote a letter to the *Times* portraying Hong Kong as a “nest of official iniquity”, exaggerating well-known problems in the colony that involved Anstey's enemy interpreter Daniel Caldwell who had been cleared of corruption charges laid by Anstey, but whom Anstey suspected of conniving with pirates (Endacott, 1962/2005). Before he finally retired to a legal career in India he

expanded his attacks to include the Chief Justice and Chief Magistrate, and threatened others in the government with claims of criminality. Anstey was considered incorruptible but largely lacking balanced judgment, and Bowring spent so much time and effort trying to sort out claims and counter-claims, libels, and reporting all the details to Britain, that he was eventually removed from office. Bowring had been an honest man not firm enough in his administration to keep control of all the fractious characters in the colony.

### Part 7 Ink and marriage in Britain

*In which Legge returns to Britain, marries, the Hong Kong mission struggles, and conflicts between Britain and China turn into war.*

Legge left Hong Kong in May 1858 for Britain. His voyage to Britain was routed via Calcutta and the ship landed there in March after 15 days, just as the news arrived that British forces had achieved the relief of Lucknow, one of the famous events of the Indian conflict. When it left for England a few weeks later, Legge's ship included many of the officers of the Lucknow garrison as well as the widows of those who had died, and he listened to many "thrilling narratives" on that journey home. Despite experiencing this flush of national feeling, he wrote that British trade, military, and political activities were often very un-Christian, and was still quite disgusted with the British government, angry at its failure to stop the opium trade. International rulings on opium were still in flux. In April for example, news came from California that the US government had ruled that the opium imported from China by Chinese migrants for smoking was not considered to be a drug taxable at a 24% customs tariff, but instead was "just an article of commerce peculiar to the Chinese", and thus only subject to 15% duties on "unenumerated articles".

#### Chapter 40 Legge in Britain

Arriving in Britain in the late spring 1858, Legge had an ambitious program of tasks planned. He needed to seek medical care, rejoin his daughters (Eliza now 17, and Mary 16) and arrange for their care and schooling, help the Morison family, as well as buy printing type, ink, and paper for his first volume of the Classics. More crucially he needed to meet with the Eastern Committee of the LMS and describe for the first time the full nature of his massive project with the Chinese Classics, to seek their approval for his use of time on the project and their help in upgrading the Hong Kong printing press on which he hoped to print the books.

Legge spent the next 13 months in England, and it followed the pattern of his first return to Britain in 1848. He rented accommodation in London at 27 Montpelier Sq. Brompton, and across June he made regular visits with his daughters to his gravely ill father-in-law John Morison. As Legge's health improved he moved to Leicester to help his brother George, where his daughters might live and attend school.

Legge's family situation stabilized, and his re-acquaintance with George opened him to an insight in which he began to see parallels between the lives of Confucius and his brother, now 56. Both were men so eager in their pursuit of knowledge that they

forgot to eat, “forgot their sorrows, and did not perceive that old age was coming on” (G. Legge, 1863; J. Legge & Legge, 1863). George wanted to become Chairman of a new union of Congregational churches for a few years to help establish it, and James stayed on in England longer than he intended in order to help with this. George planned to retire at age 60 in order to work on a book that would integrate science and religion. In this ambitious project he would attack the high church approach of Anglo-Catholicism, and create a system of theology that would integrate science, morality, and “the aesthetic spirit of the age”.

#### Legge lectures in Britain and marries Hannah

As Legge recovered his health he began lecture tours of Scotland and England on behalf of the LMS, giving many speeches about mission work in China. His change in interests toward scholarship rather than religion was noticed. The Leeds *Mercury* newspaper of 2 June 1859 gave a detailed account of one of these shortly before he returned to Hong Kong. His talk to a large audience in the East Parade Chapel showed Legge to be speaking more like a scholar and educator than a man focused on mission work, and the reporter found the talk “deeply interesting”. Legge praised the meritocracy of the Chinese system of civil service examinations, which allowed power to those with education and knowledge. He explained how valuing education had contributed to social stability in China across all dynasties, and also contributed to an educated class that was uniquely available to reading Christian texts in comparison with mission work on other continents. He praised the universality of Chinese script, equally legible to Chinese across the vast land despite very different spoken languages. He decried the fact that despite much effort by missions, the British in China were known mostly for the opium trade, which “had been the occasion of great evil”. He explained the vast size of the Chinese population, contesting lower estimates by others, provided a history of Christian contacts with China starting with the Nestorians, (whose influence was “extinguished by the Mohammedans”), described the disputes over territory between the Dominicans, Franciscans and Jesuits, and referred to Gibbon’s account. He confessed that he had suffered much because of his lack of success in mission work although his spirits had improved in the last 12 months, and explained to the audience why more missionaries were needed to help bring the Christian message to the vast population in China. Legge concluded by observing that the Chinese did not have any traditional religion to compete with Christian ideas, because the Chinese had an ancient ethical system and were far less superstitious than Hindus and Muslims, and this system of beliefs had produced much better progress in civilization and education in China. At

the end the church leaders made an appeal for funds and many responded with generosity.

Late in 1858 in the course of these lectures he met Hannah Johnstone Willets (1822 – 1881), the 34- year-old widow of Congregational minister George Willets. Legge now 42 had met her 12 years earlier on his lecture tours in 1848 with the “three lads”. By the time of his second visit to Britain she had been widowed three years and had a daughter Marian (b. 13 July 1853) now aged 5. They married on 26 May 1859. The marriage appears to have been rather low-key, perhaps because Hannah was mourning the recent death of her father and was concerned that her mother “was reduced to a state of imbecility”, paying more attention to the details of the coffin than to memories of her dead husband.

Hannah’s family had a long connection with LMS missions and she had a good idea of the demands of mission life. Her brother John Johnstone of Hull had worked as an LMS mission man in Tahiti from 1838-1849 during the period of the LMS’s fight against French atrocities there. He returned to Britain in 1850 for his health, and as he recovered he began lecture tours on behalf of the LMS missions. His wife was no longer used to the cold and damp climate of England, however, so in 1852 they moved to a congregational church in Australia.

Hannah’s daughter Marian added a wonderful element to Legge’s new family life. She was an energetic and forceful young girl and James developed a very tender and playful relationship with her. After so many losses of infants in Hong Kong, with five dying prematurely and no young child alive since 1853, James had years of pent-up affection for children that he lavished on young Marian. In time James and Hannah would have four children in Hong Kong: two sons and two daughters. All suffered delicate health during their early childhoods in the heat and fevers of Hong Kong, and were eventually sent to the more healthful climate at the Dollar Academy in Scotland for their education.

Counterbalancing these fresh joys, Legge’s stepmother Barbra (sic) Spence Legge died while he was in Britain, on 5 January 1859, age 78. Barbra was the mother of his childhood life, for James only learned when he attended school that he had lost his biological mother in infancy. Across the spring of 1859 James and his daughters regularly visited the girls’ dying grandfather John Morison, James even providing personal nursing services during the night to give relief to other family members.

The great stink of London, July 1858

Although Legge was surely in London in the hot summer of 1858, he did not write comments on the major event of London of that time, immortalized as the Great Stink. June and July were the hottest on record and the sewage of the city drifted inefficiently down into the Thames. Since 1815 household sewage had been allowed into the city drains, and by mid-century the flow was significantly greater than the drains or river could handle. At low tide the sewage would drift downstream toward the sea, but the rising tide pushed all the sewage back up into the drains across endless daily cycles until the entire city became pestilential, filled with sewage and reeking. The stench was more than unpleasant because people believed that stinking air caused malaria and was a direct cause of disease.

The newly-built gorgeous Houses of Parliament were located picturesquely on the banks of the river, and as the sewage began to heat up in that particularly hot summer the stench became horrible. In Parliament they tried unsuccessfully to muffle the smell by soaking the curtains in the Commons in chloride of lime. The situation was a crisis and Parliament responded with emergency legislation that was passed in 18 days, giving massive powers to an extremely talented engineer Joseph Bazalgette (1819-1891) who had been trying to get this authority for some time. His vast reorganization of the drain system over the next 16 years, with massive pumping stations, sewage treatment facilities, and a huge number of new and re-configured sewers still serves as the basic system in London today, updated with modern pumps and more miles of giant drains (Halliday, 1999). Luckily the city avoided an outbreak of cholera or typhoid, after having had them in 1831, 1848 and 1853, across which Dr. John Snow's theory of contaminated water as the vector of cholera was gradually accepted.

In a more thrilling event that year, the hoisting of the giant bell "Big Ben" into the clock tower completed the rebuilding of the Houses of Parliament.

#### Legge, the LMS, and the Chinese Classics

While Legge was in Britain, his growing international reputation in Chinese scholarship led to fruitful meetings with other European scholars. Mohl came from the Academie Française in Paris, so impressed with the beauty and clarity of the type for the Chinese characters created by Legge's press in Hong Kong that he wanted to buy the complete font in two sizes.

Once settled, Legge was finally able to return to intensive work on the Chinese Classics, and in early June sent the LMS Eastern Committee four copies of a specimen set of the early pages of volume I, including the Title page and pages up to 11. Volume I included three works; the Confucian Analects, the Great Learning, and the Doctrine of the Mean. In late June he appeared twice before the Committee to explain this work and

to describe the larger publication project for the Classics, which by now had become a plan to publish a series of 10-12 volumes over 6-7 years, in the large and handsome Royal octavo size. He expected each volume to be about 700 pages.

Legge explained that missionaries to China needed an accurate understanding of the ideas and literature of the country as published across the centuries. All educated Chinese learned these classics in the form of a specific set of books and commentaries known as the Confucian canon and used as the basis for the vast civil service examinations. Legge argued that knowledge of these works was directly beneficial to all mission work in China, thus his translations and commentaries were not simply some quirky private hobby, but were an integral part of any educated Christian interaction with the citizens of the empire. He emphasized that both the translations and his accompanying essays and notes were essential to this task.

Legge explained that a British merchant in Hong Kong had promised to pay the printing costs (ink, paper, fonts, and binding), but the old LMS printing press in Hong Kong needed improvements. He described how five years earlier the committee had refused his request for \$2,000 to build a new printing office, thus now Chalmers was struggling along with “poor appliances”. Legge reminded the LMS that since his request the Hong Kong mission press had generated net profits every year for the past four, now amounting to £500, more than his original request. The profits would have been even greater if the request had been originally approved and a better physical plant constructed for the work, instead of which much of the printing income had to be used in repairing the building and machinery.

Most of the Press income came from making and casting Chinese metal type from its own LMS matrices, rather than in printing, while printing was essential to the mission’s work. Legge reminded the directors that the Hong Kong LMS printing had been entirely in Chinese, mostly for Bible and tract societies, and the beauty of its Chinese fonts led to profitable contracts. Just before he left Hong Kong the mission had made a very large contract with the Russian Government for a set of Chinese matrices for these fonts in both sizes. Its one attempt to make English fonts under Mr. Cole’s supervision had been unsuccessful however, and Legge knew that good English fonts from Britain were needed for the Classics.

On June 24 Legge learned that the Committee had approved his proposal to print volume I, and he soon set off for Edinburgh with £50 to buy “English” fonts to use in his introductory essays and in the translations and notes. He had learned that he could buy better and cheaper alphabetic fonts in Scotland, and knew that he needed one that would have to be made specifically for his book. The LMS also approved a grant of £600



for the Hong Kong LMS press building and £100 for a new press, exactly matching his request. The committee's Minutes of the meetings noted "as James Legge has spent some years on the task and it appears to be one of value and importance and likely to facilitate the work of future missionaries - & as the work can be taken to the Press free of expense to the Society, the Board concurs in his proposal to prosecute this arduous undertaking." The ever-frugal society made it clear however that the £600 "grant" was actually a loan to be repaid out of the profits of the Hong Kong LMS printing office.

#### The LMS worries about Legge's attitudes to the Classics and to Chinese ethics

Despite these approvals, LMS secretary Tidman wrote Legge in mid-July, advising him that the LMS was worried about two aspects of his work on these Chinese texts. The LMS understood that although all the costs of publishing would be borne by Joseph Jardine, it was worried about the amount of time that the translations would take away from mission time. Tidman reminded Legge that he was responsible for many mission tasks including the printing office, the congregational work, and the school after Chalmers' removal to Canton when Legge returned to Hong Kong. Tidman had a cool attitude to Legge that showed up in his letters and affected some of the decisions made in London regarding Legge's work.

There were more serious LMS concerns relating to Legge's scholarly approach to Chinese ideas. The Directors worried about Legge's approach to Confucius, in particular wanting to be reassured that he would be criticizing Confucian sentiments that were anti-Christian. Tidman explained that the Directors expected Legge to write notes to refute any parts of Confucian text that differed "from Christian truth".

This was the first direct intervention from the LMS on the content of his scholarly work and it foreshadowed criticisms from other Christians that followed Legge across the rest of his life. Christian fundamentalist mission men along the Chinese coast were very upset when they realized the admiration that Legge showed for "the Sage", and they had long been alarmed by his theological insistence that the Chinese shared with Christianity a common belief in a supreme God from ancient times. He was seen as altogether too sympathetic to Chinese ideas and culture, failing to categorize them mainly as pagan and inferior.

Tidman's scolding letter made Legge angry and he responded with a testy letter from Huntly the same month. First he chastised the LMS for begrudging him the scholarly work. He reminded it of his nearly 20 years of service and reassured it that he intended to provide the general care for the mission as the "senior missionary" when he returned to Hong Kong. He tackled the LMS however, on their intention to have him

work alone in Hong Kong, with teaching in addition to all the other mission tasks. He asserted that although he would provide oversight for the day school that was needed, he flatly refused to return to teaching school as “I have done my share”. His school of 82 Chinese boys had closed with his departure and 30 of the lads had transferred to St. Andrews’ school.

Legge explained his research method for his essays introducing the Classics, in which his comments would compare and contrast the sentiments of Confucius and Christianity. He did not accept guidance as to his evaluations of Confucius and invoked the principle of academic freedom for what he was writing. “... I must say that it was unnecessary thus to school me in the way in which I should execute what I have taken in hand”. When the Eastern Committee had mentioned such concerns to Legge in their meeting he wrote Tidman, he “could afford to smile at it. When it comes to me repeated by you, as an important part of an official communication (from the Directors), I hardly know how to take it.”

Despite these disagreements with the LMS committee, Legge must have been ecstatic. His huge and magnificent project was approved, and funding was in place for the publishing costs and for the improvements needed at the LMS Hong Kong press. He was entering a new and exciting stage of his life.

### Chapter 41 The Hong Kong mission and Chalmers

With Legge away in England, Chalmers was now running the Hong Kong mission, and was busy trying to repair the dilapidated printing buildings as he supervised the huge font contract for the Russians. His wife was again dangerously ill with more of the serious attacks she had previously suffered, and in August her doctor strongly advised she return to England for her health. Chalmers sought permission to send her and the children home while he stayed “as long as needed”, presumably until Legge returned as expected in 1859. Chinese migrants were again fleeing Hong Kong and Macau as the Cantonese returned to their traditional anti-foreigner ways once the Tianjin treaties agreeing to foreigner rights were signed.

By September food prices rose “to enormous heights” and Chalmers quickly fell into debt. He reported to the LMS that all the government staff with salaries less than £300 p.a. had received increases and very delicately hinted that he would appreciate similar consideration. He had been sick with fever so extreme that it brought out boils all over his body, but was now recovering. Early in 1859 the Eastern Committee approved a special £50 grant to help Chalmers.

Chalmers reported that Dr. Wong and Josiah Cox had been exiled in Macau for three months, but on their return to Canton found that the hospital premises and even its recent repairs had all been carefully preserved during their absence. He reminded the LMS that Cox was only a temporary replacement from another mission for the LMS work in Canton, pointing out that a permanent “European” missionary was needed to fill Cox’s place.

Chalmers was excited to learn Legge’s application for a grant for the press had been successful, and with the £700 approved he began construction on a new press building in October using Chinese refugees from Canton, expecting many would leave as soon as the treaty terms were settled. Before long Tidman, a micro-manager, scolded Chalmers for beginning the building before Legge’s return. In defence Chalmers explained that the application for the building was a project of the Hong Kong mission, and he and Legge understood if the funds were approved the construction should start in the cooler winter months even though Legge was not expected to return until later. The approval had been done in June in Britain, and Chalmers knew that Legge and the committee had met in August finally confirming the project, so Chalmers accepted Legge’s instructions to begin the work. Despite this logical explanation, poor Chalmers was apologetic; he was a peaceful man not interested in picking a fight with the LMS. He stressed that the improved printing operation would help the work of the mission, “as well as furthering the arrangements for printing Dr. Legge’s translation of the Classics,

of the importance and value of which to all future missionaries in China I am fully satisfied". He emphasized that Legge's mission work never suffered from his work on the Classics, noting that Legge did mission tasks "in season and out of season, reproving, exhorting, rebuking...". Work at the press and type foundry continued, and Chalmers sent two sets of Chinese fonts to Mohl in Paris in mid-December.

In early November the committee approved Chalmers' request to send his sick wife and children home and they left on a steamer the *Princess Charlotte* on 28 November 1858. He expected them to reach London by mid-March 1859, to return to Scotland to live with friends. He paid \$787 for his family and an amah Wong Lyekan, expecting the Chinese girl to return with Legge. By late December Chalmers was quite lonely in the empty Hong Kong mission, worried about who would receive his wife and children after they arrived in Portsmouth, only finally cheered by a visit from Benjamin Hobson and family in late December.

#### The LMS press and Huang Shing

While Legge was seeking support in London, in Hong Kong the press was producing work under the supervision of Chalmers while Huang Shing did the detailed daily management of the printing. Legge described Huang as "a man of good education and high principles". As a lad he had attended the MES school in Macau in 1840 with Wong Fun and another student Yung Wing (1828-1912) who graduated with a Yale law degree, and later became a respected figure in Hong Kong society and a revolutionary in China. With the collapse of the MES school in Hong Kong, Huang had gone to the US with these two friends and Rev. Brown in 1846, but returned to Hong Kong after only one year owing to illness, without completing university as planned. He quickly joined the LMS congregation, began working in printing at the *China Mail*, and served as interpreter for the government. Legge hired Huang to help the printing office in 1853 after Li Kimlin became so ill with tuberculosis that he had been sent home to Singapore. By early 1858 Huang's credibility as a skilled tradesman and an honourable citizen was widely recognized, and he was named the first Chinese member of a jury in the Hong Kong Supreme Court. With such a printer in place, Legge had been able to argue that the LMS grant of £700 for the new building and new press would be managed expertly.

#### Hong Kong schools and the mission

In December 1858 the Hong Kong government announced the opening of a number of government schools in the town of Victoria and across the island. The *China Mail* reported that these schools for Chinese students would have Chinese teachers teaching "the Chinese elementary books", the Chinese Classics, geography and other

modern subjects, and English. The government would provide the classrooms and pay the teachers' salaries, and no fees would be asked of any parent. The classes would run from 6 – 8 AM, from 8 – Noon, and from 1 – 4:15, and rules ordered that teachers would not be allowed to leave or to accept visitors during these hours.

At the mission, Chalmers in his report for 1858, told the LMS that the English congregation of Union Church had reached a stage in which it needed its own full-time minister because the LMS men did not have enough time to do a good job there in addition to their mission work. He apologized for having overdrawn six months of his salary, and explained that the terrific price rises during the hostilities of the summer of 1858 had forced him into this miserable situation. He had completed building the new print office by March, and the old one was being renovated for housing Ho Tsunshin, Legge's oldest Chinese minister. Since sending his sick wife and children home, Chalmers was lonely and isolated, deeply aware of the fragility of the "South China" mission even though Canton was becoming a more placid and welcoming city.

Chapter 42 Harry Parkes and Canton with the 1858 trade treaty

Although the allies had taken Canton and their tribunal was administering it, the Qing did not return to work on revising the 1842 trade treaty as expected, and other events contributed to a steady feeling of unrest there and in Hong Kong.

In 1859 Canton was still struggling with widespread kidnapping of labourers by local gangs working to provide men to work in the gold fields in America and Australia, and these criminal acts became a major problem for the city. It was estimated that 60,000-70,000 men had been carried off from Canton in the years prior to the allied occupation. After the occupation the Cantonese gangs increasingly targeted the Chinese gentry hoping they would be worth ransom because the allies would regard them as more civilized.

Harry Parkes was essentially running Canton most of this year because he was the only man on the allied tribunal who spoke Chinese, and the Chinese gentry began to fear kidnapping gangs to such an extent that they called for his help. At times these press-gangs were themselves kidnapped and murdered by outraged Chinese, but the citizens wanted the allied tribunal to set up orderly rules for recruiting coolie labour and outlawing many aspects of the trade. In April the tribunal did that, posting proclamations outlining new laws, and by the autumn a full set of regulations was created. Families were to be allowed to go with the workers, the British government would guarantee the rights of the workers in British lands including the education of the workers' children, would establish model contracts for five years with specified pay rates, and repayments if the contracts were broken by employers. The French soon copied this system and the new Chinese Acting Governor-General Lao also agreed to the system. Parkes required all recruiting to be done on land and not on ships in the harbour, enlisted the cooperation of the gentry, and created inspectors to ensure compliance with these regulations.

Resettlement of the foreign traders in Canton was another task facing Parkes. Josiah Cox was in Canton on the day in March when Lord Elgin arrived to consult with Parkes and the hong leaders to decide where the foreign traders would be allowed to live. In a pouring rainstorm they traipsed all over the Shamian island that had traditionally been used, then Elgin made a five-minute speech explaining that his brother Frederick Bruce would decide after he arrived from England.

Cox had learned of Legge's success in receiving LMS approval for his scholarship on the Chinese classics and the imminent launch of volume I containing the Confucian Analects, and wrote to congratulate him. "You are fairly in for a long period of labour... the achievement is... a formidable undertaking", but he was certain it would be

successful. In a recent visit to Honan he had discovered that the villagers were still very unhappy with the British, and was reminded of an earlier visit he and Legge had made there to visit the famous temple, with “the unpleasant consciousness that a small mistake might involve one in a row”.

#### The Dagu forts debacle June 1859

In the larger picture relations between China and the western nations who traded there continued to be troubled across 1859 because the trade treaty was not yet ratified. Frederick Bruce was sent from London with a March 1 order to go to Beijing to present his credentials directly to the Emperor for the final Imperial ratification of the allied Tianjin trade treaties as signed one year earlier (June 1858), in time for the agreed deadline of June 26. The Qing Emperor still believed his mandate was to rule “all people under Heaven” and his officials still considered all western nations as tribute bearers to their empire the “Central Kingdom”, resisting any different view, and this view still structured the way court officials responded to the Europeans.

Bruce’s orders were to notify the Chinese of the arrival of his embassy at the mouth of the Beihe, to ask for “an honourable reception”, and to be accompanied by Admiral Hope in a ship of war as support. Bruce arrived in Shanghai from London in May, ready to proceed to Beijing. He immediately learned that the Emperor was very hostile to elements in the treaty his officials had signed, that a “war party” was in power in Beijing, and that the Beihe port had been staked and the Dagu forts there reinforced. It appeared Beijing was ready for hostilities.

The Chinese authorities in Shanghai tried to avoid Bruce’s ratification trip, first by ordering the ratification to be done in Shanghai, contrary to their earlier agreement to do this at China’s capital. Bruce was outraged at this and refused on the grounds that the location of the formal ceremonies in Beijing was “at matter of right, not of favour”. The Chinese responded with a counter-offer, telling Bruce he had to go by an interior road route instead of by ship up the coast. Everyone knew this route would be arduous and full of perils, would take two months (far longer than the sea route), and would cause the June 26 deadline to be missed. Bruce refused this proposal and decided to take the allies’ diplomatic fleet north to Beijing as agreed one year earlier. He notified Governor Kuei-Liang (1785-1862) by letter on 11 June in Shanghai of the trip, emphasizing that it was in accordance with the Treaty, and throwing all responsibility on the Chinese for any consequences that might arise from his trip. KueiLiang was old, and even 15 years earlier the Emperor had noticed that he showed signs of impaired condition.

Bruce asked Rear-Admiral Hope to precede him with one ship to announce the imminent arrivals of the British and French ministers, and to confirm arrangements for their passage up the Beihe to Beijing. The Admiral's fleet of 19 ships included 11 gunboats, and they reached the Bohai Sea east of the mouth of the Beihe on 17 June. In the meantime the Russians had met with the Chinese behind the lines, and taking advantage of the show of force presented by the English and French, were able to get a treaty signed on 13 June. Their negotiator Count Poutiatine wrote Elgin two days later that "It is the success of the arms of the two allied Powers which has forced the Chinese to yield, at last, to the just demands of civilized nations" (Editorial Committee, 1859). Elgin replied to the Count commending the rapid completion of the Russian-Chinese treaty, and expressing hope that the allies could similarly complete their treaties without great calamities. He was worried that westerners would abuse the provisions for extraterritoriality in the treaty. The Americans signed their treaty with China on June 18<sup>th</sup>, again the apparent beneficiary of the British and French show of force at the river's mouth.

Admiral Hope gathered his fleet 30 miles away from the river's mouth and sent in a rowboat with messages for the Chinese officials, asking for the forts to be cleared of troops while the diplomatic party went up the river, and asking for a local market to be set up for use by the ships while they awaited the return of the anticipated diplomatic mission to and from Beijing. This boat was met with active hostility and returned to the fleet without any success. Across days of attempted communications the Governor of Chihli province told Bruce the allied diplomatic party had to go to a smaller port Beitang north of Dagu, and head along a land route from that small northern city, instead of using the main river via Tianjin.

Bruce was determined to use the normal route up the Beihe because it was "the national highway". After a reconnaissance showed Admiral Hope that there were three layers of obstacles across the mouth of the Beihe including chains, spikes, and rafts, the British asked the Chinese to remove these. Anchored offshore, the allies argued back and forth with the Chinese officials for days, with the Chinese evasive and delaying decisions, so on June 24 Bruce ordered the Admiral to remove the barriers. It appeared to the allies that the Dagu forts were deserted as American ships helped move the British troops forward to land along the river's shallow and muddy mouth. At one point the Chinese sent provisions to the American commodore, which he passed on to the allied troops even though his ships were not active participants in this embassy.

As the British began dismantling the barriers the Chinese opened fire from the forts, the allied sailors got stuck in the sloppy mud, major damage was done to their



ships and there were more than 400 allied casualties including two separate serious injuries to Admiral Hope. By nightfall, after 5 hours of bombardment from forts on both the north and south shores of the river, the Chinese stopped, so the allies resumed attempts to land. The Chinese resumed firing with an expertise and artillery that surprised the allies, killing many who had landed. There was huge bloodshed, the westerners called for a retreat, and the retreating boats were damaged by shelling, further complicating the mess.

In the end 5 gunboats were lost, 519 allied troops were dead and 456 wounded; fully 1/3 of the allied force was lost. The expedition spent three days destroying the remains of their useless ships then retreated in disarray back to Shanghai. The whole event was a debacle, with dark suspicions that the Russians had trained and equipped the Dagu defenders. American ships had no part in the hostilities but helped the British with the wounded, actions that are still honoured in the Royal Navy today. Within a month the Americans decided to go by the northerly land route to Beijing with their own independent diplomatic party, and by 27 July they were lodged in large villas outside the city, from which they were not allowed to move. Legge learned about this June debacle at the Dagu forts when he returned to Hong Kong in September 1859.

In the analysis of this disastrous venture historians have noted that Bruce was in error in claiming the right to use the main river up to Beijing because his fleet included warships, and the standing treaty of 1842 did not permit warships to enter Chinese rivers in peacetime although that right was being anticipated in the new treaty. Bruce reported in his own defence that his French allies agreed with his approach. At the time other critics complained that the Admiral should not have sent small gunboats to land before he had shelled the forts, should not have sent landing parties without the proper equipment to land in mud, and should not have required the marines to swim deep ditches of eleven feet carrying all their ammunition when the tide was going against the allies. Most of that ammunition was thus made wet and by the time the British men had crossed the first ditch not one weapon could fire, all useless in the conflict.

Later Qing documents showed that the Emperor had ordered the attack at the Beihe. For its part, the British government publicly reprimanded Frederick Bruce that November, coolly noting that he should have negotiated rather than using force. To forestall another diplomatic blunder and hot war London decided to send Lord Elgin, James Bruce (Frederick Bruce's older brother) in a second attempt to take the ratification documents to Beijing. He was to be Britain's ambassador, to be present at the Court's ratification of the treaties. In October the British and French in Hong Kong decided another expedition should be launched to take the new treaties to Beijing. By

December 1859 the treaties signed by Japan with Holland, Russia, England, France and the United States had all been ratified by the Qing and were functioning well. In contrast, the Chinese Prime Minister now declared that the treaties signed at Tianjin with the French and British in June 1858 were now “null and void”.

Both the Emperor and the British were having troubles in other parts of their empires. Xianfeng’s empire was still struggling with the Taiping rebellion and with more remote problems in a Muslim uprising in Yunnan province where the capture of the capital led to the suicide of the provincial Governor. For their part the British had just finished the Crimean war against Russia in early 1856, and had still been fighting until late 1858 in parts of India to overcome the rebellion there.

## Part 8 In Hong Kong with a new family

*In which Legge returns to Hong Kong in a nightmare voyage with his new family, the trade war ends, Rengan joins the rebels, Wong is the centre of a scandal, and volume I of the Classics is completed.*

Legge and his family left London for Gravesend on 13 June 1859, just days before the bloody encounters between China and the European allies at the Beihe half a world away. James, his new wife Hannah, and three daughters were embedded in a party of 16 on the train including his brother George, Hannah's brother William, other friends with their children, and Wong Lyekan, the Chinese amah who had accompanied Chalmers' wife and children to London. The group also included a new LMS mission man, Frederick Storrs Turner (1834-1916), intended to help Wong in the Canton mission. Hannah kept a diary for this trip, which ended with their arrival in Hong Kong on 21 September.

Hannah was amused to be individually hoisted by sling onto their small sailing ship the *Dora*, "like so many head of cattle". Their ship was a fast clipper designed for speed rather than for cargo volume, very sensitive to the slightest wind and quite tricky to manage because it was relatively unsteady. The trip gradually evolved into a nightmare.

It took four rough days to get out of the English Channel heading into the rougher waters of the giant Bay of Biscay, then they became becalmed June 22-26 off Portugal. They passed by the Canary Islands on 28 June, and heading west to take advantage of trade winds. On 6 July Legge and Turner were enjoying the lovely weather, playing chess while Legge smoked a cigar, when a sudden squall hit.

"All hands ordered on board, the dogs rushed wildly about, the officers suddenly assumed the appearance of Esquimaux, the vessel reeled and everything not stationary was carried hither and thither. The utmost excitement prevailed, the rain came down literally a cascade, the *Dora* ploughed the waves at a fearful rate but at no time were we in any danger... the night was very turbulent".

For the next few days they were again becalmed, now in the tropics, and the heat became oppressive. The Captain was in despair for he planned to complete the trip to Hong Kong in 100 days and he knew he was slipping behind schedule, fast trips being the whole point of a clipper. By July 10 he started to talk about there being a curse on

the ship. The last ship they were to see for the next two months came near, but the incompetent second mate mislaid his flags and lost “his books” so the ships did not meet and passengers lost their last chance to send letters home. They crossed the equator on 14 July and by the 17<sup>th</sup> picked up strong winds. By the 20<sup>th</sup> they had gone west across the Atlantic and could see Trinidad, then for the next few days they were again becalmed in the heat.

After the winds picked up so they could head southeast along the coast of South America they encountered four days of terrible storms 31 July – 2 August. The topmast was first blown off, then the severe gale and heavy seas killed one crewman, injured seven others, and destroyed 20 sails. One crewman was thrown suddenly against a pump handle with such violence that it took out one eye and fractured his jaw, then a cannon ripped loose and fell on him breaking his legs. He lay in a coma three days before dying, and Legge performed the mournful burial service on a cold raw day. “Oh what cold desolation was connected with the scene”. The body was wrapped in a shroud “and the body went into the sea with a plop and a splash looking more like a Guy Fawkes than anything. The romance of a burial at sea was broken”. The interior of the ship was a mess with bloodied seawater from the corpse all around being cleaned up beside them as dinner was served.

The storms pressed them quickly east and they reached the longitude of Cape of Good Hope on 5 August although it was out of sight because they were 300 miles south. It was cold and raw but they were going quickly at 12 knots and over the next 10 days the captain took them even farther south “get rougher weather to speed us along”. On 16 August this yielded trouble in the form of another terrible storm so violent that everything that was not fastened down was broken and Hannah could barely sit up in bed. They stayed in their cabin for safety, while above decks three crewmen were swept overboard by a huge wave. One grabbed something and was able to hang on, while the Captain threw a line out to the others. Crosby grabbed it and two men tried to haul him up but were not strong enough to do it fast enough, and he was so battered by the wild seas that he lost his grip and was gone, joining his crewmate. Eliza wept, and this event terrified the remaining crew, “for they know now how frail is their hold on life. The clipper ships being made for speed are much less safe for the crew, they are also considerably more unsteady, and require more working”.

The short-handed crew did not mutiny after the terrible storm of their cold tumultuous southerly route of 16 August, but by 30 August the captain had had enough of his incompetent and rebellious second mate, who had “become so unmanageable that irons were brought out to compel obedience”. Hannah noted that he “had never done a

good job and... was consequently the more officious'. The mate was furious and threatened legal action when they reached port. The crew loved attending the Sunday services that Legge and Turner conducted but the captain did not because the crew was not working while they sat and enjoyed singing, and Hannah was aware of the reason behind their enthusiasm for attending the services.

The crew had to "work like horses", and now began to murmur against the captain, who insisted on running sail day and night to catch all possible wind. The wild jerking in the ship tossed the dinner's roast beef platter into young Marian's lap one night, while the roast beef itself leapt up over her shoulder. The captain responded "I think we shall all go to pieces soon", leading Hannah to feel nervous for the first time. In their cabin Hannah and James sat on a sofa that was nailed to the floor when suddenly it broke loose and shot across the room smashing through a door. Legge maintained helpful composure across all these dramatic events, but even he became unnerved in a later episode of drastic lurching the next day, an event the captain described as a miracle of recovery because the helmsman had made a serious error. The captain was distraught and began wringing his hands crying "Oh my God, my God, what have I done that this should have happened to me!".

Within a week they had reached their farthest point east and began heading north to Java, to the busy port of Anjer at the Sunda Straits. They reached there on 1 September, just a few months more than 20 years after James had arrived there with his new bride Mary. After supplying up they headed north across the Java Sea to the Gelasa strait, a narrow passage between two now-Indonesian islands Bangka and Belitung on the north-west edge of the Java sea, a spot where the sea-bed rises up to become treacherous shoals before sloping down north into the South China Sea. In that strait they ran aground on 5 September on the notorious shoals that became the location of a famous Japanese aircraft bombing of a Dutch ship in February 1942. The captain and crew were frantic, and once the vessel was freed, anchored for the first time in the voyage to inspect and repair the damage. Underway again they saw pirates camped beside a small boat on an island, and the captain told them of a recent pirate attack from islanders on an Australian immigrant ship the *John Bunyan*. The aboriginal pirates had seized the ship, murdered all the crew, and "probably" ate them. At this point their captain confessed that he had forgotten to bring gunpowder for his cannon, so they would be helpless if attacked.

They crossed the equator heading north and were again becalmed from 13-20 September in a fierce tropical heat. They could see the China coast but were 40 miles away and even being blown the wrong way for a few day before a huge electrical storm

with “magnificent” thunder and lightning all around the boat broke out the night of 20 September. The captain was his usual optimistic self and wailed “I think we shall be all done for yet”. As the storm eased they caught a brisk wind that took them into the Hong Kong harbour the night of 21 September. They had indeed met the captain’s goal of a voyage of 100 days.

Across these three months of isolated travel the Legges amused themselves when they weren’t just coping with the violent storms or heat. Hannah, flush with a new bride’s pride, discovered that James revelled in rough weather, “Papa is just in his element, the greater the danger the more fearless, the greater the discomforts the more heroism. But it is otherwise with me. I have not learned to conquer difficulties or overcome fancies”. Eliza and Mary were good sailors, but Marian was seasick the first week with “many tears and fears” although she soon gained her sea legs, able to run on the deck in the worst weather. By 20 July she could run along the poop deck when even the Captain could barely stand. “A squall is to her a glorious amusement and the nightly chase of cockroaches makes her quite uproarious”. As they reached warmer waters giant cockroaches had emerged, and with Marian, Hannah entered into the spirit of things and “succeeded after an amusing chase in capturing one”. The food was tainted with an unpleasant oily smell, but Marian enjoyed eating flying fish when they reached waters that also included dolphins. When a swallow flew into their cabin and landed on Marian’s face Marian shrieked, Hannah shrieked, and “Papa” jumped up from his berth with a great roar “as if some murderous work was going on”. There were sheep on board for food, and dogs for Marian to play with. The captain and another crewman made toys for Marian and the steward made her a lovely plum cake to celebrate her sixth birthday on 13 July, with more toasts for Eliza’s 19<sup>th</sup> birthday on 27 August.

James, Eliza, and Mary took advantage of another passenger’s skills to study German with him, and Hannah and the girls studied with him to improve their Chinese. Hannah soon concluded she would never master it, although it was the first language of the children she would bear in Hong Kong. Eliza and Mary enjoyed singing, and the crew sang heartily at the services and in the evenings. Hannah had to start wearing long gloves to protect her skin after significant sunburns once they encountered the tropics.

There was an exotic event en route that revealed the moderate nature of Legge’s theology. On June 26, becalmed off Portugal, the ship came across a strange object bobbing in the sea and a small boat was sent off to investigate, finding it was a huge cask of valuable palm oil. The cask had attracted many sea worms, which were attached and boring into it. In turn, these had become prey for masses of small fish, which the sailors immediately caught for fresh food. One of the passengers piously refused to eat the fish

because they had been caught on the Sabbath “as a pastime but not out of necessity”, but James and Hannah debated this privately and decided with Scots practicality to relish the fresh food. Another day the sailors caught a shark and everyone was surprised to find a neatly bisected dolphin in its stomach.

Hannah first encountered local Asians in the form of rough and ready Malay vendors alongside the ship in Anjer and was intrigued by them. In her encounters with very different races and cultures she combined a conviction of the superiority of British culture with the egalitarianism of her faith. In this view, while cultures and religions differed and some were superior, all humans were born equal in the sight of the Lord. She was scandalized when the captain told a racist story about an unconscious coolie. The ship’s surgeon had concluded the man was dead and was ready to sew him into a shroud when the captain decided they should check again to make sure, by lancing him. When he did not bleed the shrouded body was shipped overboard although the captain was still suspicious that the man was alive, just having a “fit of unconsciousness ...but then, what did it matter, he was only a nigger” he concluded his story. Hannah underlined these loathsome sentiments in her diary. As they came close to Hong Kong her mixed sentiments were aroused again when a Chinese boat came alongside. “The first sight of the crew inspired me with feelings of pity and compassion and also a conviction that had they centuries of education and Christian cultivation which we have been privileged to have they would in every respect equal the English”.

In England at this time the Peace Society was becoming so worried about racist anti-Indian prejudice among the British, and its effects in India, that it wrote the LMS asking it to take a leading role in remedying these bad attitudes. It wrote that the LMS mission workers in India were now a group of some size, had a good reputation, and had “acquired no little moral authority over public opinion”, so were uniquely in position to improve arrogant British attitudes that were “worse than physical cruelty”.

### Chapter 43 Daily Life in Hong Kong

When the Legges arrived in Hong Kong in late September 1859 Hannah was excited to become part of this exotic community. She was intrigued by the rich Chinese merchants who came on board the ship to trade wearing elaborate costumes including white kid gloves. Carried up the steep streets 300 feet up the hill to the mission house on a “mountain chair”, she was welcomed to her new home by John Chalmers and Keuh Agong, the aging preacher with his two latest children named 72 and 74 in honour of his age.

Within two days Hannah had to play the hostess to a large and colourful parade of callers, including delicate Chinese ladies with bound feet wearing exquisite flowers, earrings, bracelets and hair decorations, with their children. Unable to speak a common language they smiled and inspected each other’s clothing and jewellery. The Chinese men and youth of the mission congregation were the most interesting of all to her, with their “refined and softened appearance, elegant manners, and becoming dress”, which she concluded represented the “triumph of missionary enterprise”. Another interesting visitor was a Parsi merchant Pestonji Dhunjubhoy, and when she made a return call to his home a few days later it reminded her of Pompeii, all “coolness and luxury” As a group the Parsis struck her as “the most aristocratic, wealthy, and intellectual of all the eastern races”. It is not clear if she then understood they owned about 1/3 of the opium trade but she soon learned this.

Other callers included senior figures of the European community such as Sheriff William Mitchell (a “gentlemanly Indian”), merchant and editor Robert Strachan, the Swedish Consul and wife, a German missionary and wife, American missionaries Mr. Graves from Canton and Dr. and Mrs. Brown, Lt. Johnston of the Madras Army, Rev. Beach the Anglican Bishop’s chaplain, Rev. Genaehr, and Irish physician Dr. Kane. She responded with equanimity to a less welcome response when she went shopping a few days later in a district where Englishwomen were not usually seen. “The surprise and contempt evinced by many were perhaps equal to my own pity for the social and moral degradation of the “working classes of China”.”

Hannah was thrilled with the substantial mission house with its large library, 70-foot dining hall, the two sets of sitting rooms and bedrooms upstairs opening onto a veranda eight feet deep and 70 long. The bedrooms had venetian blinds open to the sea, while the front of the house faced south to Victoria Peak. It was “quite equal to noblemen’s mansions in England”. She did not yet understand that it was also a large mission operation with classrooms and large kitchens and storerooms for all the work



and visits the mission had to host. On the main floor it had a schoolroom and large lecture-room, in addition to rooms for the Press.

Soon after his return Legge learned that his beloved father-in-law Dr. James Morison had finally died of his long-standing heart disorder, ironically on the same day that Legge and his new wife had embarked for their trip to Hong Kong. The chapter of his life with Mary was finally closed.

#### Hong Kong a place of colourful travellers and locals

Even without the drama of war refugees, Hong Kong was an exciting way-station and destination for travelling Americans, Britons, and Europeans. It was attractive in part because it was a truly international and multiracial city, with good relations and respectful treatment across groups the rule. Hannah wrote of the colour and excitement: “Hong Kong has been brim-full of soldiers, and the harbour of ships. Tents on any bit of level ground. The Sikh regiments were very fine. I went over one day to see them; it was a most picturesque and animated scene; each man had his war-horse. I went through in my chair, and we passed the sacred bull they had brought with them. The Queen’s Road is crowded with persons of almost every clime and costume”.

An expert who had studied clipper ships around the world after their 1843 introduction, described their glories in the Hong Kong bay that autumn:

“I have never seen a collection of vessels which could compare in stately beauty with the fleet of American clipper ships which lay in the harbour of Hong Kong during the autumn of 1858. The American ships were all built of wood and their hulls were painted black from the metal up, though (some) carried a crimson stripe or a stripe of gold. Many of their figureheads were of considerable artistic excellence, being designed by skilful artists... (Clark, 1910)

#### The Hong Kong mission 1859

The Sunday after his return on 21 September, Legge was back leading church services, first a morning service for the English congregation at Union Church, and then two Chinese services, at 3 PM in mission house then at 6 PM in the Chinese chapel in the Lower Bazaar in the Chinese Taipingshan district, ending with an evening service for the English congregation at Union Church, where Storrs Turner began his new life as preacher and minister. He had made a very favourable impression on Hannah during the voyage, as being “complete or rather symmetrical in character, a most excellent and intelligent Christian, just fitted to be a missionary”. Hannah saw that Union Church was full of gentlemen dressed in tropical white suits, some soldiers and marines in uniform,

and with only a few ladies. She soon learned that this grossly unbalanced sex ratio affected all the social life of Hong Kong, including the lives of her new teen-aged daughters.

Once Legge and his family were settled into the Hong Kong mission in September, Chalmers and the new man Turner left for their work with Dr. Wong in Canton in the same month. Chalmers had learned in June that his wife and children had made it safely to Scotland, and was pleased to discover that Cox was doing effective work for the LMS mission in Canton, complementing Wong's medical work. Chalmers and Cox took a stroll in the countryside and were "delighted to see the changed spirit of the people. They were not just civil, but obliging and happy to converse". He was even happier to learn in July that the LMS was increasing his meagre salary.

In contrast to his happy personal situation Chalmers was horrified by the terrible news from the June 1859 Dagu Forts conflict. His analysis blamed the Chinese for "an act of perfidy and mean treachery" in stopping Bruce's diplomatic mission from going to Beijing, but he also blamed Bruce and Admiral Hope for their management of the confrontation. Local opinion held that they had been imprudent; Bruce in calling on military aid, and the Admiral in letting his men fall into a trap. Chalmers was more forgiving, explaining that the British could never have expected treachery. "The laying of such a trap, were things of a character which one is proud to believe, it never entered into the mind of British minister or British officer to conceive." They never "dreamt that the treaty would be openly and boldly torn into shreds before their eyes".

Chalmers thought that the worst aspect of the outcome would be that foreigners would no longer have any sympathies with the Qing dynasty and would turn their favour to the rebels, and this would speed up the disintegration of the empire that had proved itself to be "corrupt, rotten at the core, and perjured". He thought the only other alternative would be for the foreign powers to annex China, which he thought would be a terrible outcome, "a thing to be dreaded and feared". He was quite surprised by the general response to the Dagu forts affair by the Chinese, who showed "great composure" and said they had expected it.

In Hong Kong Legge used a practical approach when Chinese members in the community consulted him on decisions that troubled them. Hannah recorded the case of a man who wanted to know if he should marry a certain woman. "The parents wanted sixty dollars for their daughter, ten dollars for cakes, fruit, etc., and two roast pigs on the third morning after the marriage. 'Why', said Dr. Legge, 'it will cost you more than one hundred dollars to get married. Have you got the money?'" "No" was his answer. So he was advised not to think of it".

James and Hannah's activities were not restricted to posh social events and dutiful teaching and congregational work. Both showed personal courage in providing intimate nursing care for dangerously ill people, friends or not, both Chinese and European. James had shown that in Malacca, and Hannah showed herself his equal in Hong Kong. The seriously ill mother of one of the Chinese servants was brought to Hannah after no Chinese person was willing to help her. Although the woman was drenched with fever Hannah took over her care, washing her body to try and bring the fever down.

Soon after returning to Hong Kong Legge was surprised by another visit from the old man of Boluo, Che Jinguang. He was still doing itinerant preaching in villages around his hometown "without fee or reward". Legge learned from two mission friends that Che was a man of good character who had been very helpful to them in their work, and was effective both with the mandarins and local people, so he decided to provide a salary to Che for three months. At the end of that period the local committee would review the situation and decide if they should establish a permanent mission in Boluo under Che's direction.

At the end of 1859 Legge summarized the Hong Kong mission's work for the LMS. He was worried that no word had been heard from his friend Hong Rengan, whose wife and children the Hong Kong mission had supported until the end of that year when she returned to her native village. He honoured Rengan, "a man who won my affection and esteem as few of his countrymen have done". The English congregation in the Union Church was growing, Legge had returned to do some teaching after pressure from Pastor Ho, and Legge's daughters were running a day school teaching English to nine girls.

#### Legge and his big happy family in Hong Kong

Legge was "deliriously happy" to be back in Hong Kong. His domestic life had been transformed by his new marriage, his work on the Classics had the approval of the LMS and practical support from a prosperous merchant, and he was again the senior man at the Hong Kong mission. Other members of the mission were also gaining family members, as Rev. Ho welcomed his fourth son, Ho Kai (1859-1914) that March.

No longer the lonely widower, James Legge was now patriarch to a large and active family, and the Hong Kong mission house was again filled with the happy sounds of children. He gave Marian a set of marbles, and in the mornings she would tear along the veranda to his bedroom so they could hunker down on the floor together and play a game of marbles. He let her collect pets, which included a canary, a cat, a turtledove, and two white rabbits; she was also negotiating for kittens and pigeons. All that life encompassed some hazards, and Marian was unhappy to discover her canary had

hopped off the veranda and been eaten by a cat or “the rats”. Hannah described James as “so kind and good & as playful as a child”, while Eliza and Mary “are always so sweet & amiable & ready to do anything required of them”. In the daytime Hannah and James enjoyed going on picnics with the children. One picnic to Happy Valley included a visit to the Protestant cemetery where Mary was buried, although Hannah judged that the tomb, with granite that came all the way from Aberdeen, was “not the least interesting”. On 29 February 1860, on Leap Year’s day, Hannah gave birth to their first child Helen Edith, to become James’ third surviving daughter.

Legge’s new marriage was exceptionally happy and tender. He was proud that “Mrs. Legge proves a good sailor” during the journey. From the tone of her letters it is clear that Hannah loved him very dearly, referring to him as “my precious beloved husband”. Once after he had been away travelling for only two weeks, she wrote “though the house has been full of company, I have felt desolate”. Others thought of Hannah in similarly tender terms, and years later when Hannah died in Oxford in 1881, James gathered their children around him while he read aloud a letter about Hannah from a friend who wrote of her “beautiful and gentle soul”.

Hannah was discreetly silent in her letters concerning some kind of nervous crisis that Eliza experienced during their trip to Hong Kong but James was a little more revealing in a letter to Tidman. He explained that she had become very ill. “Her nervous system, which had been severely tried by her grandfather’s illness, gave way entirely for a time. She rallied however, and is now well, though extremely delicate”. Once re-established in the mission life, both his older daughters began teaching in his boys’ school, the Victoria Free School, and then in the autumn Eliza opened a girl’s day school with 12 girls.

While various dramatic political and military events were taking place in the north in 1860, Hannah was settling in to her new life in Hong Kong. She wrote letters home revealing the large scale of the mission household and reflecting the major social demands of the position that Legge had now achieved as the founder of churches and schools. She was far more worldly than Mary had been, and loved fancy dresses, embroideries, and luxurious silk gowns. She admired her young daughter Marian looking “beautiful dressed in white with a lilac sash and hat with mauve flowers”. She also admired handsome faces, and praised the mission staffer Shifu for his “beautiful countenance”. She boasted to her brother William that Paris fashions arrived in Hong Kong within six weeks, and that “fashions are all grand”.

Hannah wrote to her sisters-in-law Mary and Rebecca Willetts and brother William about her family’s daily life, which was full of action. Young daughter Marian

would rise for the first of two family breakfasts at 7 AM, just tea and toast with somewhat doubtful butter that Hannah avoided, then would tear along the 70-foot veranda in her boots and with her hoop making a welcome racket to join her new father James, and her step-sisters Mary and Eliza for a raucous game of marbles with much laughter, waking Hannah. "Peals of laughter from the verandah betoken a game of marbles with Papa, Eliza, Mary & Mr. Turner... the trundling of the boots & peals of laughter being sound implying health & buoyancy more sweet to Mama's ears than the finest melody". Hannah loved the happiness of the household and her three daughters, but began to notice signs of an independent and sceptical spirit in her daughter Marian.

Old Keuh Agong would assemble the mission and household staff at 8:30 AM for morning hymns and prayers led with his deep voice, "the hymn of praise exactly as you would hear it from a company of white men". When the family assembled for morning prayers Marian often ignored the tradition: "I am sorry to confess (Marian) likes to have some private amusement of her own". The second breakfast at 9 or 10 was hearty and included meat, rice, curry, eggs, and rice cakes. There was an early dinner at 3 PM prior to a family walk in the cooling air, then an adult "tea" later after Marian was in bed. Legge was continuing to hold early evening services every night but Wednesdays, after which visitors would visit them for their adult tea at 8 PM. Marian was quickly learning to speak Cantonese from her "attendant" (not "servant") Shifu and two Chinese boys helping in the household, while she tried to teach them English; by June she was speaking Chinese as fluently as English.

On evenings when they were alone, after a short period of conversation James and Hannah went out for a "walk" in the cooling air that actually consisted of being carried in sedan chairs. As a special treat, they went for a boat trip. When they had guests for tea they would leave the table for the drawing room, where they had music and songs, played chess and "rotary gammon or a game of poets etc." They would all sing "Blest be the tie that binds", and look into a stereoscope while they finished off coffee and buns. It was "like a party every night". This was followed by an evening prayer and hymn. Hannah attended military band concerts some evenings while the troop ships were in town. James' family life was now crowded, noisy, and joyous.

Hannah had a canny eye for expenditures and values. Her household's daily cost for food was just under nine dollars for a list that included mutton, chickens, soup, curry, oranges, persimmons, potatoes, greens, pepper and salt, fish, eggs, charcoal, and pork fat that she knew was used only for the Chinese staff's meals. She complained that one dollar only went as far as one shilling in England, and quickly understood that

although this was a mission house in which virtue was expected, the cook and his assistants “live entirely from peculations” and extracted a percentage out of her food budget for their personal income in addition to their salaries.

She was quite aware of other costs and values, and wrote in detail about the rapid rise in costs in Hong Kong affecting everything from property to salaries. While a highly-competent bilingual European could earn as much as £4,000 p.a. from a top position in the Chinese government in Shanghai, another lost his job at £400 p.a. because he could not do double-entry bookkeeping. In the commercial bubble underway, investments yielded 30% interest. She detailed the costs of a Chinese tailor for the clothes for herself and her daughters, a cost of \$1.00 for three days of 9 hours work each.

Hannah’s delivery of a daughter Helen Edith on 29 February 1860 was not fraught with all the dangers and illnesses faced by Mary, but Hannah suffered severe migraines that led her to seek dark and quiet for long periods. The local swampy areas meant many mosquitoes and baby Edie’s face was often covered in mosquito bites. Although Hannah concocted a makeshift mosquito net supported by whalebone for the crib, the amah could not be convinced this was important. Even the family doctor said the bites were of “no consequence”, a mistaken understanding of the role mosquitos played as the vector of malaria in the notorious Hong Kong fevers.

Hannah hired a Chinese wet nurse for the baby, reflecting the Legge’s move into the cultured middle of the Hong Kong community; this had never been considered with Mary’s babies. The “fat old Amah with her black turban tied round her head, and hanging in long ends behind, her wide trousers and tunic, and large gold earrings, waddles stomp, stomp, stomp into the room; she grunts considerably in carrying baby into the next room”. The new baby thrived and became a playful “sweetest little pet exactly like her papa, so devoted to fun”. The new family arrangements upset James’ bachelor routine and he got out of bed only at 7 rather than his longstanding 3 AM rising for translation work, but he was still working hard on the final copy in preparation for printing volume I of the *Chinese Classics*.

As the allied fleet collected in May 1860 in Hong Kong for the northern expedition Hannah went down to look at all the ships and troops, especially admiring the splendid Sikh cavalymen and their fine war-horses. Her friend Mr. Pestonji, a Parsi in the opium trade, was very impressed when he watched the cavalry exercise and play polo. Hannah loved the cosmopolitan energy of Hong Kong; “it is a beautiful sight when walking on the Queen’s Road to see it crowded with persons of almost every clime and costume. The dress of the soldiers in this hot season is very graceful and the Indians especially seem to have a taste which luxuriates in elegance of costume”. She was less impressed after

watching an elaborate Chinese wedding to discover that beneath the priests' elaborate scarlet religious robes they wore dirty trousers and no shoes or stockings. Marian was not bothered by such a minor detail but enthralled by the overall spectacle, deciding she would be married in the Chinese style so she could be carried in a decorated sedan chair.

The large mission house and Legge home was again operating as a full-service mission station as well as a hospitality centre for many different people. Hannah wrote that in a typical day she might be visited by

”...either a lady dressed grandly (for the fashions are out here six weeks after their appearance in Paris), or a military or naval officer, or chaplain in the army, or some young man just come out bringing a letter of introduction, or some adventurous female *en route* for Japan, or some new missionary just arrived from America on the way north, or some of our more intimate friends, or Chinese to say “chin-chin”...” (H. E. Legge, 1905), p. 123.

With a large drawing room upstairs, Hannah had the talents and interests to run her household as a welcome resource for the whole community. Soon it became common for the family to have visitors at their hearty late meal, ranging from 6-12 on ordinary days, running up to perhaps 20 or 50 officers and soldiers occasionally, and to huge numbers on special occasions, because the rooms were large enough that there was no crowding. These were jolly dinners that started with soup or fish, progressed to either beef, mutton, pork, fowls, ducks or goose, a dish of cold meat or hash, rice, and a dish of curry with mango chutney, which James relished. Friends in the community who were hunters offered Hannah ducks, pheasants, turkeys, hares, capons and mutton joints as gifts, and sometimes she received so much she had to give it away in turn. The food was accompanied by ale or wine, as the Legges were not teetotallers. “Pudding” was sometimes elaborate desserts including pastries made by Hannah and her daughters, followed by “dubious” cheese, and fruits with wine ended the meal. Embellishments included oranges, pineapples, pears, pomegranates, and ginger.

After the dining was finished around nine the party turned to music, then prayers led by James, singing, card games, and ending with a rowdy game of Blind Man's Bluff. Hannah loved watching “the officers in their regimentals like children at play”. At the same time she gradually realized that the regular soldiers and sailors became increasingly weak and pale as their time in Hong Kong stretched into months. She attributed this gradual weakening to their very narrow barracks diet of beef and rice, with only a weekly rice pudding, a diet deficient in vitamins although they were not yet

identified. Hannah recognized that part of the reason that dinners at her home were regarded as a paradise by her guests was that she provided wonderful food in great variety. On those rare occasions when she had no guests, family dinner was considerably simpler, with jugged hare, curry, and plum pudding.

The most grand dinner party hosted by James and Hannah was held for 130 men, women, and children from their Chinese congregations. Hannah organized entertainment for the women and children in the upper drawing room at 4 PM, then moved various groups of men, women, and children around between the drawing room, school-room, and lecture theatre for different activities, finally settling everyone down to a 30-course Chinese meal served to groups sitting on chairs around a dozen tables in each room. Chinese distilled spirits were served to all and Hannah joined in drinking to the toasts offered, as well as eating with chopsticks. Her one concession to her homeland culture was her confession that she did not enjoy Chinese food. The feast lasted three hours, complete with mosquitoes, and all the adults were tipsy from the prolonged toasting and cheering that went on until late. Other events were similarly jolly and sweetly wholesome to jaded modern eyes. When Hannah had 50 soldiers to dinner, after the meal she entertained them by playing on the piano and singing Auld Lang Syne “which brought down thunders of applause”.

Hannah provided hospitable care to travellers even when Legge was away touring missions on the mainland. Once while James was away, “I am expecting every day a bishop from America; so what with Revs., Drs., bishops, children and ladies, amahs and boys, I am pretty well occupied from morning till night”. By Christmas the good life was making its own impact and she began to notice that she was gaining weight, with her rings becoming impossible and her shoes beginning to pinch her feet. This represented a return to good health, because one year earlier she had been ill and underweight.

Hong Kong was also thriving again in the summer of 1860, and now had a substantial core of worldly and prosperous merchants, officials and officers who created entertainments for themselves. The homes of successful Europeans were large and elaborately furnished with chandeliers, Persian carpets, mahogany furniture, and elaborate sets of china and silver. The homes of the wealthy Chinese merchants in Hong Kong and Canton were even more vast, and richly decorated with “fine massive furniture, tapestries, lamps and fittings”. These large households were run with the help of troops of servants, and a unique Hong Kong custom developed for large formal dinners. Each couple invited to a grand dinner would bring its own table servants, who would stand behind their own employers and provide all the meal services to that couple. This lent an air of exotic colour to the dinners because the servant from one



household might be a turbaned Sikh from the Punjab, from another might be a Portuguese from Macau, while others would be Chinese. These were so vigilant for their employers' needs Hannah wrote, "you would not think of handing any thing even to the person who sits next to you".

James and Hannah were also invited to some lavish receptions and dinners at Government House under Governor Hercules and Lady Robinson who had arrived in September 1859. One dinner included Major Fane of Fane's Horse, a magnificent Sikh cavalry that participated in the calamitous June 1859 trade and treaty expedition to Beijing. On another occasion there they met Sir Rutherford and Lady Alcock; he had just been assigned as Ambassador to Japan, and he and Legge had long talks.

These dinners were banquets that dazzled Hannah with their elaborate menus. Other dinners with families were also richly supplied with food. At a dinner hosted by Sheriff Mitchell they were offered mulligatawny and oxtail soup, baked oysters and fish, turkey, goose, pheasants, mutton, beef, hare, plum pudding, gooseberry pie, fruits green peas, potatoes, turnips, carrots, magnificent Christmas cakes, fruits, champagne and coffee. Some guests made amusing speeches, and some sang and played the piano. Hannah was a pianist and played the harmonium in some of these parties. Large official picnics of 60 guests were taken with the help of relays of coolies out to Stanley around the coast of the island, complete with a regimental band to entertain them and splendid food accompanied by champagne.

Many of the Commanders of the ships of the fleet in harbour the summer of 1860 had wives with them, and Hannah received formal calls from these ladies, building an obligation to hire a boat and return these visits. Some expatriates had gorgeous boats, and Hannah was invited to visit American Rev. James Beecher's "chop". It was a large houseboat that featured lavish fittings and large photographs of his family, "the cleverest in America". Beecher (1828 – 1886) was the brother of American Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of the 1852 anti-slavery book *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Beecher was an American chaplain to the Seamen's Bethels in Canton and Hong Kong, son of a famous radical and rather wild pro-slavery American Congregationalist preacher Lyman Beecher, and brother to Henry Ward Beecher, the most famous preacher of his time. He invited Hannah on board a 12-oared boat for a trip across the harbour to Kowloon. There they visited two military camps and the presiding Major gave them tea, then escorted them back to their boat via two villages entirely populated by known pirates. Hannah observed with an eye undimmed by political correctness: "A number of dogs, like wolves, rushed out, but were kept back by the inhabitants, who are always awed by

red-coats. The pigs everywhere seemed to fraternise with the people, and filth reigned supreme”.

Conversation at the formal dinners was often political, and within weeks of their September arrival in Hong Kong Hannah was plunged into the fretful talk about the Beihe debacle of June 1859, three months earlier. She met “the old Admiral” at a dinner party and described as very handsome, brave, and good, and while many in official life were very critical of him, others considered him to be technically excellent and a good man and hoped he would not be superseded. In addition the soldiers supported their Admiral and hoped he would not be punished for the Beihe affair. Legge visited him and found him in good spirits.

Hannah soon learned that the usual opinion was that the opium trade was necessary as funding to retain India, even though the Indian debt was increasing annually despite the busy trade. Hannah was saddened to realize that “every China merchant, almost without exception, is now connected with the opium traffic”, and after an evening sail as the guests of a Parsi on his little yacht, she commented morosely that he is, “like all the Parsi merchants here, an opium merchant but an exceedingly kind man”. Later a Parsi family gave Marian a lovely large pearl set into a gold ring during her visit to their home. Marian visited freely among the neighbours, sometimes accompanied by Shifu.

Hannah realized that the intense social life of Hong Kong did not match ordinary ideas of mission family life, and felt it necessary to justify it to her brother-in-law. “If you understood the state of society here you would think differently.” The core problem was the lack of women in the colony, and the resulting lack of “domestic pleasures” such as her home provided to men without families and homes. The main town of Victoria included men who were general adventurers, military officers with their soldiers and sailors, merchants and their clerks, diplomatic and government officials and their clerks, and large numbers of merchant sailors. Most of these were without women, and Hannah’s sociability and the presence of two daughters of marriageable age turned the mission house into a social centre. “The majority of white people here are men who have few social and no domestic pleasures, and with most who come it is almost, they say, like coming to a paradise out of the world, for their only other recreations are either the club-house or mess-room; there are here no lectures, concerts, etc.” to leaven their all-male lives.

There was such excessive interest in the Legge daughters that they eventually had to refuse to be introduced to the steady stream of military and naval callers. Some of the gentlemen callers even became such a persistent nuisance that Hannah had to more

actively discourage them, for her “diffident and retiring” girls were becoming fed up with being the incessant objects of curiosity to such a large pool of potential suitors. Hannah considered Eliza particularly graceful, while Mary was “sweet”, and both played the piano very well. One Parsi offered Hannah two cases of opium valued at £200 each, to purchase Mary. Even Josiah Cox of Canton, the agent of Legge’s angel Jardine, was one of Eliza’s rejected suitors, but that did not damage the close relations he had with James and his family. Even men with wives often ended up alone, as Hannah explained when Bishop Smith returned alone to Hong Kong in September 1860 from Australia; “everybody’s wife lives in England, the climate does not suit many”.

The dearth of families in Hong Kong led to a hospitality burden on any household with a master and mistress, and these households tried to provide social invitations to ameliorate the excessively male circumstances. The Legge family was equally welcoming to Chinese and European guests for dinners or for prolonged stays as house-guests; guests ranged from American missionaries with their families to Dr. Wong from Canton, and the requests for hospitality sometimes pressed to an unreasonable degree.

A young American woman came to them for care, “some adventurous female en route for Japan, (the resort of all the romantically ardent in the missionary cause),” expecting to go to Japan as a teacher but without funds, a supporting society, or any concrete plans. She needed a place to stay and none of the local congregations would help her because she was a Presbyterian. In another case, an American man 6 foot 4 inches wanted Hannah to take in his wife who had given birth ten days earlier on board ship and was ill, so Hannah again obliged. As the Taiping rebellion flared up around Shanghai and set its suburbs ablaze, James and Hannah also took in European refugees and expected “a shipload of ladies” soon to arrive, although Hannah was beginning to tire. “It is a very plain duty to be hospitable, but sometimes it seems more than we can get in.”

Hannah understood that she also had a job as a pastor’s wife in addition to all the social duties expected of her by the gentry, and that meant visits to members of the English and Chinese Union Church congregations. She was struggling to learn Chinese, and by October quite concerned to report that Legge had lost his hearing in one ear, a significant problem because tonal variations are crucial in spoken Chinese. She attributed this new problem to a bathing misadventure during their voyage in which a hose forced water into the ear, but the permanency of his problem seems rather to reflect some more individual pathology. It might have even arisen as a side effect of quinine doses for Legge’s frequent bouts of “Hong Kong fever”.

Hannah's father had died by the time she had left Britain, and her mother had begun dementing. After the death of her first husband, Hannah's marriage to James Legge had plunged her into a new life far from her past comforts, and with a rapidly evolving family. Marian was a lively child with great curiosity and considerable intellectual skills, playing chess by the age of seven, but she also had a tendency to "natural scepticism" and "selfishness in her heart" that drew Hannah's worried attention.

#### Eliza is courted by Horatio Nelson Lay

In January Hannah began worrying about Eliza, now 20. She loved drawing, was a good pianist, and was "so graceful" that she attracted the interest of many young men, but her health still seemed fragile after her breakdown during their frightening voyage to Hong Kong. Family Dr. Kane had been called in to some effect, but Hannah's letters are subdued and elusive as to the specific problems. By the spring 1860 however, Eliza had become engaged to marry Horatio Nelson Lay (1832-1898), an energetic and idealistic administrator 10 years older. He was "a truly Christian man" whose Chinese was so excellent he had helped Lord Elgin as interpreter for the Treaty of Tianjin. Within a few years Horatio's promising career turned into a public disaster.

Horatio Lay had been sent to China at the age of 14 after the death of his father of fever on an island off Xiamen in 1845. George Tradescant Lay, the British Consul in Xiamen, had been a devout Christian and accomplished scholar of Chinese. Young Horatio was a near relative of Admiral Nelson. He served briefly in Ningbo, became Interpreter in the Chinese consular service, transferred to Canton as Secretary to the Allied Commissioners who were then governing Canton, then resigned from the Foreign Office to become China's first Inspector of Imperial Maritime Customs where he was soon named Inspector-General in 1859. This was a new customs system in which the Chinese government contracted the customs tasks of taxes and records to British staff, hoping to gain efficiency and reduce bribery. The Taiping rebels had closed the operations of the Shanghai Customs office, and when all the replacements proposed by the Chinese were rejected because they were recognized as being too corrupt, the consuls of the British, French and American governments proposed a new system in which they would administer the Chinese Customs office and remit all duties to the Chinese government. Thomas Wade was the first Chief Inspector at Shanghai under this new system, soon followed by Horatio Nelson Lay. The Qing government found this system so successful that they soon copied it at other treaty ports, and Lay was working effectively in this role when he met Eliza.

### Crime in Hong Kong

There were active risks to the recreations in Hong Kong during the 1860s as crime became an increasing problem. A thousand poor migrant men arrived by steamer each day from Canton at a cost of per trip at 10¢ each, fleeing the chaos of Canton and its province. All were desperate to improve their circumstances in the thriving Hong Kong community through any means possible, including petty crime.

When the heat of the day was beginning to taper, residents might go for a sedan-ride to visit friends, go for a drive along the coast of the island, or for a ride in large rowboats across the harbour to Kowloon. With the rising crime problems these ladies' recreations often involved direct encounters with a rougher life. Once James and Hannah went to the top of the Peak in Hong Kong to stay for a few days visiting the signalman there. Although it was a time of widespread burglaries from bands of 30-40 robbers that rowed over from Kowloon each night, James and Hannah slept with the doors open to try and catch every breeze, either stoical or fearless about the possibilities of attack. The genuine dangers there were realized a year later during the visit of another friend. Mr. Coffin actually locked the doors, but during the night the venetian-blind windows were broken open, the doors were attacked, and a stink bomb was thrown in. Stink bombs contained gunpowder that would explode, releasing fire and a terrible smell; people would be burnt or suffocated in the smoke. In this attack the signalman was gravely injured and Mr. Coffin remained ill for weeks afterward.

One Christmas Hannah strolled with a retinue of women and their children to visit Rev. Lechler of the Basel Mission to admire his German-style Christmas tree and to enjoy the hospitality of his house full of Chinese parishioners. Hannah's party was particularly vulnerable to the bands of robbers roaming the streets because her group included some Chinese girls with bound feet who made slow progress. The ladies were determined however, so added two protective males to successfully discourage any idea of attack.

The Legge household and ladies of the colony took a rather robust attitude toward the crime problems. Hannah wrote that many Hong Kong ladies went armed with a loaded six-shot pistol as they visited about town, while others carried "Penang lawyers"; these were thick walking sticks with a bulbous head, readily used as a club. Hannah never carried a revolver but "a spirited friend did so, and rather hoped for an opportunity to use it". Her friend's gun was either pathetically weak or her aim was completely hopeless, because she shot at a dog bothering her chickens, and when it seemed only wounded went closer for some final shots to put it out of its misery. When she finished she was surprised to watch it rise up, shake itself off, and wander away. Two

men made a vicious attack on the Legge family doctor as he walked along West Road; they cut his head badly and stole his gold watch and chain. Hannah worried to James that he would suffer a similar fate, but he was stoical: "Sufficient unto the day, my dear", and paid no further attention.

Ladies and revolvers were also a theme when Hannah went on a holiday to Japan to improve her health in 1865 and stayed with a friend in a Buddhist temple. Two men hanging about the grounds and boasting about the sharpness of their swords left her feeling somewhat unsettled about sleeping with no protection from the light wood and paper walls. Her hostess reassured her by providing her with a revolver to keep loaded under her pillow, and her hostess moved her own bed and baby close by to provide another ready revolver. Hannah was as stoical as James "There is however, really no cause for fear, beyond what might happen in almost any place, and this I am pretty sure of. Under God's protecting care we are safe anywhere".

#### Hannah Tours Hong Kong and Canton

While the British, French and Chinese faced each other down in the northern autumn battles of 1860, life in Hong Kong was more tranquil and interesting, and Hannah was eager to explore the region. She described a June 1860 visit to Canton, showing no trace of modern sensitivities. She was not patronizing by attempting to censor out any distasteful elements she found in Chinese life, but neither did she issue blanket condemnations of the whole culture for the specific problems she saw. She simply described and assessed the good and the distasteful with equal succinctness. In this visit by boat up the Pearl River to Whampoa and Canton Hannah observed the fetid squalor and extreme crowding of the poor living on sampans, the premature aging of the tiny women, and the ubiquitous presence of animals and vermin in the habitations. She found the houseboats of the poor quite disgusting and the condition of the women pitiful. Hannah described the Pearl River; "why call it Pearl when it is blackened over with sampans & junks composed of grease & filth & wretchedness, at night resembling a river of Pandemonium more than anything one can conceive?" She contrasted that with the boats of wealthy gentry, "brilliantly painted & the mandarin junks were of a superior exterior in point of colour & cleanliness", many decorated with lanterns and used for gambling. She thus attributed filth and misery not to race but to impoverishment, as in Britain.

Hannah found the altars in the temples of poor boat-dwellers filthy and the smoke and smell offensive, but was impressed that every boat, however impoverished, contained a small shrine with offerings honouring the spirit of "a higher power". She

was quite dismayed by all the devastation left from the recent battles and described a famous temple bell about which a local belief held that Canton could not be taken as long as the bell was untouched. When a bullet went through the bell in the conflict the previous year, the Cantonese “lost all hope”.

Hannah and James stayed with the Chalmers and Turner at the Canton mission, and both families went out into the country to see the famous garden and pavilions of rich Hong merchant Pun Tinqu. He was a trader who in earlier times offered tea and an opium smoke to western visitors as he sat in his classical pleasure garden of pools and a pagoda with some of his wives. En route Hannah praised the beauty of two famous pagodas, and the fading glories of the abandoned garden and home of Pun, whose wife and daughters had recently been robbed in their home by French troops, to universal European outrage.

The next day Hannah visited Canton, whose streets were so narrow and rough that carriages were impossible and travel had to be done by sedan chair. The lead chair bearer would shout out each oncoming obstacle “hill”, “bridge” for the bearers at the back, and passers-by would shout out “foreign devil” or “foreign barbarian”, as Hannah was moved along. Corners were a problem because the chair-poles were too long to turn the tight corners offered by the narrow streets, and the bearers had to step inside shops on the corners to handle the problem. Hannah saw a small square where the dispossessed, “the lame, the blind, the leper” and diseased would come to lie down and await death without receiving any care.

She visited a famous temple and was struck by the mixture of sacred and profane in the interior.

“In Cathedrals at home everything offensive to the eye is put out of sight... Here there is no study for effect: unwieldy painted bedizened idols, splendid new embroideries, faded old ditto, food, parcels neatly done up in paper containing presents for the gods, cumshaws from persons who suppose they have received some special benefit - side by side with smoke-black pans, old empty bronzes, and... things worse than brushes & dustpans”

As dark came during the return trip Hannah became separated from Turner in the narrow streets and became quite alarmed, unable to speak to her sedan chair carrier and fearing she might be kidnapped. After some frightening passages she successfully rejoined the party and was told that her emotional response to the crowded city would

wear off over time. She philosophically told herself that was probably true, with the exception she hoped she would never lose her “Christian feelings of sympathy and compassion”.

Another day she visited Hobson’s Guangli hospital, where Dr. Wong was still active as the medical director. Hannah noted “he speaks English elegantly, is most intelligent & is considered the first surgeon in China”. Although she heard cries from two patients undergoing surgery she noted that chloroform was always used for surgery. She was impressed by the ethereal beauty and “sweet, almost rapturous expression” in the face of a young man with grossly diseased legs for which there was no hope; features “I shall not ever forget”, and realized the hospital could do with the nursing services of a Florence Nightingale.

Hannah visited the palatial Yamen (official residence and offices formerly belonging to the Manchu Governor), now inhabited by allied commissioner and British Consul Parkes. After a short friendly visit with Parkes, a “grass widower” whose wife was in Britain, she went on to a famous Canton pagoda. She climbed to the top and admired the vast views of the flatlands and meandering streams of the Pearl and its delta. After a few more days her visit ended and the Legges returned to their children in Hong Kong. Hannah was sobered by the misery she had seen but philosophically concluded that she would probably have more temperate views after a second visit, as had happened with Hong Kong.

Hannah’s letters reveal interesting attitudes. She was impatient in learning from sister Betsy that her sister-in-law Mary Willetts planned to write a book. Hannah considered Mary a neurotic, self-centred complainer who never learned anything from life but stuck with rigid ways of disapproving of everyone. Hannah had no sympathy for a woman who constantly complained that others let her down. Hannah was a feminist in praising a book on child-rearing that wrote of the intellect of women as being “unkindly treated – too much flattered, too little respected”. She was interested in books that would help her rear her children to be adults with good character and productivity.

Hannah had a vigorous response to exotic foreigners, as in the case in the frequent visits from Rev. James Beecher and his wife. She tolerated the Beechers’ rather astonishing bombastic and powerful personal styles but she was sarcastic about their crude and imaginative fundamentalism. “I have no doubt they are sound in all the main points, & have a simple & earnest faith, but as a family, they have been a republic in a republic & must not be judged by the rules of English conventionalities. It is the most remarkable family in America & the saying there, is universal that there are three orders



of beings viz: the good; the bad; and the Beecher family”. James Beecher was 32 years old and privately beginning to suffer from hallucinations that became such an acute torment in later years that he committed suicide. It is not clear if he also suffered delusions, but Hannah’s letter captures the elusive unpredictability of the man along with her own hearty accommodation.

#### Eliza marries Horatio Nelson Lay

On 21 August 1860 Eliza married Horatio Lay, earlier than planned because of the confused state of Chinese-British affairs. Legge conducted the ceremony at Union Church in Hong Kong, and a month later Eliza moved with Lay to his work in Shanghai. She had recovered her childhood mastery of Chinese quite well after returning to Hong Kong. Legge admired Lay’s character and his “deep interest in all Chinese affairs”. He had been in the failed Northern Expedition of July 1859 where he suffered some injuries, and in February 1861 he asked to return to England for a year of leave on account of these injuries and general exhaustion (Gerson, 1972).

#### RAS Hong Kong collapses

At about the time Legge returned to Hong Kong, the Hong Kong branch of the Royal Asiatic Society was in a collapsing condition. It was a branch of the British RAS, which had been created as a scholarly association for the promotion of studies of Asian countries. In early 1859 while Legge was still in Britain, one of its leading members the retiring Governor Sir John Bowring left for Britain and as Legge arrived in September its longstanding Secretary Dr. W.A. Hartland died. Legge joined the efforts of the new Governor Sir Hercules Robinson, Bishop Smith, Harry Parkes and others to save it, but by September 1860 all failed. The Hong Kong branch of the RAS was not revived until a century later, in December 1959.

#### Translating

Legge was now in a position to put more time working on the Chinese classics. He had spent much of his time during his return voyage studying Chinese, and he also set up classes on board to teach his wife, children, and the new minister Turner. Turner was by far the best student and Legge was pleased to predict he should “prove an efficient missionary”. Now back in the Hong Kong mission, although Legge attended to his students and his flock in his daytime activities, he was putting tremendous effort into finishing his work for volume I of the Classics, along with his introductory essay examining all the most important commentaries as the translation’s underpinnings. He stayed with his traditional work schedule, working on the *Classics* late at night and very

early in the mornings, bracketing his more social and mission activities with this daily intense research and writing.

Even as he was creating an English version of the great Chinese texts for the education of mission men and the European world of letters, Legge also did translation work for the mission, translating English schoolbooks and religious texts into Chinese for use in his schools and congregations. In November 1859 he began printing galley proofs of volume I, planning to have each page corrected and printed by July or August 1860.

#### Chapter 44 The trade war ends in northern China

*In which China and Britain complete the trade treaty after murders of the diplomatic party and Elgin's retribution, destroying the Old Summer Palace.*

In March 1860 the British, frustrated with the Qing stonewalling of the past two years, sent an ultimatum to the Qing government asserting that the Tianjin treaty negotiated in 1858 had to be signed in Beijing, and reparations had to be paid for the attacks in 1859. The Qing court refused and Britain formally declared war against China on 8 April 1860. Lord Elgin left Britain on 26 April as Plenipotentiary to lead a new expedition to get the treaty signed and to get the Chinese to apologize for the June 1859 Chinese attacks at Beihe.

Elgin was not in an aggressive mood, and he and his political masters did not want to do anything that would lead China to fall apart in civil war for the very concrete reason that war would hinder trade, and trade was the whole point of the treaty. At most Lord Palmerston allowed Elgin if necessary, to set up a temporary occupation just long enough to “bring the Emperor to reason”.

Elgin was a Scottish landed aristocrat who had little sympathy for the aggressive Scots merchants of Hong Kong, and he also had no taste for colonizing, writing “No human power shall induce me to accept the office of oppressor of the feeble”. His goals were focused strongly on a diplomatic embassy rather than war. At the same time, the disaster of June 1859 had taught the British that a show of force was essential to convince Qing officials of the seriousness of purpose of the embassy, and gunboats accompanied Elgin, as there was suspicion that the influential parties in the Qing court were still actively hostile to foreigners.

The British wanted a British Embassy in Beijing so treaties could be negotiated with the imperial power by diplomats of equivalent national status, rather than being forced into tedious wrangles with provincial officials in Canton who lacked national powers. For their part the Qing negotiators believed their heads would fall if they allowed foreigners to establish residence in Beijing, remembering that the treaty makers of 1842 had all been demoted, including the highly competent Commissioner Lin.

As suspected, the Qing government refused to ratify the negotiated treaties it had signed more than a year earlier. Instead the young Xianfeng Emperor (born in 1831 and on the throne for eight years) had his officials continue the stalling tactics that had frustrated the British for the past two years. He appeared not to accept that once his officials had signed the treaties, honour required that the court must ratify them. His

fateful miscalculation on this led to the most dramatic and final events of this second trade war.

In May a large British-French fleet consisting of 200 ships carrying 13,000 British and Indian, and 7,000 French troops on 143 troop ships assembled in Hong Kong under the command of Elgin's brother-in-law General Sir Hope Grant. On 9 June this fleet began moving north, by 25 June congregating in Dalian Bay to the east of Dagou, across the Bohai Sea, where it set up camps at Odin for the Sikh cavalry. The British fleet gradually assembled in the northern part of the Gulf of Bohai off Dagou, and the French assembled in a southern section.

In early August the allied forces landed troops upriver of the mouth of the Beihe river and the Dagou forts, past abandoned forts around a more northerly river. By August 12 land troops curled back south to the Beihe and outflanked the Dagou forts at the mouth of the Beihe. Harry Parkes, now 32 and an interpreter and advisor to Elgin, offered truce to the northern fort on 20 August, which was rejected, and the following day the British and French attacked and took the north fort with Chinese casualties of 4-500 and allied of 25 killed and 184 wounded. The allies quickly took the remaining forts. General Grant wrote "the poor Chinese now had a sad time of it. They had fought desperately, and with great bravery." By 21 August the allied ships began clearing the river barriers and moving up the river to Tianjin, and Elgin landed there on 25 August, met by three Imperial Qing commissioners. He demanded they comply with the March ultimatum that the treaty was to be signed. In response they started picking apart different elements of the treaty, in effect re-opening the negotiations that had already been agreed upon two years earlier. They explained that the Emperor did not want any foreign troops to accompany the diplomatic party to Beijing.

The Chinese delayed any actions or decisions for many days. A high mandarin came to Tianjin on 31 August and left on 7 September without explanation, so, frustrated by this stalling, on 8 September Elgin decided to proceed toward Beijing. The main party made slow progress over rough fields, and it took nearly a week for a small forward party to cover only about 35 miles, but this slow move forward convinced the Chinese that talks should resume. They agreed that Elgin was to send a small advance party of diplomats to Dongzhou to meet Chinese commissioners for initial talks; accompanying troops would be required to stay 4 miles outside the town while the envoys entered it.

On the 17 September Elgin ordered the small forward envoy party to go overland to Dongzhou about 12 miles out of Beijing, to hold preliminary discussions with Qing officials and prepare the way for the official allied party, inspecting roads and living

accommodations that would be needed for the official delegation. This advance group of 37 consisted of French and British diplomats including Elgin's secretary Mr. Loch, Mr. de Norman, the London *Times* correspondent Mr. Bowlby, a French priest Abbé de Luc, and Consul Harry Parkes as interpreter. They carried a flag of truce and were escorted by two captains with a Sikh cavalry of 25 (Fane's Horse), and infantry of the King's Dragoon Guards under Col. Walker. Parkes with five soldiers reached Dongzhou on 18 September and reached some agreements with the Chinese envoys at a nearby site, but when they tried to get back to the main British forces to report, they found their way blocked by a Manchu army of 30,000.

Parkes left the officer and four soldiers there and returned to Dongzhou to protest, and the Manchu force began aggressive moves against the five military men who soon realized they must flee for their lives. Col. Walker and his men made a dashing escape through the Manchu lines, evaded fire, and explained to Elgin and General Grant that the Chinese had become quite hostile. General Grant knew their allied envoy group was now behind truly enemy lines. In Dongzhou Parkes protested this Manchu army's position with a Qing official, Prince I, who counter-charged, claiming that he had heard (false) "news" that the British in Tianjin had captured the Prefect of the city. The next day Prince I ordered the capture and imprisonment of Parkes and all the members of the advance party still in the hinterland, and Elgin soon found out about it.

In all, the Manchu general seized 26 British and five French of this diplomatic party, and this elicited retaliation. Lt.-General James Hope Grant landed more allied troops including cavalry, fought significant battles over the next few days and won access to the northerly road to Beijing while French forces took a southerly road inland. On 22 September the Emperor fled from his Summer Palace to Jehol, a Manchu site.

Within two weeks the allies learned more details about the treatment of its captured envoys after the Chinese released a Private who described three days of torture and starvation. Two Sikhs added more details about how the members were beaten, tortured, and starved under the orders of the famous Manchu general Senggelinqin. In fact 22 of the 37 had been killed during their two weeks of imprisonment although it took some time before the allies learned of the scale of these murders.

The allied troops freed the surviving hostages on 8 October including Parkes, Loch, a French officer and nine Sikh cavalry. Two men were known to be dead from torture and many were still missing; Bowlby of the *Times* had died the second day. Parkes explained what had happened to him and his little group. After their arrest they were taken in chains to a large jail in Beijing and on 28 September Parkes learned that the Emperor's talented half-brother Prince Gong (Kung, Manchu name Yixin) wanted

peace. The other criminals in the jail treated them with kindness, and on 29 September they were moved to better quarters, but their tortures and starvation had fatal results.

When Elgin learned of the tortures and murders of his ceremonial forward party, the allies decided to use a show of force and capture Beijing, giving an ultimatum for the surrender of Beijing by a certain deadline as a means of avoiding further harms. The Hoppo of Canton, an old friend of Parkes, acted as intermediary to the Qing officials, and within fifteen minutes of the allies' deadline the Emperor agreed to all demands after he was told the city would be burned if he did not surrender it. The Anding Gate was opened and the British entered with a huge military parade. Six porters carried Elgin into Beijing in a deliberately flamboyant symbolic act because tradition allowed this only to the Emperor, followed by an honour guard of 500. There he met Prince Gong, soon to become the first Foreign Minister for the Empire.

#### Retaliation against the Summer Palace, not against Chinese people

French troops reached the huge garden of palaces and follies that comprised the Old Summer Palace (Yuan Ming Yuan) on the outskirts of Beijing on October 5, occupying then looting it in a vast spree for days, despite desultory efforts to post guards. The *North China Herald* of October 20 commented with disapproval that "after the French had made the first selection... the officers, from the General downwards, are said to have enriched themselves greatly". This looting was not in the British tradition, but when the British troops reached the palace and discovered the vast extent of the looting they were jealous of the riches being appropriated by the French soldiers. Prize officer Major Anson argued successfully that some of the riches should be shared with the British officers on October 7, consisting mainly of gold ingots.

General Grant knew that if he deferred the question of prize money to some future decision in Britain he risked losing order among his soldiers, so ordered that all treasures taken by British officers were to be surrendered for valuation, after which they could be purchased immediately or put up for sale by auction, the proceeds to be shared with the regular soldiers. The Army was to receive the proceeds. In this way \$32,000 was generated and immediately distributed as prize money to those who showed valour in action. As things calmed down at the now-empty Summer Palace, villagers nearby brought tea and cakes to the allied soldiers as they were leaving, in a small example of many ironies of this expedition.

On 14 October the Chinese sent the allies coffins containing 11 dead from the allies' envoy. The bodies were in such terrible condition the men had to be identified by their clothing, and the horror of their deaths made a huge impression. Elgin decided to

bury the murdered men with full military honours, and also decided that allied retaliation for these horrific tortures and murders of diplomats had to provide a spectacular display that would punish the Manchu rulers but not the Chinese people. After some rumination he decided this must be the systematic destruction of the Summer Palace as a symbolic act, even though he had much reluctance about this. Elgin authorized the attack on the grounds that he would thus show the Chinese that civilized people did not murder helpless captives in retaliation for political struggles, but they only destroyed property.

In the destruction of the empty shells of the palaces, Elgin reasoned that the physical reminders and the loss of face to the Manchu rulers would also be more permanent than punishment of any individual Qing official might be, while not harming the peasants. Proclamations were written in Chinese by the allies for posting in all nearby villages explaining the reasons for the destruction of the palaces.

Elgin did not admire much of Chinese decoration, although he believed that beneath the “rubbish there lie some hidden sparks of a divine fire”<sup>34</sup> which his countrymen could gather and nurture.

“I am not so incorrigibly barbarous as to be incapable of feeling the humanizing influences which fall upon us from the noble works of art by which we are surrounded. No one regretted more sincerely than I did the destruction of that collection of summer houses and kiosks, already, and previously to any act of mine, rifled of their contents...

... in no other way, except indeed by inflicting on this country and on China the calamity of another year of war, could I mark the sense which I entertained ... of an atrocious crime, which, if it had passed unpunished, would have placed in jeopardy the life of every European in China. I felt the time had come which I must choose between the indulgence of a not unnatural sensibility, and the performance of a painful duty.”

This destruction of the Yuan Ming Yuan “at least meant that flesh-and-blood injuries done to people he knew intimately would for once be revenged not, as in war, upon other people ... but on inanimate objects, on redundant and expensive things”. (Beeching, 1975)

---

<sup>34</sup> Barmé, Geremie R, Gong Xiaogong: A Case of Mistaken Identity. Asian Studies Institute Publications, Victoria University of Wellington, online.

The fires and attacks on the structures of the Summer Palace were thorough and destroyed buildings and artwork on 18-19 October. The French were critical of this destruction, claiming it was barbaric, although they did not apply that term to their own earlier looting and destruction of the rich contents of the buildings. Ironically the pavilions of the Western Gardens of this complex had been designed by Jesuits in the Qing court in the 1700s, and were even named the “western palace” (Xiyanglou) by the Chinese.

The Qing finally realized that Elgin had to be respected and they had to take the treaty work seriously, and on 24 October Prince Gong in Beijing agreed to a truce and signed the Convention of Beijing with the British. This ratified the previous treaty of Tianjin, opened Tianjin to trade and accommodations, and provided an apology from the Emperor. The Imperial government promised to pay reparations, and ceded Kowloon to Britain. The next day Beijing signed a treaty with the French, and by 9 November most of the allied troops had left Beijing, with only small garrisons left in Tianjin and at the Dagu forts.

#### The ratified treaty of Tianjin 1860

The ratified treaty of Tianjin provided for increased access of foreigners to China, allowed them (with no discrimination against missionaries) to travel in the interior of China, and opened six additional ports for trade. These agreements also set transit taxes for goods in the interior, and established standard weights and measures in the trading ports. In a later supplementary agreement in Shanghai it was clarified that opium could be sold to Chinese traders in the treaty ports, where it would be taxed, but all inland opium trade was restricted to Chinese merchants. Although the treaty provided that British and other foreigners were no longer to be named barbarians (“yi”) in official Qing documents, the empire still refused to allow a permanent British Embassy to be set up in Beijing.

Prince Gong was then around 32 years old, and was considered to be the most intelligent member of the Qing imperial family. He had developed an understanding about the changing status of China in relation to the western world. Gong visited Lord Elgin in Beijing on 3 November and told him that until this British visit he had not known that India was “merely a province of the British empire”. He explained that the Qing court believed that “Great Britain was a very small island, the population of which was so large more than half were obliged to live in ships”. Gong became an active statesman for foreign affairs and was eventually named Foreign Minister, the first official in the Qing court given the task of dealing with foreigners now that it seemed inevitable that



the dynasty had to open to the foreign world and could not trust international affairs to local politicians in Canton.

The absolute bloodshed of this second British-Chinese trade-treaty war was still small in comparison with the blood still being shed in the massive internal rebellion of the Taiping. Estimates are that the British lost 4,000 and the Chinese lost 6,000 men in the Tianjin treaty war of 1857-60, while the Taiping rebellion was to cost 20- 30 million Chinese lives by the time it ended four years later. This vast civil war touched the lives of James Legge and his Chinese friends in a very brutal way within a year.

#### James Legge and the Northern expedition

Legge shared the Hong Kong community's relief at the success of Elgin's expedition in reaching Beijing, but as of October 27 Hong Kong residents still did not know if the Emperor had remained in his capital to sign the treaty. Elgin had sent to Shanghai to call his brother Frederick Bruce north to be part of the final documentation, and events were still unsettled, but the electrifying news had been of the torture and murder of most members of the small advance party. Legge wrote the news "has produced a great sensation here, and will do also in England. Nothing can be said in extenuation of it. I have been conscious myself of the disgust with the whole people which it naturally excites, and overcome the feeling only by falling back on the fact that in ourselves we are no better than they, and that wherein we differ it is from the grace of God". He recognized "a great difficulty in the way of intercourse with the Chinese government and authorities" because they refused to recognize that they were just men like other men when they continued to force all foreign officials to bow down in the kowtow (ketou) to the Emperor as a god. "This assumption of superiority underlies all their dealings with foreign nations".

#### Chapter 45 Legge, Hong Rengan, Shifu, the term question, and a crisis with Wong

*In which Legge's rejection of money from the Taiping king earns him unsuspected kudos, his neutrality is not widely shared, the term question is revived, and a crisis develops concerning Wong.*

Legge's personal connection with the Taiping rebellion came from his warm friendship with Rengan during the years he had lived alone in Hong Kong, and Legge was pleased on his return from Britain to find Rengan's brother Hong Shifu working as the chief of the mission staff. Legge's connection with Rengan, now a Taiping prince called the Shield King (Wan Wang), led to an unusual episode. One day Shifu brought Legge one thousand dollars from Rengan that he wanted distributed to Rengan's old friends including Christians, in batches of one hundred dollars. James was offered \$100

of this. Alarmed, he asked where Rengan had obtained the money. Shifu replied “he is the king and can get what money he likes”. Legge was perturbed.

“You call him the king; I call him a rebel. If the Tai-Ping rebellion succeeds in overturning the Chinese government, I will be happy to recognise him as a king and to receive money from him, but now I can only recognise him as a rebel, and doubt whether the thousand dollars have been honestly procured. He used to be happy here with ten dollars a month; write to him and say that I cannot receive the bag of a hundred dollars” (J. Legge, 1872b).

News of this incident spread among the Chinese Christians of Hong Kong and China. Years later, in 1864 during a holiday on the West River, a man in the village of Zhaoqing recognized Legge and bowed to him as “the righteous man” who had refused the bag of money sent from the Taiping Shield King.

Shifu eventually joined Rengan in Nanking and became an official with the Taiping government. Foreigners often visited Nanking from Shanghai, and the Shanghai papers often praised the behaviour of Rengan and Shifu. When Nanking finally fell in 1864 and the Taiping leader Hong Xiuquan committed suicide, Rengan tried to save the leader’s young son and gave himself the handicap of trying to ensure the young man escaped. They were both captured and Rengan was put on trial and beheaded in 1864. The rebellion was over.

Legge wrote of his great regret that Rengan had not taken the advice James offered at the outset of all the troubles, which was to stay in Hong Kong and remain a pastor with his Chinese congregation. Had Rengan followed this advice he “might have been living with his head on him to the present day”.

#### Legge’s views of the Taiping and Hong Xiuquan

Legge had studied the writings of the Taiping king Hong Xiuquan, in which he reported visiting Jesus and God in heaven and being recognized there as Jesus’ younger brother. Legge concluded that Hong must have been hallucinating during a fever to generate such fantastical accounts. He examined all the Taiping writings sent to him and concluded that these were conventional only up until 1844, but all after that showed problems. He explained in an article in August 1860 that Hong Xiuquan’s ideas about religion had grown up “independently of intercourse with foreign missionaries”, and his later writings were “extremely objectionable”. Fellow LMS man Joseph Edkins of the Shanghai mission thought differently and published a series of articles on the policies and religion of the Taiping first in the *Hong Kong Register* in June and August 1860,

then as reprints in several issues of the *China Mail* in August. He concluded that the Taiping understanding of Christianity was “in all substantial points correct”.

Hobson and the other LMS men in Shanghai were directly confronted with the bloody nature of the on-going civil rebellion in 1860 when irregular forces of secret societies claiming to be Taiping rebels threatened the city. Some fringe rebels attacked Shanghai, eliciting a defence force of both Imperial and European men, and risking future hostilities between the Taiping and the British. An American adventurer Frederick Townsend Ward became the swashbuckling leader of a mercenary Chinese-European militia funded by Chinese and expatriate merchants who wanted an effective force to protect their trade routes. His force suffered initial defeats in the blistering summer heat but retreated and trained, becoming an effective fighting force keeping the rebels out of Shanghai even as the city swelled with Chinese refugees to a population of 500,000. During June 1860 more than 900 of these refugees died of starvation and cholera there within three days. The Qing Imperial troops, with Confucian scholars as officers leading a fighting force of conscripts, were never able to hold towns that Ward’s “Ever Victorious Army” had taken for the Imperial side. Ward died of battle wounds in September 1862, the defence of Shanghai then taken over by British Major Charles Gordon, later to become known as “Chinese Gordon”.

Legge reported “the melancholy fact of (the Taiping king’s) practice of polygamy”, but thought that the French and English had been wrong to fight the rebels at Shanghai, thus allying themselves with one side in the civil war. At that point no one in Hong Kong understood that the attackers of Shanghai were a separate group of opportunistic secret society warriors, not the Taiping.

Legge recognized that the very bloody nature of the Taiping rebellion could not be the basis of Christian criticism because Christian armies also slaughtered, although even by western standards the scale of the Taiping massacre of the Manchu garrison at Nanking was “beyond expression dreadful”. Admiral Hope had visited the Taipings in Nanking, which they had now held for nine years, and there had been some military encounters. He was going back to Britain with a report that might set British policies to align British power with the Qing and against the rebels.

Legge was opposed to the British taking any side in the Chinese civil war. In a long letter to Rengan in 1860 Legge hoped that the British would never decide that the Taipings were either their allies or their enemies, arguing that the only proper response was neutrality. He pointed out that the Taiping had never made then broken official promises, had never destroyed British property then refused to pay for damages, and had not interfered with trade, all behaviours of the Qing officials. Legge recognized that

although the Taiping king had made a “shipwreck” of Christian values, this was no basis for war from the British.

Legge knew that the Taiping forces were doing evil things, and but so too were the Qing “Imperial braves”. He had spent hours in their company, and described their march over the Cantonese countryside as like “the progress of locusts and caterpillars. Their thirst for blood was quenchless; their outrages on the young and old were indescribable”. Both sides were equally cruel, but because the Imperial forces had all the power, their gratuitous cruelty was also cowardly. Reminding Rengan of Ye’s cruelty in which he had beheaded more than 70,000 in one year, Legge worried that a victory by the Qing would simply install many more like Ye, and the British would be responsible for allowing power to many more “butchers of human beings”. He was well aware of the irony that the British policy with China was “most anomalous; we are warring with it, trading with it, and will probably soon be fighting for it – all at the same time.”

As to the Manchu dynasty, Legge thought it was hopelessly inefficient, unable to meet the needs of its people or its treaty promises; its gentry were rude, the officials ignorant and unwilling to comply with either Imperial edicts or provincial proclamations, and the best course for the British was simply to let the dynasty die, “as the Stuarts did in Britain”, neither attacking nor defending it. Any dealings with the rebels should be done with mercy and Britain should insist that the Taipings should behave with mercy to the Chinese people, who were the victims of both sides. He noted, with his historian’s eye, that China had hundreds of years of anarchy and civil strife across the Christian era and Britain should simply abstain from interfering in any of it. “Let not us call those rebels whom it calls rebels”, or send our armies to do what the Manchus dynasty cannot do for itself.

To the great surprise of Legge and the Hong Kong community, Hong Rengan returned in the summer of 1860. Ironically, Legge’s daughter Helen Edith in her 1905 book about Legge’s life, called Rengan “the Shield King” even though Legge was opposed to this usage. Legge knew that Rengan was very critical of many of the things the Taiping were doing. Rengan agreed with Legge that the Taiping was not a Christian movement, and they both agreed that the mission men of the northern Chinese ports of Shanghai and Amoy were in error and naïve in believing that the rebels were Christian and that they would prevail in the conflict. Legge wrote in July that so far the rebels had not been able to establish “a vigorous and righteous government” anywhere, believing with Rengan that the Taiping king and movement had “forgotten and forsaken God, and they were therefore reaping the fruit of their own actions”. The two men awaited news

that summer of 1860, from the great expedition that Lord Elgin had taken north to Beijing to ratify the Tianjin treaty signed in 1857.

In August Legge published an article in the *Overland Hong Kong Register* criticizing the Taiping for the scale of destruction they were leaving; “as soon as they exhaust the resources of one district, they move on to do the same over and over again”. He had written the Taiping “king” and warned him that unless he could organize a government and “get the peoples’ hearts, the rebellion can never succeed. Its success so far is the strongest evidence of the imbecility of the present rulers of the country”. Even credulous Issachar Roberts, for a long time a hopeful observer of Hong Xiuquan’s activities, by 1861 concluded Xiuquan was “crazy, ... a wicked despot” (J. P. Davies, 1972).

#### Legge and the term question again

Legge was annoyed in the summer of 1860 to learn that critics in England were harassing the LMS and the Bible Society on the old term question once again. One man, Tomlin, was even trying to get the BFBS to remove its support from the Delegates Version of the Chinese Bible, now in circulation for many years using the term *Shangdi* that Legge and Medhurst had defended. Legge explained to London that virtually all European missionaries used the Delegates Version, an increasing number of American mission men also turned to it, and even the American Bible Society was giving grants to publications using Legge’s preferred term for God. Lambasting the arguments made in Tomlin’s letter one by one, Legge concluded that there was not a single point in it worth “the slightest consideration”. Worse, the Bible Society had approved a version of the Bible in “mandarin colloquial”, meaning that the northern “mandarin” dialect’s pronunciation was transcribed into the Roman alphabet. Legge rightly denounced this as a complete waste of time and money; it would be appropriate only for the small group of missionaries hoping to work in the north but not yet fluent, and for northern Chinese who could read the Roman alphabet. The Bible Society had also approved portions of the Bible written in the alphabet for other regional colloquials. This amounted to writing and publishing the entire Bible in a series of phonetic transcriptions of use only for new mission men trying to learn the pronunciation of their local dialect, practical manuals of no enduring value and of use to only tiny numbers of new mission men. This seems a desperation tactic trying to circumvent the problem of mission men having difficulties learning Chinese.

In the spring of 1860 Legge contributed to the struggle for a full LMS salary for Dr. Wong, was pleased to baptize seven men and two women well-prepared and sent from

Boluo by Che in February, and to learn a few months later that Che had now prepared a further 100 converts to be sent for baptism. In April Chalmers had decided to visit Che in Boluo later in the year, but that plan had been interrupted by a scandal in the Canton mission.

#### Successes in the Canton mission

As 1860 began Chalmers was pleased to report in January that Canton mission staff met with friendly responses when they went out into the community, and were no longer called abusive names or molested. There were now 16 English and American mission men in Canton, but there were two sources of conflicts among them. They did not agree on infant baptism, or on which term to use for God, the old term question dragging on there even though most of the mission men were “well-educated gentlemen who will maintain a reputation of Christian enlightenment and civilization”. The hospital was thriving, and after it published its annual report for 1859 Josiah Cox had been able to raise enough money in Hong Kong for the hospital to operate for a whole year. The longer-term worry in the Canton mission was that despite many Chinese eager to hire on as pamphlet distributors, there were very few converts, and Chalmers mistrusted the motives of those eager to work for the mission. He was so content, however, that he hoped to spend the rest of his life in the Canton mission and looked forward to the return of his wife and children.

Turner, the new man helping Chalmers, was thrilled to report in March 1860 that Miss Harmer had accepted his proposal of marriage, offered more quickly to her than the three-year delay of his original plan. She would arrive with Mrs. Chalmers and her children. Turner’s main problem was his struggle to learn Chinese, whose difficulties he found “beyond comprehension”. He urged the LMS to provide training in Chinese characters to mission men before they were sent out to China. By September Turner reported he was pleased with many things; glad of an LMS decision re Wong’s salary, refreshed after he had enjoyed a visit to the Legges in Hong Kong to raise money for the hospital, and enthusiastic that he had a house ready to greet his fiancée’s arrival. The house was roomy and included a classroom so he could teach, “a labour I long for’. He and Chalmers were stirring up so much mission activity they now wanted a third man to help them. But a major problem festered in the Canton mission that year.

#### Conflicts and crisis in the Canton mission: Wong’s salary, extortion, lies, adultery

During Legge’s absence some troubling events occurred in the Canton mission, involving the status accorded to Dr. Wong, events that raised the question of racism in the LMS. Wong had re-established Hobson’s hospital in Canton and in January 1859 the LMS had decided to send him Storrs Turner, an ordained minister, to take on the

congregational tasks of that mission. By April Wong had become so well-established that his old Chinese friends in the city were urging him to marry, and he wrote asking if the Directors would provide him with “the same salary as that of a European married missionary” if he married. In mid-summer Wong told the LMS he intended to marry, and the salary question became concrete.

Wong’s initial salary of £150 p.a. was consistent with his status as a single man, for in theory the LMS paid mission men on a scale that increased with marital status and with number of children. Unfortunately the LMS was often inconsistent even within the Chinese region. It had once paid printer Wylie (£200 p.a.), more than the standard bachelor salary, and in 1855 had docked Chalmers for presuming to withdraw a child allowance on the grounds he had only one child, although Tidman had granted Wylie a child allowance for only one child in 1853. So although there was ostensibly a fixed salary scale, under pressure or with favouritism, this became negotiable.

The Directors responded to Wong’s request with alacrity and alarm, explaining that “inasmuch as a compliance with your wishes would introduce a new and very undesirable precedent. The China Mission does not furnish a case in point, (but) where the Society employs several Native born agents (the intended reference was probably to India), the practise has been to pay such agents a less amount of salary than that accorded to European missionaries, and this distinction has been made upon the obvious ground that the expenses incurred by the Europeans are necessarily greater than those of the Native. Viewing the matter in this light, and with such precedents before them for their guidance, the Directors will not I fear be able to accede to your application, but before adopting a final decision they have deemed it expedient to collect opinions of some of the Missionary Brethren on the cases”. This crucial letter explained these consultations would cause some delay in the decision.

The LMS Eastern Committee had never before appointed a native Chinese man as a medical missionary, and it was clearly panicked when faced with Dr. Wong’s request, struggling between its Christian ideals of the brotherhood of all men, and its implicit biases linked with experiences in Africa and India. The danger of setting new precedents relating to money was always a delicate matter to the Society. This unsettled issue of Wong’s salary affected Legge and the Canton mission when he returned.

Within a few weeks of his return Legge learned of the problems Dr. Wong faced in seeking a salary increase from the LMS, because Chalmers and Turner had been asked to provide comments to London. Legge asked Chalmers to come to Hong Kong to discuss it, and sought all the facts and their implications. He learned that on the one hand Wong was not living as a European but in a Chinese style, which cost him much

less in living expenses. This meant he had saved a lot of money since his arrival, and when he married this less expensive life would continue to be true. Legge also learned that Wong was not participating in the Canton mission life with the same wholeness that the other LMS men did, and perhaps Wong's return to a Chinese life-style removed him from the fully integrated mission life that Legge, Chalmers, and Hobson had always lived. For his part Chalmers had reservations, complaining that Wong did no pastoral or missionary work, but only medical services. He did not teach as Hobson had done, did not preach, and never participated in public mission prayers. It was also now clear that he was not an effective public speaker, and "if he were ever so willing, his temperament, his manner and his speech are all against him in making the attempt".

On the other hand the LMS had sent Wong out with a standard bachelor mission salary, not a salary reduced on the grounds of his being a "native", so there was no principled basis for a lower salary just because he married. In addition, Wong did indispensable medical work and the hospital would be useless if they lost him because of a salary squabble. While the LMS struggled to identify the most just principles to use in this case, the American missions were continuing to use a more openly racist system paying lower salaries for Western-educated Chinese mission men, the case of Charlie Soong providing the most high-profile example.

That October Wong wrote reports of his medical work and of Cox's success in raising \$700 from Hong Kong merchants to provide more medical supplies for the Canton hospital. He also kept a clever eye on local political machinations, and when the British proposed to ensure the superintendence of the customs was restricted to Europeans, Wong was amused to report that the European merchants were all against this plan, hinting that less illegal dealing might be allowed under the new system.

Turner, the new man, may have been unaware of Wong's delicate situation. He settled into the house organized for him, although it was partly destroyed from the previous years' warfare and he could only live in the front part. He hoped that he might be eligible for \$700 in war reparations, a good portion of the total he needed to make the building habitable. He had his eye on a piece of land that adjoined it, realizing that it would be a good place to extend the building for Chalmers' family when they returned.

Turner was quickly enthusiastic about the prospects for Canton and the mission. The Chinese and allies had settled the question of locating the new foreign factories, dredging was clearing out clogged waterways, and buildings were under construction everywhere. Prices of land and buildings were rising and he was optimistic about his new life. All the LMS needed to do was grant him \$2,000 to buy the land and pay for the building. Cox discreetly withdrew from the mission work he had done so faithfully for



the LMS men, and Chalmers learned in December that his wife intended to return to him, bringing only one child and leaving two in Scotland. He fretted about the miseries of rough companionship she might have to endure on the trip if no other lady was aboard, fearing he might have to pay the extra money for the “overland” route via Egypt and the Red Sea if he could not be assured of her safety on the longer Cape trip.

A significant problem began in January 1860 after the LMS responded to Dr. Wong’s request for a salary increase to the married category. It wrote a long explanation of the reasons why it was not approving the request. The LMS argued that European mission men needed a higher salary because they were unable to maintain a normal family life on the stipend that would be “amply sufficient for one born in the Country and familiar with its usages”. The Eastern Committee had set Wong’s initial salary at the European level because it realized that his medical qualifications made him special, and because of its expectation that he would serve as a fully active missionary. This was an amount “far greater than has ever before been given to a Native, and is beyond what your necessities can require, we can discover no sufficient reason why the possible event of your marriage should entitle you to an advance”. They added, “independently of the consideration that such an advance so far from being necessary to your respectability and comfort, would place you in a far more advantageous position than the European Agent, we regret also to learn that your services on behalf of your patients have been restricted to the relief of their physical maladies, and consequently your claim to be regarded as a Medical Missionary, that is a Christian teacher no less than a practitioner of medicine and surgery, the two-fold capacity in which you have been recognized by the Society, has not been practically realized”. The committee acknowledged Wong’s “Christian character” and his interest in helping the hospital, and concluded that any future request would elicit “more unqualified ratification” if it included “distinct evidence of your efforts for the evangelisation of your Countrymen”. They summed up his employment condition: His salary of £150 pa plus housing gave him three times the remuneration of any other Chinese agent of the LMS, they knew this amount was considerably in excess of his actual expenses, and he only provided medical work to the mission rather than full missionary services.

Wong responded to this decision in April by going to Hong Kong to meet with Legge, who was favourably impressed by Wong and urged him to return to Canton and “communicate fully with his brethren”. As a result Wong explained his problem to Turner and Chalmers, and “with their cordial approval” appealed the LMS salary decision in an April letter asking for reconsideration of its decision. He argued that the Eastern Committee had promised him the normal marriage allowance if he should

marry in two letters from LMS directors. These letters had been given to him in 1856, when he first applied to the LMS and had specifically asked them about the marriage allowance. He apologized for not being able to preach in the way that Dr. Hobson had, explaining that he had not yet mastered Cantonese. He closed by implying he might have to make a change in the “future course” of his life, depending on the LMS decision. In fact he began secretly to look for another job.

The new Canton man Turner wrote at the same time in support of Dr. Wong’s application for a salary increase, arguing that Wong “though a Chinese by birth, has become to a certain extent English in education, ideas, and feelings”, with English tastes and habits. He had graduated on equal terms as a medical man and was always treated as an equal by other medical men. Setting his salary lower hurt his feelings because it implied inferiority of his services. Turner had seen the two letters sent to Wong by LMS directors when he had first raised the married salary question years earlier, “which clearly imply” a promise to pay him the same salary as a European. “I would deeply regret if the LMS parts with Dr. Wong because of salary disagreement”. Not only would Wong’s loss to the mission would be serious, but also the good faith of the LMS would be called into question.

Chalmers was a bit annoyed about all this because when Wong first raised the married salary question he had implied it was an open issue, when in fact Wong had documents showing that it was fully settled before Wong ever came to China. Chalmers’ letter hints that Wong had quietly stirred up unnecessary trouble by being less than open about the full details, drawing everyone into a worried confusion that had been unnecessary. “He allowed me to think the matter was unsettled” when in fact the letters were very clear. Chalmers was less convinced that Wong needed the same income as married Europeans, explaining that Wong’s expenses were actually much less than the Europeans’. Chalmers suggested that if Wong won the salary improvement he should voluntarily decline £50 for that reason, revealing some unease in their relationship.

By July 3 the LMS Eastern Committee reviewed the new information from the mission men in Hong Kong and Canton concerning Wong’s salary. The LMS hotly protested that the salary decisions re salaries to Native Agents had never been based on “any invidious preference for Europeans”, but instead argued that they arose from the natives’ relative advantage in living comfortably in their own communities, while the Europeans abroad had a struggle to obtain the customary things necessary for the health and comfort of their families. It acknowledged that Wong’s initial salary had not been consistent with this policy, but was given because of his special skills as a medical man. It had no record of any promise concerning a marriage allowance, but acknowledged the

directors' 1856 notes from Milne and another confirming a European salary scale for Wong. The LMS committee scolded Wong for not including these LMS documents from the beginning of his application for a salary increase, concluding that the salary would now be increased to £250 pa, the normal married salary. By late August the matter was settled and Wong's salary was at the full scale for his marital status and medical skills.

On the final matter of his other duties in the mission the committee accepted that perhaps preaching in Cantonese was not one of Wong's talents, and instead urged him to use his medical situation as an opportunity to direct the thoughts of his patients "to the Great Physician of Souls", so they would also understand that he was concerned about their eternal welfare. Wong thanked the committee and the matter was closed, but his method of raising the question had been rather underhanded, as if he were trying to set himself up as a victim when this did not match the circumstances. Wong's secretive style soon triggered a new and major crisis in the Canton mission that came crashing down late in 1860.

In November Turner and Chalmers learned that the 22 Chinese men and five Chinese women who lived in the mission compound were behaving in many scandalous ways in the community. Most were hired by the LMS or received support from the mission. At first the LMS men were dismayed when they realized that many were converts of convenience who used their access to the mission only for a range of venal purposes. The Britons became truly horrified when they understood the many criminal ways in which these members not only benefited from mission jobs and salaries, but brought scandal to the mission by running protection rackets in the neighbouring gambling houses, and extorting money from builders working for the mission. Turner and Chalmers had to abandon a planned visit to Che in Boluo when they learned this. Worse, they were quite discomfited at Wong's response to these problems, after he expressed surprise but "treated the offences as being of slight importance".

The two mission men began interviewing everyone and quickly discovered a large conspiracy to defraud. All confessed to extorting money from the contractors building Turner's house, the hospital staff confessed to squeezing money from the contractor repairing it, and others to holding a large feast with the profits they squeezed from the neighbouring gambling houses for promises of silence because they were illegal. Chalmers himself had spent much of the previous winter getting the gambling houses shut down. The more closely the mission men questioned each person, the more convinced they became that even their own Christian converts were lying to them and keeping even worse truths secret. Wong was asked to help in the questioning, with

Chalmers leading it as the most fluent in Cantonese. Turner soon concluded that Wong behaved more as an advocate of the miscreants rather than working for the integrity and reputation of the mission.

Adding to the shock was evidence that suggested that Wong had directly participated in the corruption. When Turner and Chalmers had trouble finding a reliable contractor, Wong asked his uncle to recommend a man, but it turned out the man had bribed the mission staff to recommend him, promising a kickback of 10% for the referral. When the crooked builder failed to make the excessive profits he had expected on the work he did not pay the kickback monies he had promised, instead giving varying amounts. This made all the staff angry, and it was difficult to even find out what had been promised and what paid because everyone was lying. Even the gatekeeper extorted money out of patients. All the male converts had been living in the hospital compound, benefiting directly from its facilities and even more so from the opportunities this gave for extortion.

Turner was even more wounded by the story of a married woman who had been rescued from a botched suicide attempt by the mission doctor, then secretly developed a sexual liaison with one of the hospital attendants. When large placards denouncing this adultery began showing up in Canton, Chalmers asked Wong to check into it. Wong told him that there was no evidence of any such adultery but Turner and Chalmers began to distrust Wong. The two pure Britons were especially horrified at the thought that all their Chinese converts had participated in the Lord's Supper for months with this unholy and adulterous man without telling any pastor.

Turner and Chalmers had been surprised when Wong had defended obviously guilty parties early in the investigations, refusing to view the corrupt actions of the converts in the light of morality. Then they learned that a builder reported paying Wong \$200, initially defended as being "repayment of a loan" of \$180 of mission money. The builder had to use cash paid to him by the mission, to pay the money to Wong. The \$20 gap between what might have been loaned out and what should have been received by Wong was not accounted for in any mission accounts, and Turner and Chalmers were even more scandalized at the thought that mission funds were sustaining what they suspected was a usury operation run by Wong.

When Wong was asked about the money transactions he became very agitated, claimed he couldn't remember, then later claimed that he had loaned the missing \$20 to the builder, then finally claimed that he had charged the builder 3% interest per month, generating only \$12 from the loan. This represented nearly 43% annual interest rate compounded, but the full story was not yet out. Within a day Wong again changed his

story, then demanded that the attack on his character had to be remedied. When the others interviewed the builder a second time he claimed to keep no books, and Turner and Chalmers sent for Legge, asking for his help in their miserable task of identifying both immoral and illegal behaviour in the heart of their mission.

Now the builder claimed that the true “loan” had been \$200, not \$180, and thus devoid of usury, but his story was so full of contradictions it was clear he was still lying. Now Wong claimed he had never received “a cent from the building of (Turner’s) house.” Legge realized the perils in all this for harmony among the mission men, and recommended that Turner and Chalmers “rest in Dr. Wong’s word”. They did but were still deeply troubled by Wong’s behaviour and by the recognition that the problem was settled “by ordeal and oath, rather than by evidence”.

The mission men decided that all the guilty converts had to be suspended from fellowship in the church, the extorting preachers and servants fired, and the pamphlet distributors sent back to their Bible society committee. Initially Wong tried to exempt his own servants from this mass dismissal but relented when he realized how determined Turner and Chalmers were to clear out those involved in un-Christian and criminal actions.

Dr. Wong’s situation was more complicated. Turner told Wong he would apologize if the facts of the loan would be cleared up, but was still deeply upset by other acts by Wong. Turner had arrived at the mission when Wong was in charge of it, and Turner treated Wong with full respect owing this position, in all ways treating him as a European. Turner went farther, advocating for Wong’s salary increase at the standard European rates in a letter to the LMS. Despite this, Wong lived much more fully within the Chinese community inside the mission than with the Britons, and Turner could not believe that Wong knew nothing about all the criminal actions that had been going on around him across the months. Turner recognized that Wong was very intelligent, making it even less likely that he was unaware of the skulduggery among the mission staff, and Turner now began to worry that Wong had “moral laxness”.

Then another situation made things worse. Turner learned that although Wong had brought back a clean report concerning the male hospital attendant Ashing and the married woman patient’s alleged adultery, Wong had failed to tell Turner and Chalmers many other highly relevant and compromising facts that he knew about the case. Wong had concealed the fact that the woman was the daughter of a policeman believed to be “a conniver at brothels”, and of a mother who was a prostitute. Wong also failed to report that the woman’s husband had originally quarrelled with her because he didn’t want her associating with prostitutes. Further, all the Chinese church members were convinced of

her adultery. All these facts would have led to a different view of the claims of innocence told by the medical attendant Ashing, and this made Turner worry more about Wong's secrecy and misrepresentation of the case.

Turner was distraught that "our mission's harmony is now destroyed." He and Chalmers had lost the mutual confidence and trust that the men needed with their colleague, and Turner was "deeply grieved to find Dr. Wong is not what I hoped. Alas". As the weeks passed Turner became increasingly upset with Wong, who acted, "not like an innocent man, indignant at unjust suspicion, - rather, like a guilty man anxious to escape". Turner was outraged that Wong had loaned any mission money at all, much less at usurious rates, and that Wong's arrangement led to his profiting from the work done for the mission at the direct expense of mission funds. Wong added a story claiming the builder had come crying to him for a loan after the mission refused to pay him in advance, but Wong could not explain why he did not go directly to Chalmers to plead the case for an advance, even after giving the loan, because as Treasurer, Chalmers could have repaid Wong's private loan immediately with no interest of any sort.

Chalmers learned that Wong's interest charges were considered excessive even within the Chinese community, and an American mission doctor and educator Andrew Happer recommended to Wong that he call the Chinese Christians together, acknowledge his fault, and return the interest. Wong refused to acknowledge any wrong and only offered to repay the mission the \$12 interest he claimed to have collected. This did not assuage Turner's deep revulsion at the moral problems of this transaction, and when Wong refused to write a letter to the mission colleagues and acknowledge his moral lapse, Turner was completely discouraged. When the builder finally provided his accounts, Wong's improper transactions were revealed, because there was no entry for any loan and it became clear that Wong had simply demanded a bribe of the builder. "It is inexpressibly painful to be forced to think that a Chinese Christian who has had the unusual advantages of Dr. Wong, should have fallen so far, as to be deliberately untruthful as well as covetous - ". The only positive sign on the horizon was that Wong had been seeking a job elsewhere, would probably obtain an official appointment as a colonial surgeon early in 1861, and the mission would be free of him.

In late November 1860 the false converts were expelled from their comfortable corrupt life inside the mission, Lo Tingshin the senior preacher was expelled as it was realized he was a central party to all the extortions, and Wong decided to withdraw from the LMS but continue doing medical work in the hospital.

The whole event was one of deep melancholy for Chalmers, who decided to suspend all further inquiries about Wong's actions. Chalmers felt especially betrayed

because from the outset of Wong's appointment Chalmers had championed Wong's case against Benjamin Hobson's worried remonstrance, and had agreed to go to Canton to work with Wong there in expectation of working with a true colleague. Chalmers had also supported Wong's salary request, and was now completely disillusioned by his behaviour. Prior to the crisis of Wong's deceitful actions, Chalmers had championed the idea of having a Chinese mission colleague of equal status as bringing a great benefit to the mission. Now he was deeply depressed, and explained to London that he had changed his entire perspective on the nature of mission roles for natives who had achieved European credentials. He ventured a new principle: "Henceforth it ought to be made a rule, that natives of heathen countries must not be put on the same footing as those sent in a regular way from home. They don't feel as we do, or have the same sense of responsibility to the Christian public by whom we are supported." Chalmers stressed that in China all foreigners are looked on as fair prey to swindling by virtually everyone, and "when a man like Dr. Wong gets to know it, which he very soon does, he feels his own advantage in this respect..., his sympathies are strongly drawn towards his own countrymen, & his temptation becomes very great". If he defends the standards and values of the mission against his poor countrymen who steal from the mission, "he does so at great sacrifice of personal feeling, so I condemn and pity Dr. Wong".

Chalmers concluded that the mission had made an important experiment and had learned several valuable lessons at its own expense. He thought the only good thing about the whole crisis was that the mission men had learned "the true character of the Chinese whom we trusted", and without Dr. Wong's interactions with them the other mission men might never have had this truth brought to light. He urged the LMS to send a replacement for Dr. Wong as soon as possible. The interesting thing about this analysis is that Chalmers did not succumb to a racial explanation of Wong's un-Christian behaviour, but interpreted it solidly within a social and cultural explanation, both for the immediate case and for the general principle.

For his part, Dr. Wong was unrepentant and even aggressive, writing an argumentative and confusing letter to the LMS in late November, trying to justify his actions. He claimed that he trusted Chinese more than his LMS colleagues did, and believed their stories about the suitability of his accepting money without thinking it was wrong; neither did he himself think it was wrong. He argued a moral relativism position, claiming that the "high honourable feelings & delicate moral perceptions of European Christians" should not be used to judge the behaviour of the locals, even though he did not advocate for the corrupt actors, and even claimed he had never approved "of the practise of squeezing money". In his view the Chinese were behaving

normally in accordance with their customs and traditions in bribing and extorting, and should not be censured for that. In his view Turner and Chalmers were naïve when they simply refused to believe the converts' stories claiming that they were only doing standard practise, and when they concluded that such claims of "standard practise" were lies.

Wong gave a long story about the \$180 or \$200 "loan" that does not make sense, gave complicated interpretations to the actions of the builder Akat and the builder's many different stories, then claimed that his own memory failure about his transactions "proves they were innocent". This was highly disingenuous because the \$200 that the builder paid Wong was huge, amounting to three months of Wong's salary, and not an amount or a transaction he would be likely simply to forget.

James Legge was again called in to help sort out the conflicts, taking a kindly and forgiving tone, trying to elicit the best in everyone. Wong invoked Legge's comments on his behalf during the investigation: "Since Akat seems to be confused, we acquiesce in the statement made by Dr. Wong". Wong apologized for taking \$12, arguing "not that it is wrong *per se*, but is unsuitable to my character". He was convinced that Legge "did not entertain the opinions of my colleagues", while in contrast Wong thought Chalmers' language was "violent" and "unfair". He acknowledged that the builder's confused account books didn't answer any of the questions, and claimed to have told Turner about the money transactions when they were taking place.

Finally, Wong asked Legge what to do, and Legge told Wong to discuss the matter with his Canton colleagues. "If they think they can no longer cooperate with you as before, then retire". Chalmers was unable to accept Wong's behaviour, so Wong concluded by resigning from his position and asking the LMS to send out a quick replacement. Within a week Wong had a new position as Superintendent at the Civil Hospital in Hong Kong, after following Legge's advice about the timing of his departure. Wong consulted Turner and Chalmers, who were "very pleased I had the job", and agreed he could take it immediately. In early December he was gone.

Eventually Legge wrote a long document in late November to the LMS at the request of Turner and Chalmers, trying to summarize the facts of the scandal at the Canton mission. The only truths established were that money had exchanged hands improperly, but most of the details were insecure. Legge concluded that builder's books had been "cooked" on the crucial items related to the scandal, with additional entries in strange places that appeared to try to bolster Wong's version. Legge thought Chalmers' discipline of the wrongdoers had been "sharp but as demanded by the circumstances". Legge expected the ringleaders of the Canton mission problems would vanish, but



others might develop remorse and seek a return to the mission. While Dr. Wong had probably not been a party to many of the corrupt transactions, his dealings with the builder “were of a highly discreditable character” and his case caused Legge “peculiar distress”. He thought the moneys involved a usurious loan at 36% by Wong rather than an outright extortion and concluded that Wong’s attitude had made the problems worse. Legge wrote “after such an affair one could no longer esteem him, and expect from him an example of a Christian gentleman from whom you could hope other Chinese would learn. Add to this the melancholy want of sympathy which he manifested with the strong feelings of the Brethren in Canton in all the painful disclosures affecting the members of the church, and you will not be surprised that they should be relieved by, rather than regret, his saying that he would resign his appointment from the Board”.

The LMS wrote a final letter to Dr. Wong in February 1861, responding to two he wrote in late 1860 in which he had apparently explained how he had not understood the true character of the habitués of the Canton mission, trying to justify his own actions. London preferred not to comment on the details of the matter as Wong was no longer a mission man, reported that the LMS Eastern Committee sympathized with the missionaries on “these sickening occurrences”, and noted that Wong’s situation was bound to give rise to some conflicts. The Committee noted, “By social position you are placed on the same footing and enjoyed equal consideration with our European Brethren – “but as a Chinaman, your natural predilections would lead you to identify yourself with your countryman, and thus in a measure to influence your opinions and proceedings”. The Committee was happy to “make every allowance for this kind of national sympathy where it did not interfere with the claim of Christian duty”, but scolded “in all candour” the evidence from the inquiry led it to conclude that Wong must have known about the “objectionable transactions in which the hospital people were implicated and... you failed to bring these to the attention of... your colleagues in the mission”. The committee pointed out that this failure was calculated to compromise Wong’s position with both the natives and the missionaries. The committee ended by reporting that all had praised Wong’s medical skills, and congratulated him on his new medical position in Hong Kong. It was not as pleased with the speed of Wong’s move to the new job, suggesting he had apparently been working on this move for some time and noting this implied he did not have the full “professional attachment” to the LMS that they had believed he had. They ended by sending him best wishes in his new job.

Arising from all these problems, at the end of 1860 the Canton LMS hospital was without a doctor, and Turner pleaded this time for “a Christian gentleman, an Englishman”. Turner’s fiancée had arrived, and they had married and moved into their

new house. Chalmers decided to close the hospital temporarily in early December, arranged for Dr. Happer of the American Presbyterian mission to fill in as doctor at Canton until May 1861, and went to Hong Kong to await the arrival of his wife and children in late December.

There were also problems in the LMS medical mission in Xiamen at the same time. After his increasing problems with the LMS mission in Hong Kong, Dr. Hirschberg had left in 1853 and settled in Xiamen where he set up a hospital in connection with the LMS mission run by the Stronach brothers. He had no support from the LMS, but used money from a large private practise to subsidize the hospital until liver disease and dysentery sent him to retire in Britain in 1858, returning in 1859 but left again in a sudden departure in November 1859. Within months he tried to return, unsuccessfully petitioned the LMS to support him with a hospital there, and by 1860 the Xiamen mission was left without its medical services. The Stronachs had to sell off Hirschberg's drugs, equipment, and buildings that included a house, a clinic, and a chapel, turning over the proceeds to an agent for Hirschberg.

#### Hannah becomes gravely ill

Although his work on the Classics was going well, in October 1860 James was deeply worried about Hannah's health. She delivered a son James Granville Legge on 17 September, and at the height of all the problems with Dr. Wong in the Canton mission, Hannah became gravely ill. This was a horrible echo of Mary's fatal delivery in 1852 at a time when Dr. Hirschberg was fighting with Legge. On Thursday 4 October during a visit to Macau she became devastated with pain "in all my bones, as if they had been broken", then overwhelmed by fever, possibly dengue which causes intense bone pain and is endemic in SE Asia to the present. Legge was in Hong Kong and did not know of her attack for some days. When her illness became so violent she was confined to bed in the next few days, Dr. Dajé from the French military hospital in Macau came and administered a huge dose of tincture of rhubarb, a laxative. This led to results that "were immediate and terrible", and she was still so ill on Sunday he administered a tablespoonful of quinine every hour. "The effects of this were as disastrous as the other & all Sunday night I felt as if life was ebbing fast away". Shifu tenderly cared for her, fanning her fever hour after hour. Soon a kind Australian woman who Hannah had helped upon her arrival in Hong Kong, began nursing her with competence greater than the unfortunate Dr. Dajé. Miss Wilson refused to continue the poisonous level of quinine doses, so Dr. Dajé ordered spoonful of ether and ammonia every half hour. Nineteenth-century western medicine had a different set of horrors compared to traditional Chinese medicine.

By Tuesday Hannah began to rally in time for James' arrival in Macau, and the next day she was carried to the ship home to Hong Kong and carried up the hillside to her own bed. Her friend Dr. Kane stopped the extreme medicines but gave her wine, and both daughters Mary and Marian also came down with fever. As they gradually recovered by Friday James opened a treasure box he had received from Shanghai guaranteed to lighten the women's spirits; it contained garments and articles from Eliza's August wedding.

This was only a brief respite however and a week later, on Saturday 20 October Hannah again "rapidly sank into the most deadly weakness". She lapsed into unconsciousness that extended over days and she drifted into a conviction of imminent death and religious ruminations that were not comforting, "I shuddered at the dark valley & though I tried to feel that Jesus was with me in the storm, I could not realize his presence". She was most upset at leaving her "unspeakably dear" husband and children. Dr. Kane was so worried he moved into the house and slept by her side, while trying to cool her fever with champagne and beef tea every half hour for nearly a week. He complained it was useless, then Dr. Murray ordered mustard plasters to warm her feet and hot water bottles on her legs to counter her chills. She remembered a friend whose dying had been prolonged by brandy and discontinued the champagne, resigning herself to death and wanting only to say intimate things to "my precious James".

Another friend moved into help nurse Hannah during her helpless state, a woman to whom Hannah had given hospitality earlier in the year upon her arrival from Southampton. Mrs. Townsend was faithful and clever but eventually lost hope, and James took over the nursing. "My dear and precious husband watched and prayed & nursed me incessantly, it was wonderful how he kept up", and Hannah worried that he too would fall ill, dooming her. Other women came to help, but Hannah was most impressed by the loving nursing provided by "my dear James". Daughter Mary recovered from her fever and became helpful and this reassured Hannah that Mary had inner resilience that would become visible whenever she might later face challenging circumstances. By 3 November Hannah was carried into the drawing room for a few hours and half-carried back to bed, but still felt very ill and within days had again sunk into terrible illness, unable to breathe and with a strong apprehension of doom. Soon high fever and diarrhoea returned, not helped by arrowroot or injections of opium, and Hannah was desperately ill for a further three weeks, lapsing and rousing from delirium. Nearly seven weeks after it began, her attack began to recede, and by 17 November she began to get hungry, finally restored to moving under her own powers by the 27<sup>th</sup>, feeling "quite renovated".

Eliza sent warm loving chatty letters from Shanghai with no real news, and Hannah hoped James could go there to visit the young couple. Hannah was feeling “almost alone” with Eliza gone, because although she still had Turner and his fiancée staying with them, that young couple spent all their days visiting in town and there were no other guests to be cared for until the expected arrival of Mrs. Chalmers and her children.

Legge wrote that Hannah had “been brought lower than I had thought it possible for a human being to be brought and yet live. After her brief recovery, the second major attack in November plunged him into “great anxiety”, until her recovery late in November, just as all the problems in the Canton mission were at their peak and he was called to Canton to help untangle the bribery and extortion scandals. There Legge played a moderating role in the high passions of outrage that engulfed Turner and Chalmers as they discovered all the corruption within their mission staff, and the gap in values between themselves and their colleague Dr Wong. The end of 1860 brought family and mission recoveries from the ravages of disease and the disquiet of conflicts.

### Part 9 The Chinese Classics 1861; volumes I and II

*In which Legge publishes the first two volumes of the Chinese Classics after a scare, he helps but cannot save Che, the flotilla heads north, Wang Tao begins to help, and Union Church generates new problems as Legge leaves for Britain.*

Across all the mission problems in Canton and Hannah's health problems in 1860, Legge was now almost ready to publish the first two volumes of the classics when new threats arose.

Legge started printing the first two volumes of the Classics in early 1860, and by April he realized he was running out of types to finish printing the Indexes to volume I. He ordered more type from Edinburgh and knew this meant he would not be able to finish the printing by August as planned, so used his time to prepare future text. By early August he was halfway through the final texts of volume II. He received the new types late in August, returned to printing the galley proofs, and by late 1860 he was proof-reading the galleys of volume I in final preparation for printing. He told Hannah that he would not push the sales of it, and did not expect to sell as many copies in England as in China.

#### Chapter 46 Threats to the publication of the classics

Late in 1860, a sudden problem arose within the MES, threatening the relationship between Legge and Joseph Jardine before anything was published. The conflicts were so intense that they were discussed in the local newspapers. The problem concerned the mission schools supported for decades by the Morrison Education Society. The MES had fallen on hard times in the years after Rev. Brown left the MES school, and it closed in 1849 with serious debts not settled until 1853. The original school never revived, but the trustees had invigorated fund-raising and began supporting community mission schools instead, on a rather shaky basis. When he returned from Britain Legge became the Secretary of the Society, and a member with a vote. The MES was run by a small group of mostly wealthy merchant Trustees including Joseph Jardine.

The trouble began when Dr. Andrew Happer, the American Canton mission doctor who also ran a school receiving MES support, wrote anti-opium letters to England and these letters began “privately” circulating there. Lord Shaftesbury received some of this text and used it in his attack on “the iniquities of the Opium Trade” in Parliament. Word reached Hong Kong about the source of Shaftesbury’s information, the opium merchants among the MES trustees were outraged, and the fragile MES operation was

directly threatened. Over a series of regular and special meetings the issue of opium merchant support was vigorously debated. The first angry meeting occurred in March 1859 when Legge was still in the UK, but he returned to find the conflict unresolved. He met privately with Joseph Jardine to try and negotiate some resolution, but in the end the trustees, led by Jardine, remained furious at Happer and refused to fund his school. Jardine and most of the other merchant-trustees of the MES voted that they would not provide MES with money for schools that openly condemned the opium trade. The uproar over Dr. Happer's opium letters led Joseph Jardine to withdraw from the Society even though the Jardine, Matheson trading company had been moving strongly away from opium trading by the 1860s, despite it still being legal.

In late 1860 the editor of the English-language business paper the *Daily Press* began steadily deriding the PMs because of these tensions in the MES between the swashbuckling merchant-trustees and the mission educators. The newspaper heaped scorn on the troubles of the MES, deriding the mission schoolmasters as "mendicants to the merchants", though the rival *Overland Register* under editor Strachan noted that the journalist in the *Daily Press* writing these "slandrous attacks" had been successfully sued for libel three times. One merchant provided continuing support on the grounds he did not want to repress the freedom of discussion, and other newspapers began suggesting that the MES trustees had made an "enormous mistake". Legge urged the MES to remain calm, and the intervention of a visiting American mission man helped. Dr. Sauffer pleaded calm and joined with Legge in helping members of the agonized group return to amicable relations.

Legge and his friend trustee Strachan voted against the trustees' decision to discontinue support to Happer's school and required their protest vote to be recorded as to its reasons. "Whatever errors Dr. Happer may have fallen into in the statements which made the majority of this meeting deem him an unfit object to receive the help of the MES, being persuaded that they were not the consequence of malice or wilful falsehood, we protest against their being made the ground of refusing the patronage of the Society to one efficiently engaged in the conduct of education, and a recognized Agent of a missionary society" (Author, 1860). Legge was clearly stubborn in sticking to an important principle in support of education, but the conflict presented the mission educators with a major policy problem in the same way then that large donations from questionable sources affect modern humanitarian and educational ventures.

Legge's vote against the other trustees' decision was also an extremely courageous one because it threatened his life's project with the Classics. Although Legge had never received grants for LMS schools from the MES, Hannah was worried in early January

because she knew that the conflict “makes Dr. Legge’s friendship with Mr. Jardine very precarious”, friendship that arose because of Jardine’s promise to pay the publication costs of the entire Classic series. Most importantly Legge’s vote against the ejection of Dr. Happer’s school shows Legge was willing to risk losing the goodwill and the financial support of Joseph Jardine. Legge was close to publishing the first two volumes and this sudden uproar within the MES threatened to derail the crucial support from Jardine. In 1860 Joseph retired from Jardine Matheson and returned to Scotland. Despite the MES conflicts, Jardine stayed true to his promise to pay for publishing the *Classics*.

New threats to the publication of the *Classics* arose from unexpected deaths. The same post in March 1861 that brought James news of the sudden death of his brother George in January, also brought news of the death in January 1861 of Joseph Jardine, who died prematurely in his Scottish estate, aged 39. Legge was especially sad that Jardine had died before even seeing a proof page of the final work, but there was a new practical problem. He did not know how Jardine’s death would affect the publication of his work, which relied entirely on Jardine’s support. In fact volume I had just been entirely printed by the end of March.

To Legge’s immense relief Joseph’s brother Robert Jardine (1825-1905), another partner in Jardine, Matheson came forward and offered to fulfil Joseph’s commitment to pay for the work. He also eventually paid for the printing of volumes II and III, and for the preparation of the type for volumes IV and V. Another merchant, John Dent, came forward to help ensure that missionaries could afford to buy the books, for they were the specific audience for whom Legge had done all this work. Dent subsidized half the purchase costs for all missionaries, including both Roman Catholics and Protestants. Dent’s fund eventually ran out, but the discount for mission men continued and it seems that Legge paid for the difference between the selling price to them and true retail cost out of his own pocket (Ride, 1960). By February 1861 Legge had paid all the costs of printing, including the creation of many new punches for new fonts.

#### Printing the *Classics* volumes I and II

Despite all these difficulties 1861 was the momentous year for James Legge, for it was this year that he published the first two volumes of the *Classics*. His great project was finally sent out into the world. Legge included three Confucian classics in volume I: the Analects of Confucius (*Lun Yu*), the Great Learning (*Da Xue*), and the Doctrine of the Mean (*Zhongyong*). “Analects” was Legge’s original name for the first book, which in a more literal and ungainly translation meant “digested conversations”. Legge used the Hong Kong LMS printing press. That press, along with its own type foundry,

included two sizes of beautiful Chinese fonts and multiple sizes of Roman alphabet fonts, including italics, and now had the capacity to print the complex texts he needed.

In March 1861 Legge printed 1,200 copies of volume I and two-thirds of volume II, Mencius. In his introduction Legge explained that he expected the complete collection of works to require seven volumes to cover what the Chinese scholars called The Five Classics (older works), and the Four Books (later works). Legge wrote that if he lived long enough he would also like to complete four additional works that together comprised a classic set known as “the Thirteen Books”, works known to all educated Chinese. He hoped to complete printing of volume II by the end of 1861.

Legge used an old transcription system of Chinese proper names that Morrison and Medhurst had used, but in the Index of Chinese characters he listed at the end of the volume he adopted the 1859 transcription system created by Thomas Wade, by then a consular official in Beijing. Wade created a complex system of accents just a few years earlier for Romanization based on the sounds of the northern version of Chinese spoken in the capital, and Legge was content to accept Wade’s more intense scholarship on this matter. Interestingly Legge assumed that this northern, “mandarin” dialect used eight tones in its spoken version “as does the Canton dialect”, a mistaken notion because the northern language uses only four tones. “But I have not paid much attention to this issue”. He did not have a discriminating ear for either music or Chinese language tones.

Huang supervised all Chinese workers on the printing and did proof-reading for the Chinese text, but Legge his family, and a friend Mr. Jeffrey from the *China Mail* did the proof-reading for the “English” text, while Mr. Low and the *China Mail* proprietor Mr. Dixon helped with typographical matters. It seems by now the *China Mail* was no longer his enemy. Legge’s friend John Chalmers compiled lists of Subjects and of Proper Names for the Indexes.

### Printing and the Fonts

The non-Chinese text used in the Legge’s essays and the Notes was written not only English, but also included sentences in small Chinese characters and transcribed Chinese using the Roman alphabet. In later volumes the printing task for the Notes was made even more complex because Legge made use of relevant quotations from literatures in Latin and French for which he had italics fonts in three sizes. Although he wrote other books and articles that included the use of true character fonts for Greek and Hebrew, these were not yet available at his Press. In later published work he also included comments in German. In the *Classics* Legge included the Latin and French quotations without translation because he assumed his audience of educated Europeans



would be able to read each quotation in its original language, and many of the mission men of that time were well-educated men who could.

The type used in the book was the direct descendant of the pioneering work by LMS man Sam Dyer and his experiments creating metal type for Chinese characters. Dyer had been dead almost 20 years but his novel use of steel punches to make sturdy character masters and copper matrices for manufacturing multiple copies of each character, had taken the publication of Chinese text into an entirely new and modern era. Best of all, the LMS printers' care with the creation of each character led to a particularly beautiful text.

### Legge's translation strategy

Legge had learned the breadth of the problems of translation from old Chinese into English, difficult because ancient Chinese is written in a telegraphic style with realms of associated meanings swirling around many of the characters, meanings associated both with the radical and with the pronunciation. Modern Chinese words are often now written in a "binomial" manner, using two characters to enhance meaning accuracy, but classical Chinese consists largely of one-character terms, often creating ambiguity (Cua, 2003). Sir Charles Eliot (1862-1931), an astounding linguist of modern times, struggled with this, calling these the "austere monosyllables of Cathay". Sir George Sansom explained in a 1956 address at the School of Oriental and African Studies, that these have to be "clothed, warmed and feathered" into English (Sansom, 1965). Legge had to struggle with the task of writing English that revealed the core of these complex meanings without going into long elaborate paraphrases.

Legge's translation style in response to these problems shifted somewhat over the decades of his work. In his early years he tried to stick to strict tight translations, staying as faithfully as he could to the Chinese text, "just the facts", without long English paraphrasing to enhance comprehension even though he was capable of eloquent writing<sup>35</sup>. At the same time he understood that a terse classical style in English might interfere with easy meaning, so his Notes were lavish, used to explain and enhance the meaning of the Chinese text when the originals were unusually enigmatic.

---

<sup>35</sup> In translation work Legge tried to stick very closely to the meanings of the Chinese text but in his informal writing his language was more eloquent and colorful. In describing the hills around the Great Wall of China in a letter to his family he wrote "the Wall seemed to dash up and long their ridges like a mettled racer, a wild stallion of the desert dashing along" (H. E. Legge, 1905), p. 180.

Unfortunately, later editions of his works were republished in “modern” editions without these extensive Notes, and these deletions by populist publishers were a huge pity because of the nature of that translation problem from ancient Chinese. Modern translators do not solve these problems by giving more lavish language in their translations, because these risk an even greater disconnection from the compact but allusive and challenging meaning of the Chinese text.

As Legge became more deeply embedded in understanding the texts he began adding richer English text to aid readers. At times this led him to translate a single character by an entire sentence in English, but this solution did not really satisfy him. By the time he worked on the revisions for the second edition of the *Classics* in Oxford late in his life, he considered re-writing all the translations. In his Preface to his 1892 revision of volume I Legge explained that he had been tempted to change some of his translations by adding more English to make it flow more gracefully, in addition to correcting errors. He decided not to mainly because he did not want to create extended paraphrasing that would not be a faithful translation. Nor did he want to be tempted to use a more lean, terse, style echoing the Chinese original, which he thought would sound too pretentious, and decided to stick with the method he had evolved earlier, translating the terse telegraphic ideas as clearly as possible without trying to turn them into graceful English. He wrote of his great struggles to seek accuracy through comparing the raw texts with notes from all their commentators:

“I am groping amidst mists of Chinese physics and metaphysics, a shape like the ghost of Aristotle or Plato rising up ever and anon before me. I go to grasp it – and a Chinese folio interposes its knotty pages” (H. E. Legge, 1905), p. 75.

In each book he printed a guiding quotation from Mencius in Chinese, meaning “never use a word that will ruin the meaning of a sentence, and never use a sentence that will ruin the meaning of a paragraph”.<sup>36</sup> Clarity of meaning is what he sought rather than English eloquence, additional explanation, or interpretive speculations.

#### The format and content of the volumes

James Legge created a sturdy format of three major sections in volume I, a format that he followed in subsequent books in the series. The first section began with a long

---

<sup>36</sup> Mencius, Book V, Pt. 1, Ch. IV, V. 2

critical essay, *The Prolegomena*, the second section consisted of the Chinese text and translations with commenting notes, and the third section included several indexes.

### The Index of Chinese characters and the challenge of Chinese dictionaries

For his indexes of Chinese characters Legge used the traditional complex system that is necessary for Chinese dictionaries. In Chinese there is no kind of inherent order for Chinese characters such as is provided in alphabetical languages in which each letter represents a fixed sound and the alphabet has a set order for the letters. There has been no standard pronunciation in China until very recent times with the dominance of the northern dialect, and even within the northern dialect a given Chinese character may have multiple pronunciations associated with different meanings. This means that sound cannot be used as a means of creating an ordered list of characters unless they are written in the modern Roman-alphabet pinyin based on the northern pronunciation.

Traditionally order was created for entering characters in a Chinese dictionary by using a straight numerical count related to the core meaningful element in each character, the radical. Radicals are a core character-element within the ideogram, representing a core of meaning. The radical is used in combination with additional semi-phonetic script to generate words that all have some meaningful connection with the radical. For example, the “water” radical refers to water or wetness as its core meaning, then full ideograms are written that incorporate that radical along with additional strokes for words that in some way relate to water, including river, lake, clouds, and steam.

Entries in Chinese dictionaries are ordered by radical number, and within that, by stroke count. Since the Ming dynasty standard Chinese dictionaries recognized 214 radicals, reduced from a much longer list in earlier times, and in modern dictionaries sometimes now reduced to 189. The radicals, semantic classifying elements, each have a specific assigned number, and each radical has the same fixed position in numerical order in every dictionary. The tradition is to enter radicals into the list in order of the numbers of strokes needed, thus the first entry, for radical 1, has a single stroke. As the number of strokes increases, the number assigned to the radical rises. For a given stroke count there may be multiple radicals. For example there may be 14 radicals that involve 7 strokes, with each of these radicals having its own classifying number. Thus a total radical count of 214 does not mean the last radical requires 214 strokes. Legge’s character Index was organized in this traditional way.

In his master index of all the Chinese characters used in the text showing their locations by chapter and verse, Legge provided text for each character that showed the

English pronunciation and spelling of each word, its multiple meanings, discussed stroke and word combinations arising from each radical, indicated how each character was combined with other key characters in important phrases, and listed every place in the *Chinese Classics* texts where this character had been used, providing the particular contexts of each use. He usually provided this detail for 213 radicals.

That final index that Legge and his helpers created for each volume thus represents both a Chinese and a Chinese-English dictionary. In creating these indexes for each of his eventual eight volumes, James Legge was creating the first modern Chinese-English dictionary, far improved from the ancient and error-ridden giant wood-block volumes published in 1822 by Robert Morrison. For volume I Legge's collection of Indexes required 69 pages. In the original publication in 1861 of volume I, the final Part was a list of errors in all the previous parts, obviously generated after the main texts had been printed. These corrections were incorporated into the text in later editions and that section of Errata was eliminated.

The original Chinese working notes for these Indexes are now in the possession of the New York Public Library, which purchased all Legge's Chinese books from his estate. These handwritten Indexes are marvellous and beautiful to hold, massive bound volumes with neat columns of ideograms across a line at the top, heading up columns of ideograms entered in the traditional Chinese way. The heading on the column for the Chinese word for "faith, trust", for example, is followed below by a column of entries identifying all the chapters in *The Great Learning* in which this character can be found. The beauty of the handwriting for these massive books suggests they were written by a skilled Chinese scholar rather than by Legge, whose Chinese writing was rather scrappy. He was more interested in reading Chinese than writing it.

When Legge printed the books at the LMS press it was a huge novelty for a "British" book to be printed entirely by Chinese printers. In April 1861 he sent the pages to London for binding by Trübner & Co. They are handsome large volumes each with an embossed figure on the heavy covers. Volume I shows a relief picture of Confucius the Sage highlighted with gold. Legge asked Trübner to send two copies to the LMS office in London, one for its library and one for the wife of the somewhat fractious LMS foreign Secretary, Tidman. Legge planned to complete volumes III and IV by 1863, then return his efforts more fully to mission work.

Volume I, The Confucian Classics: the Analects, the Great Learning, the Doctrine of the Mean

In volume I the Prolegomena was a six-chapter, 136-page introduction to these three texts. After an initial chapter describing the importance of the Confucian classics in Chinese literature and history, Legge examined each of the three translated books in detail. He considered questions such as the probable dating of the original work, its authorship and the lives of those connected with the text, and its political and geographical settings. He identified problems with the integrity or authenticity of the text over the ages, reported and evaluated the main critical commentaries discussing it over 2,000 years of questions of interpreting the meanings of difficult sections, guided the reader to other works, and considered the relation of ideas in the work with Christian theology.

The second section, The Body of the Work, was done in a uniquely interesting and helpful format that he mostly followed in the subsequent volumes. Legge placed a large block of the Chinese text at the top of the page, followed by the English translation in a second block, with matching segment numbers to give guidance to the reader. On each page these two sections were followed by a section of Notes with numbers also matched to the Chinese and English text. These provided background information, explanation, discussion of any problem posed by certain characters, along with references to similar ideas as found across Latin, Greek, European and British authors, printed in the original languages, not translated. He explained obscure points, showed similarities and differences between these ideas and those in other sections and in the classical literatures of Europe. These Notes represented a massive task for traditional hot-lead printing because they required so many fonts, eventually including Chinese, Hebrew, Greek, and italic for Latin. In later volumes these three sections were often longer, spread out over multiple pages rather than in the compact format he started in volume I.

The third section of the book was comprised of seven Indexes, for which he had help. The first was for Subjects, referring the reader to the chapter and verse in which the topic occurred in the first book, the Analects. The second index listed all the proper names in that text, identifying the person or place-name and listing the location of that name in the texts. He did these two indexes separately for each of the three Chinese books in the first volume. The final and massive Index was for every Chinese character in all three texts organized by radical number in the system used in Chinese dictionaries.

### Legge's opinions of Confucius

In his comments about Confucius in volume I Legge expressed mixed opinions about the man he called the Sage. He respected the Sage's humility and admired his idea that rulers should set a good example for their subjects while showing concern for good

government. At the same time he criticized the Sage for his insistence on propriety, and his stern aloofness and failure to express his feelings with any spontaneity, an interesting critique that challenges the stereotypes of Victorian missionary rigid formality. Legge believed that Confucius had an overemphasis on rigid social hierarchies and ceremonials as the best basis for harmony in social relations, and contrasted this with Mencius' more flexible ideas. He concluded that the benevolent despotism of Confucius might have been more appropriate in ancient tribal times when people lived in small groups and all foreigners were called barbarians. Now that China encountered other nations with different ideas, the Confucian model was too rigid and too convinced of Chinese superiority in all things, and this harmed the ability of the Confucian Chinese state to adapt to change. Legge summed up Confucius: "He was a very great man, and his influence has been on the whole a very great benefit to the Chinese, while his teaching suggests important lessons to ourselves who profess to belong to the school of Christ".

#### Volume II, the Works of Mencius

Mencius was the Latinized version of Mengzi, a philosopher who was possibly a pupil of Confucius' grandson. This work consisted of his conversations with rulers of his time, and is one of the classic *Four Books* of the Confucian canon, which Legge called the four books of the philosophers. Legge used the same overall design in this book that he had started in volume I, its three-legged sections of essay, translation, and indexes.

#### Problems with Trübner

Legge's now faced problems with his publishing house, Trübner & Co. in London, which was essentially just binding the printed sheets and selling the books. The first problem concerned the selling price of the books. Legge had arranged with Trübner that both Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries should be allowed to purchase copies of his Classics at a discounted price, because "such a work was necessary in order that the rest of the world should really know this great empire & also that especially our missionary labour among the people should be conducted with sufficient intelligence & so as to secure permanent results'. Trübner told Legge he would sell each book at 30 shillings, but after working on the project Trübner changed his mind and charged two pounds. Josiah Cox was in England to oversee the binding and Hannah understood from him that Trübner originally said that he only expected a profit of five shillings per volume, but under the new pricing he would be earning 20 shillings for each, with Legge paying all the costs of the binding and all the shipping costs.

Legge was further upset when it appeared Trübner had not followed through on his promise to advertise the book and send copies out to reviewers. By October it appeared that he had not sent even one copy out, and Hannah and James were very “vexed” with this frustrating long-distance problem. It was even worse because all the printing from volume II was already on its way to Trübner and Legge had no effective way of enforcing the original agreement. Legge’s new son-in-law Horatio Lay, now in London, took the initiative to send copies to the *Times* and its more liberal competitor the *Saturday Review*, a new literary journal started in London just six years earlier. In mid-June the *Aberdeen Journal* noted it had received a copy, praising the high quality of the Hong Kong publishing work in its brief notice. But clearly Legge’s publisher had not figured out who the audience would be for these volumes and was not doing reasonable marketing, although it was expecting to make good profits.

Hannah was now fully involved in the *Classics*, had read the long essays in both of the first volumes, and had developed opinions about the works. She wrote sister Betsey that her life had changed drastically from her previous life in England, and among her new pleasures was “the interchange of thought, on every subject that occupies my mind, with my dear husband.” She described volume II as the more interesting because the ideas of Mencius related very directly to Christian ideas of goodness. She was proud that in upcoming volumes III and IV Legge had written the complete history of China from 2500 BC until the Christian era, noting “I should think a history of any single country has never yet been written covering such a space of time”. Yet Hannah realized that the formal and literary English style that Legge used would not create books for popular consumption. She was annoyed that the most common comment she had heard about the first volume was amazement that the printing had all been done by Chinese compositors.

#### Critical response to volume I of the *Classics*

Critical response to these two volumes was rather slow in developing. On May 9, 1861 the *China Mail* gave a favourable but casual initial comment about Legge’s first volume, a review he did not read for some weeks as he had left Hong Kong on May 1 for three weeks of travel to visit old pastor Che in China. The editor stressed the massive labour involved in what he described as a “compilation”, noting mainly the effort Legge had made in spending 20 years studying Chinese texts and translations. The editor anticipated a more scholarly critical review soon, but decided the book was “a monument of patient and diligent research, a treasury of deep Chinese learning, and a testimony of very great labour”. He noted that the foreign community in China would “gladly and heartily” respond to the work now that China itself was opening up and was

no longer the “sealed book” of earlier days. It would help bring “real knowledge of China and of its wonderful people. We can no longer afford to be indifferent to the opinions of one-third of the human race on such topics – opinions, ...that have been held in reverence by (the Chinese) for thousands of years.” He recommended the series to “consuls, Interpreters, and Government servants in this country as an indispensable adjunct to their library, and one the careful studying of which Government should encourage to the utmost”. He concluded by praising the wonderful typography, with printed Chinese text that was better than any ever seen in China, noting “the clearness of the type, the excellence of the paper, and the neat appearance of the volume”, ending with sincere congratulations to Dr. Legge. In the same edition the paper recounted with indignation, highly ignoble behaviour by a British officer and his interpreter in wielding a gun in Beijing (against Treaty rules), demanding to be taken to see the Great Wall and the Summer Garden and taking home three bricks as souvenirs. The editor was outraged at these louts, conscious that every incident of this sort harmed the emerging cooperation between Britain and China.

Before Legge was back from his trip into China at the end of May, an anonymous letter-writer wrote with great indignation to the *China Mail* that Legge’s book was far more important than suggested by the editor’s offhand description of it merely as a “compilation”. The letter-writer praised Legge’s fifty-page life of Confucius as being the best in existence, described the wonderful format with the Chinese and English text placed so well on each page that it was easy to use for students. He praised the use of large fonts and helpful spacing to make clear the “sentences” in the Chinese text (a problem in reading traditionally-composed Chinese text which did not use markers to denote the end of “sentences”). The writer explained the remarkable Notes, the admirable use of Chinese characters in the Notes and their linkage to the highly unusual and helpful seventh Index of Chinese Characters and Phrases. He noted that this Index was really a Chinese-English dictionary, praised the format for providing wonderful help to any student of the Chinese language, and expressed the hope that the subsequent volumes in the series would continue these features. He urged all those interested in China to seek out the books.

In September Legge wrote a private letter to the *Daily Press* editor Y. Marrow, voice of the business community and critic of the missionaries. Legge noted that the paper had published many criticisms of the PMs, including some “hard and unjust things about myself”, but his purpose was not one of complaint. He thanked Marrow for publishing Notices about the LMS mission free of charge, and sent him a copy of volume I of the *Classics*, concluding with “this is a private note”. By the end of the year Legge



was busy editing the book of George's sermons, and actively translating the classic *Book of History*, destined for volume III.

At the end of 1861 Legge wrote that the publication of his first two volumes of the Chinese Classics had made a large demand on his time and strength, and at times he had been depressed worrying about its overall value, but "on the whole ... I continue to believe that in this undertaking I am doing a good work. Many of my missionary brethren would be sorry if I discontinued it." There was still little hint of international scholarly interest in what he had done, and he sounded more tired and determined than triumphant.

### Chapter 47 Family life, a Sailors' Home, and Union Church

*In which Legge's family has major changes as Eliza leaves for UK and new baby boy James is born; Legge helps found a Sailors' home, and Union Church has problems.*

In early 1861 Hannah was pregnant with her second child with James, but her main concern was the health of Eliza's husband Horatio Nelson Lay, who was "quite fagged with his overwhelming duties". A plan was underfoot to send James and his daughter Mary to Shanghai to visit Eliza and Horatio. Hannah found Horatio much too "violently prejudiced" against the Taiping rebels. He had recently come to Hong Kong for a civil action in which he, in his role in the Chinese Customs, was being sued for damages by Parsi friends of James and Hannah. They alleged Lay had falsely detained their boat. It must have been a difficult experience for the household, calling upon conflicting loyalties. Lay lost the case, with the result that the Chinese government had to pay \$10,000 costs, and Lay worried terribly over the matter. It seemed to represent a class of problems that could only increase as he sought to control the shipping trade in Shanghai on behalf of the Chinese government.

Hannah observed the young couple and concluded that although Eliza regularly sent "sweet loving" letters, Hannah didn't think "there is at present any likelihood of Eliza having a family... I do not think her animal spirits are good, or else she is highly timid or nervous". In March the surprising news from Shanghai was that Horatio and Eliza were leaving in April, selling off all their newly arrived British furniture, and returning to the UK for reasons that James and Hannah did not understand.

In her Hong Kong family life Hannah was liberal in her general stance to the world, and was happy to read the fairy tales of Hans Christian Anderson to young Marian even although she was criticized for this by a friend who thought that Hannah should read only religious books. Hannah was pleased to report home that Marian had given a stout defence of herself against this overly dour churchwoman. Marian was becoming a somewhat wild free spirit and not doing well in her schoolwork, and Hannah hoped that her youthful spirits would be tempered by some "element of divine sympathy", because for the time being Hannah was continually worried about her. Marian had taken great interest in two boys who had been guests for dinner, and later announced she wanted one of them for her husband, "Mama, cupid has shot an arrow right through my heart". Hannah eventually figured out that Marian knew about Cupid from Hannah's having read the Hans Christian Anderson stories to her, but was still

“vexed at her precocity”, and worried that Marian would be ready for marriage before her education was even well begun.

Baby Helen Edith, born a year earlier, in February 1860, was now close to walking and was a cheery and contented toddler, soon to be weaned from her wet-nurse. In March 1861 someone gave the Legges a nanny goat so they were assured of a supply of fresh milk for some time. Hannah knew that weaning Edith would be troubling but it was necessary for the nurse to leave because by August Hannah knew she would need another wet nurse for the next baby she expected. Predicting delivery dates was shaky and her son was not actually born until late September. Hannah's teeth had become so rotten that “I have scarcely a tooth to eat with”, but she feared major extractions because they triggered migraine headaches. Mary, now 19, was short on tact and thrift but was developing an interest in mission work and still running the girl's school even after Eliza's move to Shanghai. The family year ended with Hannah delighted with her new baby boy James Granville, born 17 September 1861. Hannah wrote that he was not as good-looking as Edie because the little girl resembled James, while the new baby looked like Hannah. He was the first son of James to survive, as his three sons with Mary all died before or at birth.

Health was uncertain in the family with the sudden ebb and flow of tropical diseases. Within the course of one letter written over a few days, Legge's health ranged from “delicate”, to “very well”, to a “sudden and violent attack” of kidney stones that ruined him for hours. This was the third attack he suffered; in 1858 the attack had been so severe that he had to return to the UK to seek recovery.

Hannah maintained an energetic correspondence with her sister Betsey in Kibworth, Leicestershire, north of London. She commented on popular books and reported the interesting fluid connections among people with different religions in Hong Kong. She was amused to discover in conversations with some Irish Catholic women that they had no idea that Protestants read the Bible, and was pleased to discover that Parsis were Deists, and thus “nearer to us in belief than I had supposed”. Hannah yearned for the beauties of Kibworth and rejoiced in memories of “the luxurious gardens and the field, the graveyard...the sound of merry voices, the music always going and the dinner bell, suggesting to a hungry appetite thoughts of large round rhubarb puddings”.

Hannah expressed her love for James in richly romantic Victorian language. When he went off on his long trip inland into China in May, she wrote him, “I am so dull and weary without you & long for the time when I shall meet my dear darling husband again...” While he was away she worked to ensure that the printing of volume I would be done to his satisfaction. She found that some work had been done badly in the wet

weather and had spoken to the printer about the problems, then concluded “In fondest love and hopes soon to see you darling again I am your own affectionate wife”.

The Taiping rebellion came into their domestic life again when their friend the Taiping prince Hong Rengan sent \$5,000 to his brother Shifu, the mission staff chief. The Legges expected Shifu would soon leave to go north to join Hong and the rebels despite all Legge’s efforts. In the meantime Shifu hired other people to do his household work and Hannah despaired because they were rural peasants from Boluo unused to any city life. None of them knew how to do any household jobs, one using a heavy brush to put black lead on the grate then using it to sweep the floor. She had to spend time training and supervising without much effect, “a grovelling carking care”, although “after all it is no crushing trial”.

Hannah's interests went beyond her family, extending to the wellbeing of the Chinese members of the mission. When a 15-year-old son of Anuk nearly drowned then developed a dangerous fever with delirium, Hannah sought Legge’s Irish friend Dr. Kane to examine him. She supervised the mustard plasters prescribed for the grave infection and pleurisy, and stayed caring for him over several days and nights. Despite the verdict of the Chinese doctor that the boy’s family brought (that it was too late to save him and nothing could be done), the young lad recovered, to Hannah's great relief.

Hannah's interest in the political events of the colony was mainly in peripheral features that directly affected her household. Arising from the events of the Northern expedition of the Allies in 1860 and the looting of the Old Summer Palace, many merchants came to visit Legge carrying carefully wrapped cups and porcelains bearing inscriptions in Chinese characters, asking him to translate. Hannah was fascinated with these items, now actively being bought and sold. She was not acquisitive on her own behalf though, and when a soldier from the event gave Marian a chain he had taken, Hannah sent it away to her family in the UK. The Legges were on good terms with Sir Hope Grant and his wife, and Hannah was thrilled when Lady Grant sent her love to Hannah via James. Sir Hope was eager to buy volume I of the *Classics* as soon as it was printed.

#### James learns of the death of his brother George Legge

James was hit with the powerful news in March 1861 that his brother George had died in England on 23 January at age 59, a day after preaching two sermons. Hannah wrote that George “had been suffering long, so it was a mercy”, but James was strongly affected by this news as his visit in 1858 had renewed powerful family feelings. James admired George’s “gorgeous” and literary preaching style (Author, 1909a) and his

deeply intellectual interests in reconciling modern science with faith, and James realized the value of George's ideas. The shocking news came when James was working hard on the finishing touches to volume I of the *Classics*, and he became overwhelmed by the combination of feelings of the loss of George and the huge tasks ahead. He preached a sermon, telling the congregation about the death of his eldest brother "to whom I have looked up with love and veneration since I was a child. Not a little of my life was in him."

In customary fashion Legge's response to tough news was to work harder. He decided to edit a book of George's sermons because he thought they were unusually wise and interesting in attempting to show how science and Christianity could be compatible, and he worked on these across 1861. George, and James' cousin John Legge, (also a congregationalist minister) shared a modern and scientific outlook that found Charles Darwin's 1859 *On the origin of species* a wonderful and challenging proposal that they believed could be perfectly consistent with Christianity. In its obituary the *China Mail* described George Legge as having a "gorgeous and powerful imagination, which rendered some of his discourses remarkably brilliant", and as having an "original and fertile mind" whose ideas had "freshness and vigour" despite lacking eloquence in his delivery of these, limiting his popularity.

Legge worked editing the sermon-essays over the next two years, sending text back and forth to John in England. John Legge and his wife later moved to Australia where they collected fossils as part of their interests in science. At one point James lost a big portion of the Memoir of his brother's life being written for the Introduction to this volume, when it fell to the bottom of the Indian Ocean in the shipwreck of the *Colombo*. The only positive aspect to George's death was a bequest he made to James, which helped ease the steady enervation from poverty he had suffered for years.

#### Hong Kong recovers, the Mission does land deals and thrives

Hong Kong began to thrive again in 1861 with the ending of hostilities with China, land values began to increase, and Legge realized that the LMS property was now very valuable, worth as much as £10,000. He recommended the LMS sell the property, buy a smaller piece of land and construct smaller premises on it, thus generating possibly £4-5,000 for the LMS. The American Baptists had just done a similar deal for property that was much less valuable than the LMS lands and buildings. Legge explained that the original mission building had been intended to contain a boarding school and lodgings for two mission families, but there was no boarding school now and less need for one as the colony created better secular schools.

If the LMS agreed they would need to send him Power of Attorney to sell and buy, which he expected to do with the help of John Chalmers. Legge received this authority and in July had an offer to purchase the old property for £11,000, even higher than he had expected. Unfortunately the question of ownership of the mission land turned into a problem that eventually required the Governor's help to resolve. Next Legge had trouble finding suitable new property, finally deciding just to sell the buildings on the lower part of the property, retain the mission house, and build a new printing office on the upper level of the property beside the mission house. In October he completed sale of the lower property for \$26,000, and a new print office was under construction on part of the remaining upper property. He noted to LMS Secretary Tidman that all costs in Hong Kong were rising but his mission salary was not.

The sale of the lower property generated \$8,000 profit out of the total proceeds once the costs of building the new printing office on the remaining upper property had been paid, and Legge asked permission to use one-quarter of this net profit to buy two small buildings for use as chapels for Chinese congregations. The rebuilt mission buildings were soon being used in new ways. Interesting talks and tea were set up on a regular basis for soldiers in one room, and a harmonium was set up in another for music classes for Chinese girls learning to sing. The Chinese congregations now had 64 baptized members, nearly half women, and Legge begged for another man to help him with the mission.

At the end of 1861 Legge was pleased to report that the Hong Kong mission had generated a surplus that year from the printing office, and he had rewarded printer Huang with a bonus of \$100 for his excellent work. They were sending cases of their beautiful metal Chinese fonts to London to be shown in the 1862 International Exposition in Kensington. That early World's Fair attracted six million visitors across the summer and included the world's first computer, Charles Babbage's "analytical calculating machine", and a model of the Bessemer process, the first method for steel manufacture that could be used on an industrial scale.

Legge was also cheered by a visit from his old friend Dr. Lockhart who had been in England since 1857, his work interrupted when his wife became so ill she had to return there in 1850. Lockhart was on his way to a new posting in Beijing where he worked until 1864 before his permanent return to the UK. Dr. Kerr reported to the Medical Missions society that a Chinese ode had just been written in praise of the foreign art of vaccination, a safer and more effective procedure using weakened virus instead of the active smallpox virus used traditionally in China.

Legge was disappointed when in December the LMS ruled against his request for another mission man. Hong Kong now had a population greater than 100,000, mostly Chinese, and he was scrambling to meet all the demands made on him.

At the time that Legge's first two volumes of the Classics were coming out in Hong Kong, he began to criticize himself for having put so much effort into them and failing to keep up with his ministry to the Chinese. The colony had been expanding terrifically with migration from China, and he saw thousands living on lands that had been almost empty two years earlier. "I felt as if I ought to go home and burn all my dictionaries and classics, and give every hour to the preaching of the gospel to those thousands" (H. E. Legge, 1905). And Tidman from London hinted delicately that Legge might do more direct mission work; he was still less than enthusiastic about Legge's work on the *Classics*.

Legge's mission work now expanded to provide help to sailors. For four years he and others had been working to create a civilized hostel for transient sailors. The Legges often provided hospitality to seamen awaiting their next ship out, but better housing was needed because without a pleasant domestic setting in which to spend their time sailors often ended up getting drunk and in trouble. On his visits to the Chinese chapel in the lower bazaar Legge often encountered them as they reeled out of the taverns, and he sometimes took a longer route home at night to avoid rough episodes. Some drunken sailors even came into the chapel and disrupted the services. Legge wanted a clean and comfortable place for them to "sojourn" rather than in the awful boarding houses available in the rough parts of town. By February 1861 donations for this Sailor's Home included \$20,000 from Joseph and Robert Jardine, and the Sailors' Home was established to be built at West Point, an institution that operated until 1930 when its property was sold and it merged operations with the Mission to Seamen.

Early in 1861 Legge knew that his duties as a pastor to the English congregation in Union Church were too taxing in addition to his educational, preaching, and pastoral work with the Chinese, but he feared creating the turmoil of a search for a replacement pastor after the debacle of his previous replacement. He realized that the Union Church operations were "very much held together by my personal influence" so wanted it to hold stable for a while longer.

Legge continued to hold strict notions of the management of mission funds, and took a stoutly principled stand against receiving money for the LMS mission if he thought it was being offered for the wrong reasons. Money was a problem however, and in particular his household expenses had become a vexing affair arising from all the hospitality he had to provide to transient missionaries living for protracted periods in

the mission house. He explained that the task “or should I call it a privilege?” of providing entertainment and care for all kinds of transient PMs was still costly to the mission, relieved only a bit when the Union Church donated money to help pay the mission’s bills, “without that I would be in debt”. The churchmen came to his rescue with an unexpected grant of \$1,000 for his services as their pastor. As a salaried employee of the LMS Legge believed it was not appropriate for him to be paid an additional salary by the church, but accepted it on behalf of the mission as a means of paying off some of the debts the mission had incurred in providing this hospitality to visiting mission families, rather than as a personal gift.

Legge also took an active interest in the governance of the colony and problems that arose with the Chinese community. Some neighbours of Union Church wrote a letter to the *China Mail* in July to complain about a large ramshackle mat-shed that a local British contractor had allowed his Chinese workers to build adjacent to Union Church and St. Andrews school on Stanton Street. It was supposed to be used for storing construction supplies but instead large numbers of people had moved into it, using it as a massive dwelling. They were making noise all day and night, interfering with the worship services at Union Church and giving the British district “the character of a Chinese neighbourhood” without the contractor ever having had official permissions.

As his giant task progressed Legge was very pleased with the printing work done by Huang Shing. Not only did Huang have “admirable character” in the eyes of Legge, the entire Hong Kong community recognized Huang as a valued member of the community to a degree greater than to any other Chinese person there, “and there is a general appreciation of his worth”.

By the end of the year Dr. Happer wrote a letter to Legge thanking him for intervening in the MES to resolve the problems created when Happer’s private letter had criticized the MES trustees for being part of the opium trade. Happer explained that while the Chinese had legalized the trade he considered it an evil that the British should stop, but he apologized for incorrectly having given the impression that he was criticizing the characters of individuals in the trade. Legge and another MES headmaster had calmed the uproar and the MES trustees once again welcomed Dr. Happer to put in an application for funds for his mission school in Canton. All this was published in the *China Mail* in late November, suggesting a return of amity among the men funding and those teaching in these schools.



### Chapter 48 The tragedy of Che Jinguang

*In which Legge risks his life to help an aged Chinese Christian, who is murdered.*

While Legge's work on the *Classics* was starting to bring him international attention, his attention was now diverted to events affecting the Chinese pastor Che Jinguang in Boluo, events that became horrible. Legge's lifelong hope to train Chinese Christians to become missionaries had been most successful with one man who was not even one of his own students, and the man was at the heart of life-threatening events in 1861.

Che first visited Legge in Hong Kong in 1855. He was a kindly old man who had become Christian and an active evangelist in Boluo (Poklo), a town on the East River (Dongjiang) tributary into the Pearl River. Che's embrace of Christianity was especially unusual because it had taken place without any European missionary efforts. He was eager to be baptized and eventually Legge was convinced of the authenticity of Che's Christian beliefs, and baptized him. Following that, Che occasionally brought people from his village including his wife, to be baptized by Legge.

Europeans visiting Boluo wrote Legge reporting on the genuine but unusual ministry that Che was providing. He paraded through the town wearing a "sandwich-board" bearing verses from the New Testament. When visiting German missionaries were attacked there in 1859 by one of the mobs that were so readily aroused in the rebellious south, Che rushed into the mob and called on everyone to behave with respect, successfully shamed them, stopped the attack, and saved the missionaries.

Over the years Legge continued to hear reports of Che's great perseverance in going throughout his countryside to preach. A group of Chinese Christians in Hong Kong was so impressed by Che's steadfastness that they raised money so he could buy a building to use as a home and chapel under the supervision of the LMS. The English congregation of Union Church also sent regular support from their Sunday collections even though Che's congregation was close to self-supporting by late 1860. Che visited Legge in Hong Kong in September 1860, and Turner and Chalmers were determined to visit Che's ministry from their base in Canton. This soon turned into a visit that included Legge.

#### Legge goes up the East River to visit Che

In April 1861 Legge was exhausted by the flood of events of the past year, including the death of his brother George, the delicate political problems in the MES, the financial scare about publishing the *Classics*, and his final publication of the first two volumes.

This led his friend Chalmers at the Canton mission to propose a brief holiday trip to bring some relief to Legge, now that the inland of China was officially accessible to foreigners. Chalmers proposed they go up the East River to visit Che. Legge put his Mencius text to bed with the LMS printer on 26 March 1861 and sent the final printed set off to London for binding in early April. He was ready for the trip. Chalmers would hire a boat and bring a cook, and he asked Legge to bring along someone who could speak the country dialects used by Hakka and Huizhou people on their route.

On 1 May 1861 the little group set off on their “beautiful boat, a *hotou*, spacious, and bright with fresh paint and gilding”. Travellers included Legge, Chalmers, Richard Freat Hawke who was soon to marry Legge’s daughter Mary, Legge’s Chinese teacher Yam, two Chinese members of Che’s congregation, and two household staff. They were going to deliver some money for Che’s work, taking enough time to allow them to explore the region further up the East River. This would be the first trip inland by foreign missionaries since the new treaty rights. Boluo was about 60 miles east of Canton up the giant East River, and about 100 miles north of Hong Kong. The journey took three days by boat from Whampoa, the deep-water anchorage 14 miles east of Canton.

They progressed up the East River toward Boluo, occasionally stopping to walk, lie in fields of flowers, hand out booklets, and pick wild berries. Sometimes police or military officials questioned them, but Legge had a passport provided by the Governor-General of Canton province and no official problems occurred. They encountered only one tense situation in a town that had never seen foreigners, after the local teacher tried to shoo them away. Legge responded with a genial quote from the Confucian sage Mencius. “Is it not delightful to have friends come from distant regions?” When the students and townspeople laughed at this clever response, the scolding teacher retreated.

Over the next few days Legge and Chalmers met with many townsmen, talked with temple-keepers, curiosity-seekers, and some of Che’s converts. Chalmers played his accordion to entertain the curious, they answered questions, distributed literature, preached in an ancestral hall in a village, and were treated to a feast under a banyan tree. People brought them gifts of hot sweet potatoes, cakes, tea, and fresh water.

The two men enjoyed the beautiful countryside, and Legge was thrilled to have the leisure to watch the delicate flight of larks, which had given him great pleasure as a child. “I was a boy again, quivering with expectation, as when I watched the bird and found my first “laverock’s” nest on my father’s “leys”. When they stopped by the shore their party typically experienced a rush of villagers who wanted to see the foreigners. At

one stop a man who had been a spice-grower in Penang came forward and spoke in Malay to Legge. To the delight of everyone Legge responded in fluent Malay, and the village elders insisted the visitors come to dinner.

When they arrived at Boluo and found Che, Legge again showed his capacity for the subtleties of diplomacy in China. Runners from the magistrate soon appeared and Legge and Chalmers provided them with their documents, including their calling cards. Normally this would elicit the invitation to a meeting with the magistrate, and Legge had a strong reason for wanting such a public official meeting because he knew that it would confer helpful status on the work of Che. The runners returned with the mandarin's card and announced that the visitors did not need to meet the great man. Legge knew this was a subtle dismissal, and delicately informed the runners that the mandarin could judge for himself whether to meet or not, but that other officials along the North and East Rivers had welcomed him. The runners tried to save face by suggesting that the official would be forwarding presents. In turn Legge finessed this attempt at deflecting their plan, using another response from the Chinese classics. He quoted Mencius in effect that the official's refusal to see them "more than nullified all presents". The intermediaries went back to the office and soon returned to suggest that the official was eager to meet Legge.

Legge and party accepted the gift of a goose, responded with a gift of Dr. Hobson's medical textbook that had attracted such great interest among military and educated Chinese in Canton, and the travellers set off on a ceremonial progress to their tea-party with the mandarin through the streets lined with curious townspeople. The mandarin was dressed formally with his official crystal "button" signifying his Imperial rank, and talked with them and Che. The travellers eventually realized that minor officials had intercepted their original documents unbeknown to the mandarin.

Legge knew that this public meeting was crucial for Che's freedom and safety in the community, which would be best protected by a public show that he was on friendly terms with the mandarin. The visitors met many who had become part of Che's congregations in Boluo and nearby towns, and were pleased to discover that these had quite a good understanding of Christianity. Legge preached after baptizing a large number of men, stressing to the audience of men and women the universality of the Christian message, all were equal before the gospel, men and women. They left Che with the funds for his building,

This foray showed that Legge was capable of effective subtlety when that was appropriate. Soon events showed he was also capable of raw physical courage when that was called for, as when they went farther up the East River from Boluo and encountered

two larger towns greatly hostile to foreigners. As the travellers' boat pulled up to a landing in Huizhou after the first day's journey past Boluo, people on surrounding boats and shore pelted them with stones. The travellers persisted in landing, hoping to meet the town prefect, but their boatmen became frightened and drew their vessel back. Legge urged a return and was faced with more stones, which began to wreck their boat. This rude response in the face of his own mild intentions and his general conviction of the civility of Chinese manners outraged Legge, so he jumped up onto the stern house and shouted in Chinese "Are these your manners? We have only come here to do you good, and these are your manners!" He urged the crowd to stone him but leave the boat alone; the crowd became amused at the spectacle and most put down their stones. The travellers' only loss was all their remaining ceremonial visiting cards, fallen into the river and ruined.

People soon trooped out to the boat during the morning to look at the foreigners, take books home, and have their diseased eyes examined. When the magistrate failed to appear the group decided to land and enjoy a walk around the countryside beside a lake. Legge was shown a tomb of a famous poet of the Song dynasty and remembered that lines of his poetry had been found on glass bottles found in Egypt. They left with no further troubles, subtly rebuking the magistrate by refusing his very late gift of geese but pressing him to pay the boatman for the damage caused by the townspeople.

Their next village included a member of Che's congregation, a prosperous farmer who was very hospitable in a countryside that was tidy and its animals thriving. In another village they were greeted with great hospitality, given a nice public lunch, and enjoyed another ramble among wild strawberries. In one town the villagers found Legge's stout size quite admirable as traditional evidence of his prosperity and importance, and brought out their own stoutest man, joking about who weighed more all in good humour that he appreciated. Farmers brought him branches with fragrant white flowers that he identified using their Latin names. They had been received with remarkable good humour in most places, and with generous hospitality in many.

A few days further up river they arrived at their most remote destination, Heyuan, about 50 miles north of Boluo. When they anchored off shore local boaters brought over boatloads full of sightseers for a fee, making many trips bringing the townspeople to see these exotic foreigners for five-minute inspections. After a delay the party learned that the magistrate was "out of town" but they would be taken up to the office in the care of the military mandarin to pay respects to the local officials.

They pulled up their boat on a pebble beach, but the pebbles "began to fly about in a way which was exceedingly unpleasant", and a small but instantly angry crowd

surrounded them. Using their umbrellas to fend off the stones, the little party walked half a mile across fields to get to the gate in the town wall to meet the prefect. Once inside the gate they realized they were far less able to defend themselves from the shouting gangs because now they had to walk through a long narrow street to get to their meeting with the mandarin. This street was bordered by a wall on which more shouting crowds gathered, holding bricks and rocks ready for action above the travellers. At the prefect's house they entered and the gate was firmly locked to keep the crowd out, but it continued to howl as the official served them tea. Legge and his friends realized they could not safely leave and began to dawdle, hoping for some magical exit until the young mandarin was finally forced to observe that it was time for them to go. Legge commented obliquely that in light of the shouts, his safe-passage documents from the Governor had to be considered. Under this pressure the prefect offered an ostensible guard of 12 men armed with huge whips to escort them back to their boat.

Legge quickly realized that the "whips" with which these policemen were to protect them, were actually flimsy ceremonial copies made of thin leather little better than paper; they were merely symbolic. He realized his group was going to have to protect itself, so they formed an escape plan. As soon as the office doors were opened his group shouted and ran up onto the top of the city wall, directly up into the shouting mob. Many were so surprised they jumped off and scampered in all directions. The travellers took advantage of the crowd's confusion, ran along the wall to the end toward the river, jumped down and hurried along to the beach. The soldier escort vanished and a smaller mob threw stones at them and their boat. Their boatman was eagerly awaiting them, Legge again opened his umbrella for some protection for his head, some in the crowd laughed, the stone-flow abated, and the boat was pushed out into the stream and rowed away. The umbrella was completely destroyed but local friends who had prepared a welcoming dinner restored good cheer.

The group decided they had had enough of East River, realising that the Qing authorities were close to powerless in these rural communities. Being strangers seemed like a bad plan under these circumstances, especially after Chalmers was attacked with robbers using a trident, a sword and a large knife, escaping with minor injuries. The group returned back downstream to Boluo, enjoyed a scenic tramp at the base of a famous mountain, Luofu, and visited Daoist and Buddhist temples in the countryside. By month's end Legge was safely home in Hong Kong, although piracy with robbery was still a serious problem in the waterways they had used. They had encountered a significant problem in only one town along their whole trip. Legge was full of

enthusiasm for Che's mission work throughout the Boluo region, but he returned home "dilapidated with exhaustion" from this holiday trip.

#### Shortrede begins to appreciate Legge

Legge's account of this trip was published as a Supplement of the *China Mail* on 20 June, and reprinted for the UK audience in the *Overland China Mail Supplement* of 28 June. To Legge's great surprise, his report attracted very positive editorial comment from his old critic, the acerbic CM editor. Shortrede loved the article and described Legge as being much more humane, kind, and courteous than the Hong Kong government, much less racist than the Hong Kong courts, and much less burdened with missionary jargon than others. Shortrede enjoyed the "fragrance of the heather" in Legge's account, the "quiet sense of humour", the "fine manly element that pours out", and commended the "absence of affected phraseology". He admired the respect Legge showed for the Chinese people, and concluded "it does one good to witness the masculine energy of which he appears unconscious, that pervaded the journey". In July Shortrede even published commentary and quotations from Legge's report that were published in a newspaper in India.

Legge kept some events of his journey out of this published version, writing a letter explaining that in Boluo he had baptized a man who had formerly been a Roman Catholic after making sure the man understood the differences between "Popery" and Protestantism. Legge was especially concerned, in his Protestant way, when he discovered the man had never been given a Bible to read on his own. Legge provided a Bible and took away the crucifix and catechism.

In June a friend wrote to him from London, worried after he read about the events of the trip northeast of Boluo.

"I know you are farthest from being a fanatic or a mere enthusiast, but you have the martyr spirit in you, and if circumstances arise in which you may think it your duty to go, you would go at all hazards into danger. I try to hope in God for you, and I have hope and confidence in you that you will act with the greatest prudence unless necessity were laid upon you. You have been in China in terms of danger before.... the thing has haunted me like a nightmare".

Now that Legge had seen the conviction of Che's mission work he realized Che needed to own a church building, and began raising money for this from the Hong Kong LMS Chinese church and from British and American friends. Discussions were

necessary to determine if there had been a mortgage on the building, but were cleared up in June and the property was to be purchased outright. By July Legge and Chalmers had the good news that Che had bought the property he wanted, although Chalmers reported that the vendor had doubled the price formerly agreed-upon, the gentry were muttering against the presence of a chapel, and the mandarin refused to seal the deed. Legge sent his Chinese church treasurer to help sort things out. Across the next months the Boluo gentry increasingly attacked Che, and Chalmers learned that the mandarin had lied to Legge in their May visit. By October Che had established two chapels and had 186 members in his congregation, but vicious local animosity soon intruded into Che's earnest life.

Across many decades in this period many Chinese officials in the two major south-east provinces were promoting hatred of the missionaries as being Christian and therefore linked with the Taiping rebels (Cohen, 1963), (Hiney, 2000). This southern enmity was being generated despite the fact that at the same time the Imperial Court was hiring Europeans to lead big sections of the Qing army in order to put down the rebellion in the region near Shanghai, where British then-Major Charles "Chinese" Gordon had been hired in 1860 to lead a group of French and English forces in successful battles against rebels. At the same time local officials in the south were posting incendiary notices about the evils of missionaries. They and the local gentry were still furious at the attempts of the Qing dynasty to open any contact with foreigners, and when their isolation appeared threatened they usually manipulated local rowdies to act as mobs, using large public notices. Six months after the spring visit of Legge and his small party to Che, this political tumult intruded into Che's life in a way more horrific than anyone could have anticipated.

#### Che is tortured and killed

On 2 October 1861 in Boluo, a man named Su Hoyu who had a long-nurtured hatred of Che, attacked him. Su claimed that he still owned the house that Che had purchased for use as a mission. Che insisted that the vendor go with him to the magistrate but he refused. Su and Wong Chukwai then roused a mob that attacked Che's house, throwing filth on it, breaking down the door, stealing everything, and forcibly taking possession of it. They threatened to kill Che and others in his congregation. Su concocted a story for the authorities, then posted signs ordering Chinese Christians to separate themselves from foreigners and to stop speaking about Christianity. The signs indicated that all Christians would be seized, and that no Christian meetings would be allowed.

Che and ten of his congregation fled to Canton to ask advice of the church people there, including Chalmers. Chalmers wrote Legge advising that another man, Wong Shanyen had offered to buy Che's safety from his tormenters with a large sum, but in vain. Harry Parkes, soon to retire as chief of the allied Commission in Canton, went to the Governor-General of Canton asking the Qing officials to intervene against this violence, without any success.

Legge learned of this, and on October 9 immediately took the boat to meet Chalmers in Canton where the next day they met with Parkes. Legge proposed he would go to Boluo to mediate between the Christians and the authorities to clear up the matter of the property title of the church house. Legge wrote of this plan to Hannah in Hong Kong.

Both Parkes and the Viceroy of Canton Province agreed to the trip that Legge proposed, although they all knew it was dangerous. The Qing Governor-General provided Legge with a special officer to ensure his safety for the trip and to ensure that he was given access to the Boluo officials. Legge read a document carried by this officer and was pleased to find that it gave an accurate description of the conflict and ordered the officials to make a "strict examination" of the matter. The magistrate was ordered to assemble the gentry and elders in a public place and tell them their duty, require them to keep the law and to restrain their juniors. It was titled "a special and urgent dispatch". Parkes was convinced that once the Qing officials realized the British were serious about having the local authorities remedy the wrongs against Che, they would cooperate.

The rebellion was swirling throughout the region, with atrocities being committed by both government troops and rebels. Civilians were completely vulnerable and terrorist tactics against them were standard. Legge understood that the local rebels claimed to want to get rid of foreigners and Christianity, but the Chinese Viceroy of Canton told Legge that these claims were the screen under which the rebels' real goal was destruction of the Qing dynasty. The local Qing officials realized they did not have enough power to enforce the treaty that they had signed permitting foreigners access to the country, the provisions that were ostensibly the basis for the local unrest.

Before he left Canton for the voyage up to Che's village Legge privately told Chalmers that he realized that he risked being beheaded at Boluo. Everyone was aware of the conflicts within Chinese society and the frequent eruptions of violent anti-foreign crowd actions. Legge explained that if news came from Boluo that he had been murdered, Chalmers was to "go at once to the English consul and tell him that it was my wish that no English gun-boat should be sent up the river to punish the people for my death" (J. Legge, 1872b). He knew that armed retaliation cut a broad swath harming



innocent people, and had no wish for his death to trigger more armed conflicts between the two nations.

On 12 October 1861 Legge and Che set off up the East River on two boats, a passenger vessel and a government cruiser. The party included the Qing officer, the Hoppo (river superintendent), and Chinese crew. When they arrived at Boluo on October 15<sup>th</sup> the authorities welcomed the party with comforting official approvals. It appeared that the same message had been sent separately overland and the local officials were completely prepared for the encounter. The mandarin advised that the property deed was stamped and awaiting them, the district magistrate sent a boat bearing presents, and the military commander promised peace.

The next day everything seemed to be settled. Legge insisted that the local officials deal with Su for the enormity of his violence against Che, and they agreed this was their job, not his as a foreigner. Later in the day a group of gentry visited him for tea and showed elaborate politeness as he explained the Treaty to them, but he was suspicious because they showed “too much complaisance”. Then a great formal procession to Che’s house took place that included the mandarins, Legge, and Che. The officials gave speeches to the crowds informing them of the correct ownership of the house and publicly handed the keys to Legge. Large placards threatening death to Che were all removed by officials, and replaced with new ones describing the treaty, the rules allowing Chinese freedom to be Christian, and the right of missions to buy property. The mandarin deplored the persecution of the Chinese Christians in Boluo and promised there would be no further trouble. The gentry made speeches, and Legge responded with a short speech explaining the purpose of the house and handed the keys over to Che, who was publicly installed in the house.

Unknown to Legge however, by 4 AM the next morning events had completely turned. A runner came to town and secretly told the Hoppo that a crowd of 5,000 was storming to the town from nearby Huizhou, intending to capture the mandarins, the Hoppo, Legge, and Che, on the grounds that they were rebels. The Hoppo knew that they would be beheaded if captured as “rebels”, and rushed to Legge to urge an immediate departure. He knew that Legge would refuse to leave if he thought Che was in any danger, so the Hoppo gave a concocted story about the winds and the tides calling for an immediate departure. At first Legge demurred because he wanted more time to visit with Che, but the Hoppo’s manner and his insistence, in part based on his own personal fears, prevailed, and they set sail downriver early on Thursday, reaching Canton on Friday.

Two days later in Boluo, Su Hoyu, Wong Chukwai, and a mob renewed their persecution of Che, starting by sending a small boy to knock on Che's door. When he answered the mob grabbed him and hauled him into the street. They dragged him to a nearby hamlet and tortured him using a current technique in which a rope was slung over a beam and he was tied to this and hung by his thumbs and big toes. When he fainted the mob threw water on to revive him, then strung him up again repeatedly, ensuring his tortures lasted over three days. They gave him the option of burning incense in a temple and giving up Christianity, or of being dragged down to the river and killed. He refused to kneel down and "worship idols" so Wong decapitated him, cut him in pieces, and threw all the pieces except his head into the river at Kong Tung in the evening of October 16, 1861. Fifty of Che's congregation fled to Hong Kong for protection.

A brief account of Legge's early October trip was published in the *Friend of China* in late October and reprinted in the *China Mail*, which then updated readers on "the most disastrous turn" that events took after Legge's departure, which did not yet include Che's death, only his capture. The editor urged readers to help the members of Che's congregation who had escaped. The *China Mail* of 31 October was not yet certain that Che had died on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

Legge learned of Che's gruesome death soon after his slaughter. In addition to his horror, Legge was soon outraged at the lack of response by the Qing mandarins. He repeatedly and publicly tried to get British officials to force the Qing officials to handle the murder using their authority. The Qing officials would not act and Legge realized they feared for themselves. The Canton Governor-General even told Parkes that he, the Governor-General was most at risk of dying in the affair because of the highly tumultuous nature of the Cantonese and their hatred of the Manchu dynasty.

By Christmas that year Legge and the missions to China realized that Che was the first Protestant Chinese to die for his faith. Over the next months and years Legge's long-term persistence in demanding officials act properly to seek out and punish Che's murderers turned him into a folk hero among Chinese Christians. Legge concluded this horrible story, "the government is effete, the foundations are destroyed, there must be a change in it."

Mobs were attacking Qing officials in the region as well, being egged on by the gentry to seize a magistrate in one place, and in another torturing a Christian man with fire. In Boluo the ringleader Wong commanded a force of 300 "braves" who threatened all "with fire and sword", and the Qing officials felt powerless to arrest him. Placards posted around the district promised \$50 for every foreigner's death and \$20 for the

death of any Chinese Christian. The man who sold the house to Che fled with his wife and children, and throughout the district Chinese Christians fled, many to Hong Kong where Legge tended to their refugee group with daily meetings. Hannah realized that if Legge had stayed that one extra day in Boluo she “should probably have never seen him again”. She understood that the harms to Che and his congregation came from the local gentry not the Qing mandarins, and commiserated with Che’s servant and the vendor of Che’s chapel, now refugees in Hong Kong with prices on their heads in Boluo.

Chalmers summed up the motivations of the mob and its leaders. “Their motives are various, the principal being hatred of foreigners, contempt of the native authorities, resistance of exorbitant taxation, and love of plunder. The gentry, so-called, who are for the most part literary graduates, have been gradually wresting the power out of the hands of the mandarins, and it is not at all an unusual thing for them now to inflict capital punishment.” British officials including Parkes explained to the LMS that they could do nothing to protect Chinese Christians from persecution in their own land, and the mandarins did nothing.

The local gentry rebellion continued for some time and the Hong Kong mission could do nothing to help the beleaguered Christians in Boluo. Eventually it faded, the Qing officials felt safer, and the attackers became frightened over what they had done. In a surrealistic episode showing a bizarre mixture of brutality and morality, the mob’s leaders wrote Legge, advising him that if he would promise not to lay charges against them they would return Che’s house to the mission. Legge wrote refusing the deal. He told them that he would not take any measures against them, but the Chinese government knew they had committed great crimes and he could not interfere with their government.

Eventually the Boluo mission re-opened and the local congregations resurfaced once their lives were no longer in danger. The three leaders of this butchery all eventually came to “an evil end” (J. Legge, 1872b). Late that year Legge wrote summarizing these events, providing a tender and respectful tribute to the sufferings of Che and his steadfastness throughout his torments. Che’s story encompassed all the hope and agony of China’s involvement with new political and religious ideas.

Legge sent a detailed account of Che’s persecution and murder to the LMS secretary Tidman on the day he learned of the horrors. Legge reviewed all his efforts to provide safety to Che and his congregation, including all the very public displays involving the mandarins. Some of the money his congregations had collected to send to Che in Boluo could not be forwarded because of Che’s murder, so it was being used to help care for the refugees from his congregation now living in Hong Kong. Legge ended

by trying to analyse the roots of the extreme dissatisfaction the Chinese people had with their Manchu government. He tried to be hopeful about the British and Qing governments' slow efforts to seek Che's murderers, but explained that if Chalmers' and Harry Parkes' efforts to get the Qing officials to track down the murderers and seek justice for Che failed, Legge intended to put the case with the British Ambassador in Beijing.

Over the next decades Che's mission work in the Boluo region was re-established with help from the LMS, and a visit in 1876 found four thriving mission stations.

Chapter 49 Hong Kong: public education, the Osborne-Lay flotilla, crime, illnesses, and scandals

*In which Legge begins working to create a public education system, his son-in-law Horatio Nelson Lay tries to create a Chinese Navy, and crime, illnesses and scandals pervade Hong Kong life.*

Legge's huge energies now became directed at the poor system of education in Hong Kong, applying insights he had developed from his own work in mission schools. He had created and taught in a small boys' boarding school in the mission house starting in 1844, created a preparatory school and the ACC, his transplanted college-seminary, and his daughters ran schools for girls starting in 1860 using donations from the community. When the ACC faltered his mission continued to run small schools teaching English and Chinese, and his daughters continued teaching Chinese girls, but Legge realized a broader brush was necessary. In his very busy year of 1861 Legge played an effective, central, and vigorous leadership role in the creation of a modern public education system for children in Hong Kong including the upper school now known and respected as Queen's College.

From the earliest days of the colonial government provided grants to help operate small local schools for Chinese students. By 1861 the system consisted of 20 of these small village schools scattered in Victoria and around the island, taught in Chinese by native teachers. These "aided" schools received "grants-in-aid" for their work and increased in number across the years.

The problem was that these schools varied tremendously in their operations. The best were run by missions under close supervision or by graduates of mission schools, including some from the LMS. The worst were miserable affairs run by bored and often absent teachers using the traditional teaching method of rote memorization of classic Chinese texts written in arcane language the boys did not understand. Males of all ages and stages studied in one room where they would work on their own trying to read and memorize a bit of text, then would go up and loudly recite it to the master when ready. There was no instruction to the group, and there were no subjects other than reading and writing Chinese text. Attendance was terrible, students were incapable of reading or understanding any new text in Chinese, and no modern subjects were taught because the teachers did not know them. Parents had no interest in having their children become educated in this sterile way, and the students were not being prepared for a full role in the life of the colony. Legge understood all this.

Legge had an interest in the development of a good public education system in the colony from the earliest days of Gov. Davis (1844-48). Now he wanted it to start with a large free secular government school for Chinese boys. At 43 Legge was now a visible and respected member of the Hong Kong community, although with that somewhat awkward borderline status of academics and non-establishment churchmen. Although he knew the members of the business and government elite, as a nonconformist without government, military, or business rank, he was still an outsider to many of their social and political affairs. His skills were recognized however, and he was soon called upon to help solve problems with the system of education.

Over time the colonial government had worked to improve things, with Anglican Bishop George Smith becoming Chair of an Education Committee in 1850, supervising nine schools. In an earlier report on his preparatory school for his ACC seminary in 1849 Legge had written that teaching Chinese students in both English and Chinese was better education than just in Chinese because it exposed the students to new ideas and information about the world. Legge joined the Education Committee in 1853, arguing for better education in English, then in 1855 Andrew Shortrede proposed a massive overhaul of the schools. He wanted them to provide public education to children of all nations, religions, classes and condition, in English, on payment of low fees by the parents. Legge was not at this meeting but he agreed with Shortrede's vision.

Legge had been actively involved in the work of this committee in creating a public education system separate from the small schools supported by specific missions. Within a few years there were government schools with a curriculum that had added English and geography, but they were still focussed heavily on the Chinese classic texts taught in the traditional way. Legge resigned from this Education Committee in 1857 preparing to leave to Britain.

On his return to Hong Kong September 1859 Legge re-joined the task of improving the schools and recommended the creation of a more formal Board of Education to oversee all the aided schools. The government agreed and in 1860 Legge joined the Board modelled on his proposal.

When its rather ineffectual Chairman Bishop Smith returned to Britain in 1860, Legge became a powerful force on the committee in the period March 1860 - December 1861. Hannah considered Bishop George Smith to be a nice man but underwhelming, with status only because of his title and not because of his talents. Legge knew the mission schools were all in decline, and a better system was needed.

Legge's ideas promoting secular schools not associated with churches were unique among the Protestant missionaries. As historian Eitel later wrote, the Roman Catholic

church “did better” in retaining its students for church work because it taught them only in Latin, while the British Protestant mission schools taught in both English and Chinese, thus broadly educating students for every kind of career in the community. This meant they perennially lost students to the worlds of commerce and government.

Legge recognized that schools would have to appeal to the Chinese middle classes in order to thrive. Parents would have to believe that the education would provide concrete benefits to their children, and mastery of English was clearly going to provide skills useful in the commerce of the colony, while rote memorization of classic Chinese texts was not going to create a modern educated middle class. Legge thus recommended that English be taught only at a modern secular Government central school, to focus the idea of that school providing a high quality of education. He recommended that a British headmaster be hired for the job, which would also include supervision of the aided schools. Legge and Shortrede shared the idea that the school bridge “east and west” and include children of all nationalities (Bickley, 1997).

Although Legge was never the Acting Chairman he essentially took over the leadership, and in July 1860 proposed the creation of a “grand central school” to consolidate the small city schools, which included even a mosque school. Under “the Legge plan”, the new school was to teach a modern curriculum and both English and Chinese languages, with a specific emphasis on education in English to the Chinese boys as a means both of fluency and engagement in English ideas including notions of justice and the rule of law. Legge wanted a large, free government school that would be entirely secular, bringing students in from the best of the small local schools getting government aid. This new Central School would have a headmaster who would also act as Inspector of the small government schools. Legge presented it to the Governor as part of the committee’s Annual Report for 1860.

Overcoming occasional obstacles this plan was accepted, the Board of Education accepted Legge’s proposal, and in March 1861 a new Government Central School was created on land the government purchased on Gough Street. Bishop George Smith was in Britain and selected young Scot Frederick Stewart ((1836-1889) in late 1861 to become the Master. Legge supported this nomination and the government soon confirmed the appointment. Stewart had been educated at Aberdeen Grammar School and King’s College Aberdeen, echoing Legge’s school career, and was working as a master in a grammar school in Hampshire waiting to begin theological studies for Presbyterian ordination. Stewart dropped out of his university plans with his new appointment in Hong Kong and set sail for the colony in December.

By 1862 the new system of education was established, with the new Central School as its pinnacle. Students from five small schools, including some LMS schools, were relocated into Central School. Not surprisingly, the new Hong Kong system was closely modelled on the education curriculum in Aberdeenshire where both Legge and Stewart had been educated.

Central School opened on 1 January 1862, and 24-year old Stewart arrived to take up his post in March, finding 300 students awaiting him. These were not quite in the form he anticipated, as they included children and adults from the local schools, each reciting memorized texts loudly at their own individual paces in their wish to welcome him and demonstrate their skills in the traditional manner. The hot-tempered Scot shouted “silence” which was interpreted as encouragement, and it took some time for him to create classrooms of students sorted by achievement levels for group instruction, and to bring some ideas of time and standardized attendance to them (Bickley, 1997). Stewart was paid £500 per annum and given a house, and Hannah reported that the community considered this very poor pay. Legge and Chalmers still earned much less than this with their LMS salaries.

The early days of the school were shaky but Stewart quickly learned to speak colloquial Cantonese. He discovered he had to offer many inducements to get talented students in the school, starting with no fees, free textbooks, and no compulsory English in the first few years. The school persisted however with the core idea of a secular rather than a religious model. As students with some English skills began making their way into good jobs in the colony, increasingly Chinese parents began sending their children to the new school. In time low fees were introduced in the English section, and by 1865 English became compulsory although students could still take some classes to maintain Chinese competence.

Legge had predicted that with English as the language in the school it would soon attract students even if fees were required, and that prediction was borne out. In their mission school efforts, men of the egalitarian Scots background had taken a long time to recognize the importance of social class and fees in the Chinese business community, and the necessity of appealing to Chinese parents in very practical ways to convince them that schools would advance the business success of their children. Chinese parents understood that fees were required for English education because something of value was being offered.

Legge did more than just create a master plan, he also worked as a school inspector supervising many schools in later years, after Inspector Lobscheid resigned. He helped improve the textbooks by revising and reprinting in 1864 the bilingual 1856 text he had



created for his LMS schools, *Graduated Reading in Chinese and English; a Circle of Knowledge in 200 lessons* based on an English text by Baker (J. Legge, 1856). The school's greatest problem was a lack of textbooks in Chinese (Bickley, 2002) and Legge's book was a major aid.

In 1864 James Legge became the Chairman of the Education Board, and the Central School improved every year. The next year he recommended that the quasi-independent Education Board should be terminated, and that the schools should be run by a regular government department under the direction of the Central School Headmaster/Inspector of Schools, which was done, establishing schools as a permanent government responsibility for all children.

The whole public schools plan was remarkably successful. By 1933 the president of Central School's Old Boy's Association described this school as showing "the brotherhood of man", a sentiment he buttressed by linking it with a Confucian saying, "all within the four seas are brothers". Central School was renamed Victoria College in 1889 when it moved to Aberdeen Street, then became Queen's College in 1894, still a major and excellent hub for the Hong Kong education system, thriving today in Causeway Bay after closure 1941-47 during WW II. Legge thus played a key role in establishing a modern education system in Hong Kong in a model that has been sustained across 150 years.

Within his mission, Legge remained Principal of the LMS ACC until 1864, overseeing the operations of his original English-Chinese school. With its role diminished by the new Central School it was unable to find a replacement Principal and closed until a revival in 1911. It functions today as the Ying-Wa College, a superior school, and a testament to the LMS mission's earliest work in creating good schools for the children of Hong Kong. Legge was thus a driving force in early small schools, in creating an enduring private high school, and in the creation of the whole public school system in Hong Kong starting with its flagship Central School. Later a major government girl's school was opened, and in 1893 a wonderful three-story school was built for them on the old Gough St. property when the new Queen's College was built elsewhere.

#### The cadetship training program

Legge was less successful in his efforts to educate British civil servants in Chinese. In March 1861 Governor Robinson asked Legge to help devise and run a training program to prepare young British government staff to become Chinese interpreters. Legge had first proposed the idea nearly 20 years earlier and was enthusiastic about it

because he believed far more Europeans working in the government of the colony should be fluent in spoken Chinese. He agreed to run examinations every six months to assess the cadets' progress. The plan was to enrol the men after their arrival in the colony, rather than trying to teach them Chinese in England.

A new and radical feature of this plan was to make it available to graduates of any school in Britain rather than only to those from a traditional narrow list of elite institutions as was done for those training for the Indian civil service. The Chinese training would take place in the Central School. Legge was enthusiastic and asked that other European adults already in Hong Kong also be allowed as students, including the children of missionaries. In the first wave, four officers studied a challenging curriculum starting in 1861. This cadet system was used quite successfully in the years 1861-1874 (Bickley, 2001).

Years later when Legge was Professor of Chinese at Oxford, he argued for a period of training in Chinese to be given to young men in the Colonial service before they were sent out to service in Burma and China. After some delay this program was established, and in the 1880s Legge taught Chinese to young Englishmen as they prepared for their new lives as administrators in remote places. Some spent as long as three years with him, but there were never large numbers of students in this program in Britain.

#### Horatio Nelson Lay to London to create a navy for China

Eliza's husband Horatio Lay explained that he needed to go to London in 1861 because his health required a change, but his departure with Eliza came at an awkward point in his career because Prince Gong had only recently appointed him as Inspector-General of the Maritime Custom service. James knew that if Lay's health recovered he had an excellent career ahead, but the sudden departure was mysterious.

Lord Elgin's brother Frederick Bruce was highly sceptical about Lay's story of 1859 injuries and exhaustion, because since those events Lay had made two trips to Hong Kong and had married. Bruce's suspicion was that Lay had a more crass career motive behind this furlough, Lay probably fearing that the Manchu government might fail and not wanting to be on the scene and associated with this. Bruce suspected Lay wanted to wait for the outcome of all the conflicts and return to China if the Qing government had proven it was strong. Thomas Wade also believed the Manchus would lose power.

Horatio and Eliza arrived in London the summer of 1861. Lay did have a secret mission for this trip, a different mission for a major career venture. He carried a proposal from the Chinese to the British government, in which Prince Gong gave Lay instructions to raise a flotilla of boats for the Imperial government to use to fight the

Taiping rebels, to recapture Nanjing, and to suppress piracy. This would be the beginning of an Imperial Navy for China. In time this plan turned into a fiasco.

1861 world political events: US Civil War, Prince Albert's death, Cixi power

Major political events in 1861 affected China, the United States, Britain and Russia.

In China the Xianfeng Emperor (1831-1861, reign 1850-) had fled Beijing during the October 1860 conflicts in his capital and died at 29 of various addictions and dementias while in exile in his Manchu retreat at Jehol on August 22, 1861. He left his Empress and his top concubine Noble Consort Cixi (mother of his heir) with authority to continue his policy of openness, but also set eight traditional anti-foreign ministers as regents, including men who had been responsible for the tortures and murders of Elgin's diplomatic party a year earlier. In the south the Allied Commission withdrew from Canton on Oct 21, returning administration of the city to the Chinese. The British were now in a position of amity with the Qing dynasty, and were eager to resume trade in general, even more keen to extend it up the Yangzi. This required peace with both the dynasty and the Taiping, and in February 1861 Admiral Hope led an expedition up the Yangtze to Nanking to settle trading arrangements with the Taiping, bringing the British into a relatively neutral position in the civil war.

Legge was critical of this trip, and seems to have believed that Admiral Hope was contemplating armed conflict against the Taiping. Legge continued to believe that Britain should remain neutral in the events of the rebellion, and that killing rebels on behalf of the Qing dynasty could never atone for all the blood shed in the 1859 debacle at the Dagu Forts. The *Overland China Mail* also argued this sentiment, harshly criticizing Frederick Bruce for past incompetence with the Chinese, praising Harry Parkes for his heroism during his capture under gruesome circumstances the previous year, and asserting that war should never be the way to remedy conflicts that were only about etiquette. The *Times* took a different tack; their correspondent Mr. Bowlby had died of torture by the Manchu troops in 1860 and the *Times* regarded Parkes as reckless and rash in every decision he had made that day. Defending him in turn, the *Overland* noted that Parkes had declined every offer of Chinese compensation that had been offered to the men who were finally rescued. The *Overland* and other papers praised Parkes for not abandoning his party and for escaping after they were captured. Admiral Hope's new trip up the Yangzi in fact involved no warfare, reached a settlement of neutrality with the Taiping and freedom to trade farther up the river to Hankou (now Wuhan), pleasing the Shanghai traders.

By the end of 1861 China drifted into the background of British interests as other world events became more important. In April the American civil war had broken out on the issue of states' rights, particularly as they affected property rights to the ownership of slaves as a means of prolonging an agricultural economy even as the rest of the western world industrialized. In Russia, Tsar Alexander emancipated 40 million serfs and distributed land to them, energizing the St. Petersburg intellectuals into frenzied speculations about the effects this would have on their country. Seventy per cent of the country's peasants had been bound in serfdom to private landowners, supporting a rich aristocratic culture in a medieval system that had by then become incompatible with Russia's intention to become a modern and great European power. In Britain Prince Albert died on December 14, leaving Queen Victoria so devastated that the next forty years of her life were lived in mourning. She had borne 9 children within 17 years of a happy marriage, overseeing the expansion of Britain's economic and political power as the industrial revolution and world trade generated vast new wealth.

#### Mission life, and crime in Hong Kong

Summing up his 20 years in the Hong Kong mission in a talk he gave in early January 1862 summarized by the *China Mail*, Legge described his congregation of 140 members but acknowledged the problems of missionary work in China. He was grateful for the years of faithful work by old pastor Keuh Agong now 78, and a part of Legge's mission life since they first met in Malacca. Legge accounted for the activities of the 125 he had personally baptised, and the editorialist concluded his report of this meeting by commenting on all the challenges of mission work in China. Legge was preaching and doing pastoral work in the Chinese chapels, holding services in the prison and even attending a cholera death there, while continuing to provide all the English services at Union Church. He wanted more help because of the increase in the number of the Chinese chapels, finding his ministry at the Union Church interfering with his work with his Chinese congregations.

Legge was slowly receiving payments from the sale of the lower mission property, in annual batches of \$6,162. To his surprise the bank would not accept these moneys from him into an LMS bank account "on behalf of the LMS" because it was against bank rules. The only remedy was to deposit the money into his own personal account, which he promptly reported to the LMS. He was always careful to manage special funds in very particular ways and he was unsettled that the bank would not allow him to deposit the money in the account where it belonged. Legge was grateful that the LMS had approved £1,000 of the property sale proceeds to be used to help pay for mission expenses, with \$1,000 going to two new Chinese chapels. By the end of the year he had

been able to raise \$5,400 in promised funds from the European community to help build these chapels, estimating that \$5,000 was needed.

When the work was finished Legge intended the property deeds to be owned by the Chinese trustees of the chapels rather than by the LMS, hoping London approved. The donation of \$1,000 from the LMS mission would ensure the LMS the right to preach in the chapels, while turning over full ownership to the congregations, engaging them more in the care and development of the chapels. Legge noted that because foreign missions in the East were often criticized for the richness of the missionary societies and all their properties, this transfer of ownership would “set this jealousy aside”. He only needed LMS approval for the transfer of the Deeds to the congregations. The new Chinese chapels were two storeys, with a chapel on the main floor and classrooms and living quarters for the pastor above. Legge planned to invest the unused balance of the funds in a mortgage rather than place it in a bank account because it would earn twice the interest rate, and this income could then support the salaries and operating expenses of the chapels.

During 1862 the LMS printing press made \$2,000 in profits from its contracts for type-casting from its matrices. It had printed nearly 10 million pages of texts for the Bible and tract societies without earning any profits on that work, done at cost, but there was a growing market for the LMS Chinese fonts within the English publishing community. Some English newspapers in the colony were planning to print a supplemental sheet in Chinese and were happy to buy fonts from the mission.

The new printing office was built in 1862, designed by an eminent local architect, a member of the Union Church congregation, who returned his fee of \$260 to the mission to be used in other mission work. Legge’s family also received a similar but more direct benefit, when James was grateful to report that the fees he had paid to Dr. Kane for medical help to his family had all been returned. Dr. Kane was prospering, “and is glad to help a missionary family without charge”.

#### Mission hospitality; taking in strays

The mission continued to be pressed to provide passing missionaries with hospitality and as early as mid-January 1862 Hannah was complaining that she had already had to provide accommodation for the 16<sup>th</sup> visitor in the new year. Some guests were more challenging than others. The latest was a young woman from South Africa who had come with her sister who expected to join her new husband in Hong Kong. Miss de Smidt had met and married him when he passed by the Cape as a captain who told her he owned his own vessel and land in Hong Kong. When the sisters arrived they

discovered this was entirely untrue. The Captain was a crude Irishman who owned nothing, and the unmarried sister had a major quarrel with him over his lies.

Miss de Smidt soon sought sanctuary in Legge's home and was given it, but her behaviour threw the whole house into turmoil. She was attractive and a steady flood of suitors visited her daily, coming and going on various outings and causing such traffic and intrusion that Legge couldn't get any work done. Hannah suffered frequent migraines and all the uproar made these even more miserable. James knew that Hannah did not find her suffering "sanctifying". Legge finally told Miss de Smidt she must find her own housing by May and Mrs. Fox volunteered to take her in.

Before long there were problems with this arrangement because the Foxes finally refused to let her favourite suitor Mr. Ffoliott to visit in their house, apparently in part because they didn't have all the time needed to chaperone things. Mr. Ffoliott ran to Hannah to pour out his grievances and tried to cajole her into writing a cadging letter to his father, a rector in Birmingham, to increase his allowance until he was named a Captain and could follow his girlfriend to the Cape. It all settled down when a brother of the de Smidt girls arrived, provided chaperone services, and the two lovers were married within ten days. The helpful brother loaned Mr. Ffoliott £50 to furnish his mat-shed barracks over in Kowloon to receive his bride, and they were off.

The Legges also entertained members of the Chinese LMS congregations to dinner at mission house, including Pastor Ho Tsunshin, printer Huang Shing, and Alow (Laou), an old student of Legge's newly returned from Australia complete with new teeth glistening with gold. Alow remembered Mary from her childhood, and when he admired her beauty and told her it was time she married, she teased him that such talk from an Englishman would be considered rude. For her part Hannah started figuring out which woman would make a good wife for him.

Hannah still had to order large quantities of food and supplies from Britain for the operation of the mission household, and a typical order at this time included 80 lbs. of loaf-sugar, currants, raisins, mustard, jam, salt, anchovies, ketchup, vinegar, tinned meat, biscuits, homemade wine, oatmeal, and hams. Hannah still loved attractive clothes for herself and her children, and her clothing order included boots ("sturdy" because she couldn't find anyone who could repair leather), cloaks, hats, and dresses for the family.

Legge asked Hannah to keep accounts which would include an entry of one dollar for every in-transit missionary to whom they provided room and board, and discovered that previous years' accounts had significantly under-reported this cost and thus had reduced the reimbursement provided from London in previous years.

### Family life with Hannah, and social life in the colony

Hannah and James now had four children in the household and all were busy. Mary ran a school teaching 11 girls and four boys, although that was under threat because Mary was actively courted by several young men, with the complication that the Legge's favourite was not yet "sufficiently independent to allow an engagement".

Social life in Hong Kong followed the latest trends in Britain. People were starting to collect photographs and Hannah was eager to create an album of pictures of her family after receiving a photograph of Hannah's dead husband's mother, Marian's paternal "grandma", in Britain. The picture reminded Hannah of "my dear George's (Willets) face", and reminded her that it was now the 16<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their marriage. She was surprised at how she had passed through a stage of ruminating about eternal life after he died, and "I could not have imagined it possible I could be so attracted to earth again as I am now".

In her letters to her Willets sister-in-law Mary, Hannah wrote critical reviews of various philosophical and religious essays of the day for on-going discussions. She also wrote to her sister's son Frank to help him with inner struggles. She urged him to avoid the prejudices against those who were different that easily arose living in England. "The assumptions, the injustice, the unfairness of a State Church in this 19<sup>th</sup> century when people ought to know better... is enough sometimes to make one's blood boil. And yet Dissenters ought to hold their opinions in the spirit of love & charity". She concluded that her own early Calvinist upbringing had brought her "much harm".

The Legges were invited to Government House to a reception to meet the Japanese Ambassador. Although Hannah was unable to attend because of a severe headache, eight members of the Embassy made a visit to the Legge's house one day and Hannah entertained them with music and singing while they in return gave Marian gifts including a fan, a drawing and sweets.

### A trip to Xiamen, a typhoon en route to Canton

After Legge recovered from severe attacks, "four days of intense suffering" so extreme he expected death in early July, on 23 July 1862 James and Hannah set out on a trip north up the coast on the *SS Undine*, a large new steamer that belonged to Douglas Lapraik, a Scotsman who had been serving as the cook's boy on Legge's original 1839 voyage to China. Lapraik had thrived in Hong Kong and in 1860 founded a steamship company that became a giant, the Hong Kong and Whampoa Dock Company, still one of the largest in the world. Lapraik left Hong Kong retiring to England just a few years after the Legge's trip, first settling an endowment on his Chinese concubine, marrying a woman from the Isle of Wight, then dying of cancer in 1869 at 51 "with a

smile on his face”. He had created giant docks to service the Royal Navy in Hong Kong and a large steamship line for Chinese migrants (some of whom burrowed up the storm drains and into his clock and jewellery business from which they stole much loot).

Hannah described Lapraik as one of the wealthiest and most respected citizens in Hong Kong and was thrilled to report that he had offered to take the Legges on trips in any of his vessels whenever they wished. Her excitement was dimmed when she was unable to dine because of seasickness as the seas became heavy. They stopped the second day at “Double Island” (probably Dezhou island), just off the port of Swatow, then still a completely Chinese city. James told Hannah that if she visited it she would be the first European woman to land there. She declined the honour and instead visited Mr. Johnson, an American missionary on the island, “one of the most suave Americans I have met with, but a rigid Baptist missionary”. After another night at sea they reached Xiamen two days after their departure, where they discovered much destruction from a typhoon.

Two terrible typhoons hit Canton, Hong Kong, and Xiamen within one week in late July 1862 causing massive destruction, with more than 10,000 Chinese dying. James and Hannah missed seeing the devastation in the cities they knew, but were first confronted with the problems when they landed in Xiamen. They debarked to stay with aging John Stronach, Legge’s old friend from their early days in the Malacca strait. There were welcomed by “a little old gentleman with pink tongue and one tooth, his hair floating in the breeze”, who turned out to be John’s older brother Alexander. He courteously offered Hannah his arm for their walk up to his house although she soon discovered he was nearly blind and tripped over many stones.

Legge was excited to meet his old friend John again, but Hannah was further titillated to find that although he looked 10 years younger than Alex and was ‘little and nice’, he also had “an extraordinary tooth athwart his mouth”. Hannah soon realized that John Stronach still had great intelligence, intellectual vigour, “sharpness of perception, wit & satire; as to the softer qualities one cannot so readily judge”. She may not have known of John’s major work in the Bible translation project done in Shanghai, topic of so much drama in Legge’s life 20 years earlier. While friendly, John seemed less invested in his old friendship or even in his marriage than Hannah expected.

A more surprising event was Hannah being approached on the street by a rather plain “Chinaman” with blue eyes and a happy expression, who she was startled to learn, was Rev. William Burns, member of the religious revival movement in Scotland 20 years earlier aimed at creating a new Free Church, who had served at Union Church during Legge’s absence in 1848. They all dined together and had fun: “all seemed not only



happy but jovial, and harmless but not pointless ministerial wit flashed continually”. They held a family worship service together, ending with a hymn sung rolling the rrs to provide its full Scottish pronunciation. After eating Hannah sat beside Rev. Burns and chatted at length with him about mutual friends in Scotland, finding him “most sweet & benign & really communicative”. When he eventually went home the other women “attacked me for my temerity & audacity”. Apparently Burns was known to be an extremely ascetic and laconic man who never paid social visits to anyone, and had a mystique so strong the women didn’t dare approach him, yet she had “presumed to take in hand & treat him as a member” of the community. She then learned how seriously the Scots Presbyterian missionaries took their work, mostly celibate men who were rather unworldly, rarely escaping to “the sweets of matrimony”.

James and Hannah finally steamed up to Fuzhou, the great port for tea exports, which was beautiful and full of flowering trees she found “too bright”. Taken by a friend to a famous view lookout she was entranced by the vast prospect, with the lovely river winding through the city crossed by hundreds of charming bridges decorated with pagodas. Fuzhou was surrounded by perfumed jasmine fields used to make jasmine tea. The next day they visited the only British tea firm that processed its own tea and Hannah was interested in watching all the processes, amazed to learn that there were about 4,000 different kinds and grades of tea when all the different tea regions of the world were included. She realized that some secrets were being kept from her, and was horrified upon peeking into a room with many coloured paints because she was convinced these colouring agents were put into the tea to make it green. Hannah was herself a great novelty in this city where few European women ever visited, and her strolls incited great furore. James visited some local American missions, and they learned that the American Presbyterians had fewer converts than the Methodists because they “are more particular in receiving candidates for baptism”.

Hannah and James then retraced their route, returning to Hong Kong on 2 August. They were relieved to find their children “all bright and well”, but the news from the typhoon devastation in Canton was terrible. Hannah reported to sister Betsey that “the odour from dead bodies floating in the river was so intolerable that the mandarins offered a dollar for every body recovered. Upwards of fifteen thousand have been sent to the mandarins”. Not only were urban dwellings destroyed, but all the fields were desolated. Many of the Legge’s friends in Canton lost their homes, including one mission man who had just completed a new house for his bride from England. A ship chartered by the loquacious American James Beecher sank, and hundreds others were

destroyed and stranded. From Canton Turner reported that one American Baptist missionary had died when his roof collapsed on him, and others were homeless.

Young Marian was quite thrilled by the typhoon, which was just what she “had been longing for so long”. One of the retaining walls had been blown over in their Hong Kong property, and all the bamboo scaffolding built over new houses under construction opposite the mission, was gone. Hannah and James were as intrigued by the Hong Kong use of bamboo scaffolding as have been most visitors up to modern times, who are astonished by its use up the sides of skyscrapers.

#### A cholera epidemic, and Hannah and James suffer illness

The news from other northern ports was of a terrible cholera epidemic that had been killing thousands all summer, including half the Europeans in Chefoo (now Yantai) just opened to trade in 1862. People typically died within a day of falling ill. The missions all lost many members, and Hannah was temporarily housing a woman whose husband and eldest child had died within hours of each other. The widow had become somewhat deranged by these events, in a constant state of excitement and talking incessantly as she waited for her voyage home.

Family members also struggled with illness. Hannah's headaches were so frequent across 1862 that she spent about half her time suffering, and they were severe enough that she was unable to do things. She vigorously rejected any pious assertion that they might give her heightened spirituality. She loved it when Marian was feeling healthy, a glowing and beautiful “little sprite, like a fairy and very quick and full of fun”, but worried to see that when Marian felt poorly, she “gets so like me, catty & scraggy in appearance”, suggesting that Marian also suffered health problems. She was now ten years old and studying a broad modern curriculum at home including geography and mathematics.

In early June when James became alarmingly ill with four days of suffering so intense Hannah thought he would die, she called for Dr. Carmichael from Canton because the symptoms were unusual “and danger was apprehended”. When he could not come, Chalmers went to help Hannah in the crisis. Legge was most worried about “my poor Chinese flock” in three Chinese chapels. He also worried about the survival of his family, about the fate of his English congregation, and his unfinished work on the *Classics*. The cause of his sudden and severe illness seems not to have been understood until he suddenly recovered under Dr. Kane's care, and it is probable this was another kidney stone, similar to the attacks he had suffered in 1858 and 1861. Just as he recovered Chalmers reached him, and wrote to Tidman in London of his worries about Legge. He noted that Legge had now been in the field more than 20 years “and even his

robust constitution and extraordinary mental energy” were showing signs of being impaired by the climate and exertion”.

#### The Canton mission in disarray when Dr. Carmichael leaves

The Canton mission was thrown into disarray in the Spring of 1862 when Dr. J.R. Carmichael suddenly left, heading north to Chefoo (now Yantai), claiming he could not take the heat in Canton but also complaining that his LMS salary was only one-half of what he had been promised. The problem was not a matter of the LMS not paying him as promised, but instead his unjustified expectation that he would be able to run a private medical practise while still working as an LMS doctor. This was a matter on which the Canton mission had great experience and very strict expectations.

Chalmers was particularly annoyed that Carmichael left on short notice, because now for the second time in three years he urgently needed a doctor at the mission hospital and he feared he might have to close it. Events took a turn for the worse when the job Carmichael had expected fell through and close to penniless he ended up in a different job in Chefoo. The Canton hospital now needed a doctor but none were forthcoming and in October the next year the hospital was closed by the LMS. Chalmers provided some money to help prevent an American Baptist mission family from starving when the US Civil War interrupted that mission’s support, and the LMS approved this emergency help of £100.

#### Legge helps free an innocent man from hanging; pirates are converted in prison

Legge provided chaplain services in the prison, and these led him into a daring intrusion into the justice system. In 1862 two Chinese men were to be hanged, but Legge was convinced one was innocent, so convinced that he wrote a personal petition to the Governor explaining the case and begging for a review. The Governor replied that he had in fact just sent a commutation of the man’s sentence, but told Legge that he had used the wrong man’s name; it was the other man who was innocent. Legge was sure he had the correct name, but asked the Colonial Secretary Mr. Alexander to go with him and meet the two men to determine their names.

To their amazement they discovered that the justice system had mixed up the men’s names and had tried and convicted them under the wrong names. The guilty man had been given a reprieve and the innocent one was set to hang. The problem arose from the very shaky command of Chinese language skills among the British justice officials, including the police, the judges, the lawyers, the magistrates and the juries, which meant that the prisoners were always at the mercy of Portuguese and Chinese interpreters, notorious for taking bribes to interpret as paid for. To everyone’s relief, the

innocent man's name was scrubbed off the death warrant and the guilty one's inserted. Hannah noted at the end of her letter that the government was so embarrassed about the episode they did not want the information to reach the public or any publication, so her reader was advised not to mention the case to anyone.

Pirates were still creating many problems for Chinese and British shipping, and by the summer of 1862 there had been dozens captured by a roving gunboat. Hannah was scandalized at the opportunistic response of the Roman Catholic priests in the colony to those pirates found guilty and sentenced to hang, often on scanty evidence. Legge discovered that the priest had promised these men that if they agreed to be baptized the night before their hanging, they would be given free clothes and a coffin for burial. The priests were eager to be able to report converts. What upset Legge was the men's reports that they did not believe in Jesus but consented to the conversion in order to get these tangible benefits to be used by their families.

Xxx 642

#### Legge's friend Rustomjee in a giant fraud

In June 1862 Hong Kong was agog with a giant fraud in a Parsi opium company, Hormusjee & Rustomjee, that led to bank losses and bankruptcies among many firms. The custom was for opium traders to deposit their cargo with two "receiving ships" basically serving as warehouses anchored out in Hong Kong harbour, in return for which they would be given receipts representing the value of this cargo. The receipts would then be used as if they were currency in business transactions in town, and those holding the receipts could get bank loans up to their value. The Parsi partners held receipts representing 1,500 chests of opium being held by Captain Jameson and his business partner William Stanford, partners owning the ship the *Tropic*. The Parsi firm used these receipts to obtain both loans and purchases in town on credit.

In early June Rustomjee, one partner of H & R left Hong Kong to join his partner in Macau at a time when a large receipt for their opium was in circulation in Hong Kong. The captain of their receiving boat mentioned he was short of money and also went to Macau to get some from the Parsis. Everyone became suspicious of the two departures, and the holders of loans based on the receipts rushed to board the *Tropic* to take possession of the opium to the value represented in the receipt. Hong Kong had no bankruptcy laws, so possession of owed assets was crucial in any property dispute.

To their horror the businessmen discovered that while the receipts claimed to represent 1,500 opium chests, in fact there were only 50 on board the *Tropic*, and they were filled with stones. It was not clear if Captain Jameson of the receiving ship had sold off the Parsis' property unbeknown to them, or if they had made an arrangement with

the captain for a fraudulent receipt. The Captain had an excellent reputation so suspicion fell mainly on the opium merchants and the Captain's partner Stanford. The value of the receipt was huge at \$1,500,00, with half of it immediately owing to five Hong Kong banks. The Captain was put in jail and everyone assumed he was guilty of something. An arrest warrant went out for Rustomjee, who had been regarded as a man of great integrity.

The banks asked Hong Kong Governor Sir Hercules Robinson to speak with the Governor of Macau to seek surrender of Rustomjee who was soon jailed in Macau then sent back to Hong Kong. Businessmen increasingly doubted his innocence, especially after discovering that he had served time in debtors prison in 1853 for debts incurred by his brother. The newspapers wrote earnest essays on the destruction of trust that this episode created. Business worth vast sums was routinely handled in Hong Kong on the basis of personal trust, perfect honesty had prevailed in the system for years, and the opium receipts had always been regarded as reliable as cash. By the time the extent of the fraud was determined the banks and merchants had lost \$800,000.

These events had direct effects on the Legges, who were friends with Mr. Rustomjee. Hannah had written of the warm friendship with the Rustomjees in her letters home. Worse, one longstanding family in the Union Church congregation who owned a very prosperous firm, was rumoured to be entirely ruined. There was a satirical newspaper skit directed against Legge arising from these events, teasing that the fraud was imposing extra work on the "prison chaplain", not named, but clearly Legge.

The whole event became surreal when in July a great public ceremony was held in honour of Sir Hercules Robinson, retiring after three years as Governor. Bishop Smith headed up a delegation making a great farewell address to Sir Hercules, with a signed version presented to him as a memento. All the notables in town signed this document, including James Legge and the accused opium merchants Rustomjee and Hormusjee.

#### Legge and the oddities of the Taiping

In China the Taiping rebellion continued, with more peculiar news coming back to Hong Kong about Christian elements of life in the Taiping capital. Mission men had long been interested in the actual religious practises within the Taiping government after the initial mistaken impression that it was Christian. American Baptist Rev. Holmes (soon to be murdered by bandits) visited Nanjing in November 1860 and discovered the wild Tennessee evangelist Issachar Roberts living there wearing a long yellow robe and a crown, having been given a royal title only three steps below the Taiping King's own. Holmes concluded the Taiping King/Wang was using his "pretended visions" incorporating Christian themes only as a means to assert divine authority over other

rebel leaders. The King explained to Holmes that while Mr. Roberts had only heard about God and Jesus, the Taiping King had both heard and seen God, his Elder Brother Jesus, and his mother Mary and sister in heaven when he had ascended there in 1837 and during their many later visits to him on earth. The Wang wrote that he had also met the Elder Brother's wife and his three sons and two daughters. He intended to add a third Testament, the True Testament, to the Old and the New. Consistent with Chinese imperial beliefs from before Mongol rule, the Wang declared he was the ruler of all nations and all were tributary to him. He stressed that while he and Jesus had different mothers, they were born of the same father, and he wanted Roberts to become his disciple. Holmes reported that when the Wang wrote on religious matters "he writes like a lunatic".

The Taiping "heavenly king", Tian Wang set up a traditional civil service system with regular examinations that set aside the Confucian canon and now included the Bible as subject matter. One Taiping official scolded about an article attributed to Legge on the grounds that he had used a Chinese character for Jesus that implied inferiority to the one used for God, when they were both "equally divine". A visiting mission man disagreed, arguing to Legge's friend the Taiping prince Hong Rengan, that the father is always superior to the son, so Hong created religious chants for the Taiping troops to use choosing a Chinese term for "father" for God, and a term for "heavenly elder brother" for Jesus.

This bizarre account of life in the Taiping capital published in the *Overland Register* raised more questions about the role of Christianity in Taiping thinking. Legge hoped only that no foreign nations interfered in Chinese affairs, which he considered would make "dire distress now ten times worse... The Tartar dynasty is incompetent. It is tottering to its foundations". Two American PMs travelled to Nanking to visit the Taiping and came back to Shanghai very excited about the revolutionary government, making parallels between it and the rebels in the American south now engaged in civil war, while the American government encouraged the British to supply military aid to the Manchu government.

Early in 1861 Legge met with Lord Elgin several times to discuss the nature of the Taiping rebellion. In January Legge's friend now-prince Hong Rengan had sent Legge a book via Holmes, outlining the theology of the Taipings as created by the Taiping King in his *Edict of Religious Toleration*. Legge found this text promised respect for both Protestant and Roman Catholic missionaries but showed very clearly that the Taiping did not represent a Christian government. The rebels had become another despotic and authoritarian monarchy using distorted ideas from Christianity only as a means of

enhancing power. Legge realized that his old friend Hong Rengan was “sacrificing what he knows to be right... to a miserable expediency. My own disappointment in him is great”. Legge also realized the Taiping king was now clearly delusional, and predicted that mental incompetence would destroy the rebellion. “...a few disasters (will turn his followers against the leader) and their dissolved and scattered thousands will become as sheep for the slaughter in the shambles of the miserable mandarins”.

Next, the erratic evangelist Roberts sent an argumentative letter to the *China Mail* and editor Shortrede published it with an introductory essay full of sarcasm for Roberts’ credulity and infatuation with the Taiping king. Roberts defended the vast executions of the Taiping by drawing parallels with similar devastations done by Joshua on Jehovah’s orders. Roberts argued that it might be better “in the highest sense of the word, for half the nation to be exterminated, than to go on as they have been doing, if the other half would thereby learn righteousness”, and he lauded the Taiping king for allowing him to preach anywhere and anytime. Shortrede pointed out that Roberts was certainly not behaving like a Christian because he failed to reprimand the Taiping king for taking upon himself the powers of “Divine retribution” in executing thousands, instead defending the rebel king. Robert’s account is amusing at times because he defended the king against charges of using his female servants as concubines on the grounds that the king had “five wives of his own” and thus didn’t need prostitutes or concubines, accepting that even so, polygamy was not beyond criticism. He mentioned that while Legge’s friend “Wan Kang” (Hong Rengan) was sometimes described as a powerless dreamer, Roberts contested that, and explained Rengan was shrewd and intelligent, “at the top of their class”.

In late January 1862 however, Issachar Roberts fled from Nanking after living there more than 15 months under the protection of the Taiping king. Roberts had now turned against the Taiping. He wrote the American Ambassador to China describing his experiences, soon published in the *China Mail*, in early February 1862, describing the King as crazy, too ready to murder anyone for trivial problems, as in the case of two young scribes who had made an error in one character in a text. Roberts also claimed that Legge’s friend Rengan, had come into Roberts home and before his eyes murdered his servant with a sword and assaulted Roberts. He described this episode with great colour but subsequent information showed it was an invention. Roberts retained his reputation as an unreliable eccentric.

Hong Rengan was still connected with his old friends in Hong Kong and sent a request to the LMS printer Huang for a printing press and two sets of the LMS Chinese fonts, with a note authorizing payment at Suzhou upon delivery of goods there. Legge

refused to advance credit for this project, but decided if Rengan actually sent the money the LMS would be willing to provide these printing materials. "Others furnish the rebels with guns and powder. I shall be glad to supply those other articles".

In 1862 Legge wrote that initially the missionaries "hailed the religious sentiments expressed in the tracts and manifestos of their leaders. But when, ... the promise connected with the movement began to wither, their regret was corresponding, and as they had opportunity they remonstrated with the Tai-Pings themselves, nor did they hide anything which they knew from the public". He was no friend of the rebels, and recognized "undeniable and melancholy facts" about the Taipings that made it impossible to be an apologist for their cause.

Opinion in Britain had been mixed for a long time, with some Christians believing that the British government should aid the rebels, while the government basically wanted to stay out of the war. The bizarre reports coming from Nanking may have helped shift the balance of opinion to come in on the side of the Qing, and by May 1862 public opinion in Britain was decided against the Taiping. In June even Bishop Smith conceded in a private letter that he had given up hope that the Taiping would do good for China.

Legge sent a letter home for publication explaining why the British government should stay out of the battles, reviewing the problems with both sides in the conflicts. He knew the rebels "profess many absurd and fanatical dogmas; their views as to theology are miserably degrading; their warfare leads to indescribable misery among the people but none of these are a *casus belli* against ourselves". At the same time he outlined a long list of direct harms that the Qing government had done against British people, ranging from destroying property and refusing to compensate, to violating the treaties and promises, none of which the Taipings had done. He criticized the British government for sending troops to the Shanghai area to fight against the rebels in a motley force soon led by British Major Charles Gordon with the support of Qing merchants, then returning the recaptured lands to the Imperial troops once victory had been obtained. This action simply meant that the rebels reopened their attack on the incompetent Imperial troops, defeated them, then the victorious rebels viciously retaliated against the local people. As a result of these sudden and bloody shifts in power, thousands fled into the safety of Shanghai seeking the protection of the European community inside the foreign "concessions". There cholera began to rage through the homeless crowds, killing more than 900 within three days.

In November the *China Mail* commented on Legge's letter, agreeing that neutrality in the Chinese civil war was the best course for Britain, but noting that Ambassador



Frederick Bruce was on good terms with Prince Gong. At the same time the Qing promoted provincial officials who were opposed to the treaties and refused to abide by them, so the Manchu attitudes and behaviour were contradictory. “To this extent our views fully coincide with those of Dr. Legge”. The editor of the *Daily Mail* was no longer automatically scornful of Legge.

Legge was indignant when he learned in July that the British parliament finally abandoned neutrality in the battles to side with the Imperial government, sending Admiral Hope with an allied force of more than 10,000 up the Yangzi to quash the rebellion, taking sides in the civil war. Legge warned, “Even 50,000 troops will not be enough”. If Britain was going to fight the battles on behalf of the Qing to shore up Manchu rule, then Lord Palmerston should be required to get the Tartar dynasty to pay for these services. Any claims that the British needed to fight the rebels to protect trade were specious because the Taiping had never interfered with trade; the only time the trade in tea and silk from Taiping districts stopped was when war intruded.

Legge acknowledged that the rebels were often bloody, but wrote from his personal experiences with the Imperial troops, that “their thirst for blood was quenchless; their outrages on the young and old were indescribable”. He went on to point out that it was not just the common soldiers, or the “insolvent and sullen gentry”, but also the officers who were problems. When Imperial official Ye had been in charge in Canton, he had beheaded 70,000 in about twelve months, thus support of the Imperial Court did not ensure good government for the people. Legge was outraged at the abuses of the Qing government, military, and gentry against the common people: “The Manchus are not worthy that we should interfere in their behalf”. “...For hundreds of years since the Christian era there have been in China anarchy and civil strife. The nation has groaned in pain for centuries”. If the British persisted in helping the Manchus, “our high officers will be the ministers to so many butchers of human beings” and there was no way to force the Manchus to enforce the treaty provisions because they had become too weak. Just as the Stuarts had their time in Britain and the Bourbons had theirs in France, the Manchus had now finished theirs in China.

Legge knew that some argued that the best outcome for the Chinese would be if the Qing dynasty fell and the British took China under a trusteeship, “but what Christian nation is equal for such a charge? Of the four major Christian nations of consequence (Britain Russia, France and United States) will any three of them tell the fourth to take on the rule of China and do it good, and develop its resources? Unlikely... There is less chance of a helpful foreign occupancy, than of a new native Chinese ruler emerging”, so the best course for the British was neutrality.

Legge's views had an honourable history, for he had argued in a letter published in the mission magazine as early as 1854 that the Taiping rebellion was not a Christian rebellion, writing "...the religion of the insurgents is running into a wild and blasphemous fanaticism". He had lost interest in their activities until 1860 when he learned that his wonderful friend Hong Rengan had become a special friend and counsellor to the Taiping leader and crowned as a prince. This briefly roused a hope that his friend might be a force for good, but after he learned that Hong Xiuquan had married multiple wives Legge realized his friend Rengan was not going to be a force for Christianity with the Taiping king. Legge wrote a few letters to Rengan to try and ensure the Taipings did not include violent rhetoric against foreigners, but "there is good reason to fear that (the King) has made a shipwreck of faith and good conscience", and Legge essentially gave up any hope that the rebels represented any kind of positive force. He noted that as soon as Taiping publications about their beliefs became available, mission men had taken quick action to get them translated and published in local papers so that all could read why the mission men had changed their early more hopeful views.

In addition to his distrust of the Taipings, Legge was furious with the British government over its policy over the civil war in China. He suspected that one reason the British did not like the Taipings was because their leaders were peasants, and negotiations with them were different than those with the "pomp and tawdry shame of the imperial court". If the British government persisted in participating in Chinese events they should "not cooperate" in extermination, should ensure the Imperial government was merciful, and then insist on the Qing enforcing the treaty rights.

#### Legge, Ambassador Frederick Bruce, and British anti-mission policy

Legge was dismayed that the Qing authorities had still neither punished the murderers of Che nor enforced reimbursement of Che's congregation for the property the murderers had destroyed. Through Legge's persistence the British Consul in Canton had now referred the matter to the British Ambassador in Beijing, Frederick Bruce, but Bruce was hostile to all mission activities. In May 1862 Legge received a copy of a letter sent from Sir Frederick to his superior in the Foreign Office, Earl Russell, the letter having fallen into the hands of Bishop Smith. Bruce wrote that the Protestant missions were failures in part because they worked with the common people rather than the élites. He wanted the British government to stop providing any protection for them, in spite of the treaty. Legge was outraged and wrote an article for *The Patriot* in Britain that argued against these ideas, point by point. Legge attacked the British government actions for hypocrisy and failures to force the Qing government to fulfil its treaty

promises, giving as an example its failure to press the Qing officials for justice in the murder of Che's torture and murder. This was a fiery Scottish egalitarian challenge to the scornful elitism of Bruce. "I have not spared either Sir Frederick or Earl Russell. They do not deserve to be dealt with gently".

Despite Legge's critique, he and Hannah were invited to a society party in June on board the *Express*, a wonderful new riverboat steamer designed on an American model and destined for use on the Yangzi. A great occasion was created; during dinner the steamer cruised around the island to keep a breeze flowing through the hot saloon, and there was a military band on board for dancing at 10, which the Legges had to miss because their water taxi had been ordered for 9:30. Hannah was thrilled at this grand affair, which included Governor and Lady Robinson "& all the big wigs of Hong Kong".  
A new Emperor, and Cixi and Prince Gong gain power after a palace coup

In China the Xianfeng Emperor (on the throne since 1850) had sunk into depression during his exile at Jehol after the Allies entered Beijing, and he died there in 1861, addicted and demented. His only son and the next Emperor, was the five-year-old child of a concubine Cixi, then age 27. Although the dying Emperor created a council of eight regents, Cixi conspired with Prince Gong and the widowed Empress (age 25) to become co-Empresses Dowager, and conflicts soon developed between these factions out on their Manchu estate. When the official regents, now an anti-foreign palace cabal, seized power and tried to imprison the Empress Cixi and her young son, the women and child escaped with Prince Gong to Beijing where they in turn staged a successful coup, the Xinyou Palace Coup. Prince Gong had recommended that some of the old regents should be executed by the most painful method, the death of a thousand "slices", but Cixi decide against this, ordering three deaths. One was executed, and two of the regents were given a white scarf indicating they were required to commit suicide.

The victors of these events, Prince Gong, the widowed empress, and Cixi, became regents of the new Tongzhi Emperor, a boy now six who hated his studies in the traditional Chinese curriculum of classics. His intelligence may have been a problem, in that even by age 16 he was unable to read traditional court documents and he was not given full powers until 1873, four years later than tradition allowed. Across this period his mother Cixi became extremely powerful and even acted against Prince Gong within a few years.

In Hong Kong Sir Hercules Robinson was retiring as Governor and returning to the UK. A Hong Kong newspaper commented acerbically that he had carried on the affairs of the colony "with about as few blunders as any of his predecessors... and the bulk of his work was such as any tolerably well-trained clerk with a proper amount of

official vanity could do”. The gentry led by Bishop Smith presented an Address to the retiring Governor in a ceremony at Government house with a written version signed by the local worthies including James Legge D.D. The address lauded Sir Hercules’ work in presiding over three years of increasing prosperity, extensive construction of public waterworks, gardens, and a new prison.

World events: Lincoln emancipates slaves, the London Underground opens

The world beyond China was also changing in significant ways in 1862 - 1863. President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, making freeing the slaves a goal of the war of secession, and thus dissuading the British from aiding the South. Napoleon III, eager for new territory, sent his army to Mexico to fight on behalf of the old élite against the reformist government of Benito Juarez, under the pretext of collecting debts owed by Mexico. Napoleon III’s forces suffered a humiliating defeat (now celebrated by Mexicans as the “cinco de Mayo”), but he planned further moves that included placing Maximilian, the idealistic younger brother of the Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph, on the throne of Mexico as Emperor. This scheme was carried out two years later, leading to three years of turmoil and Maximilian’s execution in 1867.

In Britain the London Underground railway system opened its first line on January 10, 1863 using horse-drawn carriages in tunnels lit by smoky gas fires, transforming the streets and the lives of Londoners. Within months of its opening Irish rebels exploded nitroglycerine in the District Line tunnel. In the United States Lincoln enacted a new draft law to obtain soldiers for the Civil War, with provisions for the rich to buy themselves out of the draft at a cost of \$300, equivalent to about \$6,000 in modern terms. This led to horrific draft riots in New York City in July by the poor Irish who realized they could never buy their way free. Initially targeting federal officials and setting the Mayor’s house on fire, they soon turned against African-Americans, viewing them as the cause of Lincoln’s war against slavery. An estimated 120 died and 2,000 were injured across four days of intense fighting, with the staff at the offices of the *Tribune* newspaper defending themselves with a Gatling gun.

Chapter 50 The Chinese Classics volumes I and II are reviewed

Early in 1862 Legge wrote Robert Jardine in London, reporting on the publication of the first two volumes of the *Classics*. He thanked Jardine for authorizing his UK agent to advance money to Legge for Trübners' binding, and for a further credit note of £250 on Matheson & Co. in Hong Kong where Legge would be using it to buy ink and paper for the printing of volumes III and IV. Legge knew many would find flaws in the work, "I am well aware that it might be better done", but he was convinced he was supplying a need both for general students of the Chinese language, and for all who were interested in Chinese literature.

While Legge worked on volume III, which was to be published as two books, the *China Mail* published reviews of volumes I and II in 1862. In March the anonymous reviewer of volume I praised Legge for his efforts and for his biography of Confucius "such as cannot, we believe, be found elsewhere", but then attacked Legge for his high respect for Confucian philosophy. The critic ranted against Chinese philosophy as "preposterous" and criticized Legge because of his much more favourable opinions. The reviewer emphasized that he knew nothing of Legge other than what was written in the book, wrote that Confucius was a "feeble light in the darkness of unchristian China", and asserted that "man's nature is evil" but Confucius never understood this, erecting instead a system with its superstructure "a proud and empty dream of human perfectibility". The reviewer attacked Confucius for countenancing revenge after injury, explaining this was consistent with the "heathen sages of Greece and Rome", but not up to the standard of "Christian benevolence". He complained that Confucius failed to lead his followers to responding to injury with kindness. He spelled out the limitations of the "Negative Golden Rule", the Confucian exhortation to "Do nothing to others which you would not have done to you", contrasting it with the more ardent and positive requirement in the "rule of Jesus" in his commandment to do good to others. The reviewer found some Confucian ideas similar to the writings of Marcus Antonius and the Hitopadesa (Sanskrit fables of the 12<sup>th</sup> c.), found the text lacking the poetry and religious sentiments of the older Sanskrit texts, and "poverty indeed" in comparison with sentiments in the Old Testament. In sum, the reviewer entirely sidestepped the actual scholarly accomplishments of Legge's translation, essays, notes, or even the vast technical contributions of the appendices and indexes of these massive works.

In May the *China Mail* reviewer of volume II, Mencius, continued much of his rant against Chinese philosophy, "at first sight... little more than a mental flower-garden containing some pretty sweet-scented, and curious things growing... a place for children rather than for strong men. But if you persist, the western scholar... will find a Fragrance

about it that will tempt his steps to linger...” The critic went on to select some aspects worthy of praise in the ideas of Mencius, the “brilliant practical truths, and the harmony arising from the “parental system” of honouring those above in the hierarchy. Other aspects he blamed for allowing no scope for “that eccentric spirit of enterprise which so often lights the way to new discoveries in science and art”, ...“ the innovator falls into disgrace by the smallest exercise of independences”... In the end he thanked Legge for digging this treasure out of China, but noted “only the few will ever understand the value of it, but those few will never die, because all succeeding ages will contain them...”

These scornful evaluations of Chinese philosophy set the tone for attitudes about the *Chinese Classics* in the British community in Hong Kong. They may have also discouraged Legge in his work, for he basically suspended his efforts on volume III during 1862, explaining that he was too busy with his mission work. Legge also had other concrete diversions, responding in a major article in May to Frederick Bruce’s scornful attack on the missionaries, suffering kidney stone attacks in June and a typhoon in late July. He hoped he would be more productive in 1863 and aimed to print volume III by January 1864, although in fact it was not ready until 1865.

Family changes; Tom is born, Marian goes to Britain, and Mary marries Richard Hawke

In 1863 Legge’s family had an addition in January, and two departures. At the mission house “God has put a new song of praise into our mouths. On the 6<sup>th</sup> my dear wife presented me with another son”, Thomas Morrison. In another terrifying echo of his first wife Mary’s dreadful post-partum illnesses, Hannah was again very ill for the following three weeks with fever.

In March the Legges sent young daughter Marian to England to live with Hannah's sister Betsey at Kibworth, to be under the shared supervision of her brother Tom. Ship travel was still dangerous and a cause for worry, as another ship the *Hotspur* left Hong Kong at about the time as Marian’s, took the long route around the Cape of Good Hope then vanished. Hannah noted the “poor creatures who went in (it) have perhaps been drifted about in little boats, taken by pirates or engulfed in the waters; we know not which!”, thankful Marian had sailed on a different ship.

Hannah's letters reveal the fragility of the long-distance arrangements set up by mission families. In her letters to her sister and brother she hoped Marian would not be passed back and forth between the households, but would be settled under loving care in one place. She realized that unforeseen problems could arise and wrote that that if this care could not be managed by her brother or sister, she hoped another suitable home could be found nearby. Marian was only 10 years old, and her shipment back to England to a somewhat undefined situation was a miserable separation. Hannah warned Betsey

that Marian would be susceptible to diphtheria in Britain, had liver problems (probably arising from malaria or endemic hepatitis in Hong Kong), and stressed that her constitution was too frail to tolerate boarding school.

Letters from Marian raised fresh worries across the year, revealing conflict between Marian and her aunt Betsey. Betsey wanted Marian to read out all her letters from Hannah as a means of ensuring “perfect candour” between them, but feisty young Marian considered this an invasion of privacy. It also seemed that Hannah's brother Tom had a servant Mary who had expressed negative views about Betsey to Marian, and was turning the girl against Betsey. Hannah wanted to “adopt the same plan which Dr. L has always done with his children, to be perfectly candid with them” to solve this problem, but was constrained by not knowing all the facts. Hannah had worried from the outset that Betsey's strait-laced husband might disapprove of Marian's rather free-spirited ways and refuse to accept her into their family. Hannah reassured her sister that if problems arose Betsey was free to seek another home for Marian, and within the year Marian moved from Betsey's home in Kibworth to brother Tom's home in Hull. Hannah did not like this move but had no means of controlling Marian's placement, lacking funds to make other arrangements. Hannah sent Betsey regular money for Marian's care, and Betsey kept an account for extra expenses.

Next, Legge's daughter Mary age 21, left her little mission school when she married Richard Frean Hawke, “an excellent man in the Naval Yard” on 15 July 1863.<sup>37</sup> The LMS must have received the news by telegraph as they congratulated Legge in a letter they sent on 27 July. Hannah had long viewed Mary as an unusually pure-minded girl, “the duplicate of her sainted mother” (Mary), who “naturally yields to pure and happy influences”.

As their family changed, James and Hannah were troubled by persistent health problems aggravated by the extreme heat of the summer. In May Legge's vision was failing, along with his voice. The doctors “tell me I have strained myself to the limit of my powers.” Hannah also continued to suffer serious bouts of illness after recovering from the January delivery of Tom, with severe migraines across the year. These forced her into bed several days each week, with pain so severe she fainted up to five times one day; her doctor was prescribing medicine that included arsenic. The misery of her terrible headaches and persistent fevers was heightened by an outbreak of boils in Hong Kong late in the year. James also suffered from these carbuncles that autumn, “Hong Kong boils” being a common disorder in the colony, often appearing after a long bout of

---

<sup>37</sup> The *China Mail* mis-reported the date as 13 July and the groom's identity as Richard Haver.

fever. Modern research has learned these “Oriental” boils, widespread across British tropical colonies, represented one form of Leishmaniasis, a parasite introduced by sand fly bites (Killick-Kendrick, 2010). James also suffered a recurrence of gout that autumn, but Hannah's debilitating headaches were a serious problem for her and the family.

Young daughter Edie, now three, was speaking Chinese more and better than English, and Hannah worried about her future. Edie had “great force of will & and is disposed to be sullen”, and had decided the deity was female “& cannot be made to comprehend his spiritual essence”. Hannah was criticized by other colonial mothers for letting her children run and play freely in the mission house, but she was convinced that they were healthier and happier for it, rather than being confined to the nursery all day with the amah where they “quarrel, whimper, complain and tease & rarely seem in any enjoyment”. Hong Kong was so different from town life in England because there was no access to nature, “no going out into fields or plucking wild flowers”. Reliable staffing was also a problem. An amah who Hannah liked suddenly left when her husband was put in gaol in Canton, and the replacement, a woman with bound feet, knew nothing of children and had no knack for amusing them. Another Chinese member of the mission staff came home very drunk from an outing, “lay on the floor putting some friend's furs all over him, sick all round and lay there all day & night”, the final straw for his employment with Hannah.

In the colony, acquaintances Mr. and Mrs. Fox had been ill a long time and were bankrupt, so they sold off all their possessions and planned to return to England. They had created an uproar in the colony because of their many debts, and although many were furious with them and wanted them out of Hong Kong, the only way the Foxes would leave was if those they already owed money to, spent even more money on them by making donations to pay for their exit passages. In the brouhaha Legge tried to mediate their rapid departure, while Mr. Fox whinged that his wife would suffer too much if they were given second-class passage with the P & O line passing south of Africa, preferring the more expensive overland route through the Red Sea.

Hannah warned Betsey not to have any dealings with the Foxes on their arrival in Britain, because whenever money might be involved, the Foxes would not pay their bills. In particular Hannah tried to prevent the Foxes from knowing Marian's address, fearing that Mr. Fox would visit Marian and Betsey then try to get Betsey to take care of their younger daughter. Hannah was soon horrified to discover Mr. Fox had inveigled Marian's address out of someone, and again warned Betsey to avoid all dealings with them, commenting wryly with a sophisticated note: James “has been faithful with the Foxes & they will consequently go away with the greatest ill feeling against him”. Despite



his great reservations about them, considering them unprincipled, Legge and others sought donations to help the Foxes pay for six months of schooling for their children, and sent them to Britain, a great relief to Hannah.

In Huntly James' brother William Legge was a leading citizen who presided over the unveiling of a statue of the late 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Richmond, Charles Gordon Lennox, on November 8, 1862. This twelve-foot high statue was erected "by the tenancy of his Lordship of Huntly", and all shops in the town were closed for three hours at the height of the day for the ceremony. Speeches in his honour pointed out that the Duke had inherited the Gordon estates 27 years earlier not knowing the area or the people, but had worked hard with "great kindness and courtesy to his tenants", spending vast sums to start great public enterprises to enhance the prosperity of the people on his estate. In particular he did not raise rents when other landlords were doing so "excessively". William Legge read out the tribute, and welcomed the new Duke.

Hannah's spirits began to rise when she began proofreading new pages of volume III of the *Classics* now being printed. She loved the intellectual companionship this created with James, "my dear husband is more than a treat". Unfortunately other events intruded into printing this volume and it was not published until two years later. In the meantime Legge decided to create a record of life in early days of Hong Kong, and began the text of *Reminiscences*, a document he called upon in later years in giving talks.

Chapter 51 Chinese Gordon, the Lay-Osborne fiasco, a new church, and Legge proposes a library

Early in 1863 the Legges' son-in-law Horatio Nelson Lay, husband of their daughter Eliza, became embroiled in a hugely embarrassing international scandal in Beijing. In 1859 the Chinese government had had hired Lay to become Inspector-General of Customs in the Chinese treaty ports, headquartered in Shanghai. In early 1861 the Qing government wanted to recapture Nanjing from the Taiping rebels but did not have ships to carry troops up the Yangzi to recapture it, so asked the British for help. In July Customs Interpreter Robert Hart proposed to the British Ambassador to China, Sir Frederick Bruce, that the Chinese purchase some British gunboats to create a small navy. Sir Frederick and his brother Lord Elgin were in favour of this plan because they believed it would provide protection and stability in the treaty ports, provide relief to the Royal Navy, and help trade. Prince Gong, head of the Chinese Foreign Office and a progressive thinker, agreed with this, appointed Lay to seek British Government support for the creation of a European-Chinese naval force, and provided him with written orders.

In Britain Lay presented the plan to Prime Minister Lord Palmerston in August 1862. The British government and Queen Victoria approved of this plan and gave permission for Lay to buy boats, equip them with guns, and hire crew, showing that the British government had no fixed notion of the Qing government as an enemy, despite all their recent clashes. A key feature was that the naval force was to be a Chinese Imperial Navy not subject to provincial governors, and Lay was to receive orders only from the Emperor. Lay later explained that he believed the British Government approved of the plan specifically because he was in charge of the arrangements and it trusted he would not let the navy "be turned to an ill account by the Chinese government". What Lay did not know was that the Foreign Office was secretly opposed to the plan.

With sealed orders from the Chinese, in January 1863 Lay hired Captain Sherard Osborn of the Royal Navy as Commander of the fleet for four years, answerable only to Lay. China did not have a formal naval flag but Lay wanted the ships to have a flag so that they could be recognized as the fleet travelled to China, and in order to avoid risk of capture and imprisonment in Chinese waters. The British Admiralty refused to approve Lay's design without the Qing Emperor's approval, Prince Gong had not given Lay any instructions concerning a flag and Lay had no quick way of obtaining this, so he just made a flag of his own design. In February 1863 the flotilla of seven steam cruisers and a resupply ship left the UK. Lay arrived in Beijing in May 1863 and Osborn followed, leading the fleet, finally arriving in Tianjin, the port near Beijing in September 1863.

Even before it arrived this flotilla was turning into a major political conflict.

Within months Horatio's career turned into a great scandal arising from his naiveté, rigidity, and failure to understand his role as an employee of the Qing government at a time when there were fierce political conflicts within different levels of the Qing bureaucracy. On his arrival in Beijing in May, Lay met with Sir Frederick Bruce and discovered that Sir Frederick had not received any instructions from the FO about the new Chinese navy, so Lay showed Sir Frederick the Order-in-Council that Lay had been given by the British Cabinet authorizing the formation of the fleet. In mid-June Sir Frederick wrote to Lord Russell, head of the Foreign Office, agreeing with the command structure proposed for the Lay-Osborn flotilla, as it has come to be known. A few days later Bruce presented Lay's plan to Prince Gong, head of the Chinese Foreign Office. It explicitly explained that the navy would be under Lay's commands as transmitted to Osborn, all under Imperial Chinese command. Lay knew that there was already a large functioning Chinese Imperial bureaucracy running under the leadership of British officers in the Customs service, and British Major Gordon had been hired as an officer by the Qing government to lead multi-national forces against Taiping rebels, thus this combined British-Chinese command model with a British leader hired by the Qing was not new.

Over the next few months many in the Chinese government became excited at the idea of having an Imperial navy, and provincial officials in the capital were eager to expand it to serve their provincial governors as well. Lay explained that this would violate the plan approved by the British Government, but in July Prince Gong issued an order that Captain Osborn take a position subordinate to a Chinese official. Lay and Osborn agreed this was not acceptable and in August Lay wrote Legge from Beijing, very frustrated that Prince Gong and his ministers refused to do the best thing for the Chinese government. "They won't do the right thing unless they are obliged".

At the end of August in Britain, the FO Permanent Secretary Mr. Hammond later claimed he sent an Order in Council to Sir Frederick authorizing Lay and Osborn to operate the fleet for the Emperor, but in November in Beijing Sir Frederick was still telling Lay and Osborne that he was waiting for FO instructions.

Lay wrote Legge in frustration in October, having decided that Prince Gong was not the far-seeing diplomat that the British believed him to be, but instead was just another foppish and wily courtier. He believed the Chinese only became interested in serious naval power when the Taiping rebels were being particularly effective, then as soon as the threat receded the Qing court intrigues resumed and the possibility of creating a serious navy was again squandered. Lay was becoming completely fed up

with the Qing government, “they return again to their old ways.” His nearly five months in the capital had been a time “of incessant strife with the imbeciles (British diplomats) here to get them to do the right thing. They want me to do what our people have been doing lately at Shanghai – to be the tool of the Chinese, but I don’t think that come what may, they are likely to succeed in their attempt.”

By late October Lay wrote that the fleet would probably be disbanded because the Chinese wanted it to be put under local provincial control, “that is, under the irresponsible control of the local authorities”, the worst possible scenario in Lay’s vision. He refused to agree to this plan fearing it would be used in bloody local quarrels, “I do not think that we ought to serve simply as executioners of the mandarins”. “Fancy our voluntarily accepting the position of mere instruments of mandarin cruelty and oppression. We should deserve to be branded with disgrace”. After waiting for six months with no word, Sir Frederick finally refused to support the plan on the grounds he had no instructions, interpreting the silence from the FO as meaning that it did not support the plan.

It is not clear if Hammond actually sent the OIC from Britain to Sir Frederick, because as Capt. Osborn wrote five years later about Sir Frederick’s withdrawal of support, “I know it cost Sir Frederick much to do this, I can testify, for he was not a bad-hearted man, though a diplomat” (Lay & Osborn, 1868). Sir Frederick told Osborn to take the fleet back to Britain and disband it because it was in an “unprotected situation”. On November 10 Lay wrote Lord Russell that Prince Gong and his faction at court had now decided against the fleet, Lay still not realizing that his own British Foreign Office was also against it. Without official support from the British government the Qing government did not have enough clout to deal with court reactionaries who opposed the use of British officials, or with the provincial officials who wanted direct access to the firepower of a navy. Prince Gong’s group was unable to persist with the plan in the face of a weak young Emperor and strong provincial and Qing court factions opposing it because they did not want any foreigner to have power directly from the Emperor because it challenged their powers. Frederick Bruce’s older brother Lord Elgin was in India, not able to participate in the negotiations.

On November 16 the Qing government fired Lay, just four days before Lord Elgin died in Dharamsala. On 21 November Lay wrote Legge again, content with the stand he had taken. He just couldn’t bear “to turn the fleet over to irresponsible management”, and “It would be a crying shame, I think, if men in my position were to lend themselves to strengthening the Chinese in ... barbarism”. He had never intended the fleet to be merely directed against the Taiping, and was disappointed that Prince Gong had failed

to be steadfast in the promises he had originally made to Lay. “Had I not been assured that he was sincere I would never have troubled myself about the fleet for one instant. I shall be laughed at and abused, but I feel sure that what I have done was right”. It seems the Chinese had become convinced that Lay’s goals were entirely selfish, and could not understand how his objections to the change in command structure could have been principled.

Later that month Sir Frederick explained to his FO that the problem lay in the command structure, and the opposition of provincial governments to their exclusion from the plan. He found Lay’s firing entirely predictable. Bruce justified the Chinese decision by noting that Lay’s plan had cost them a lot of money, and worse, Prince Gong’s Foreign Office had suffered censure in the court for the affair. Prince Gong gave Lay four months with full pay to organize the accounts of the enterprise and of his Customs work, and to hand over all accounts to his successor as Inspector-General for the Imperial Chinese Customs Service. Robert Hart replaced Lay the same month, beginning a highly successful career running the Imperial Customs for the Qing. In a few parting shots, Lay charged that many Shanghai firms were smuggling and defrauding the Chinese Customs of revenues; they protested their innocence but he announced he would be reporting the details to Parliament on his return.

Capt. Osborn led the ships back to Britain to be sold and broken up, and the Lay-Osborn fleet became history. The *China Mail* was highly critical of Lay, complaining in 1865 that although he was an excellent linguist and had “active brains” and ambition, he worked too hard for the Chinese Customs Service and in doing so repeatedly “infringed on the just rights of foreign merchants”. Trying to mediate between China and Great Britain he was squashed by both. Legge thought the Chinese had made a terrible mistake in not understanding Lay’s vision of an effective Imperial Chinese navy. In its obituary of Lay in 1898 the *Times* of London similarly thought the destruction of the fledgling Chinese navy was a huge mistake and criticized Ambassador Bruce: “ thus through the supineness of our diplomacy was lost the first opportunity of compelling the Chinese to adopt an elementary measure of self-preservation”.

Five years later Lay wrote in defence of his actions in the January 1868 *Morning Post*, a London newspaper closely associated with Lord Palmerston, and publisher of articles on foreign affairs. Lay wrote that the formation of the fleet was to be a “Anglo-Chinese” naval force for which the Chinese Government asked him to seek British approval, justifying its creation and command structure. He reminded readers that Lord Elgin was party to this plan, and the British Government agreed to the plan and gave Lay authority to proceed. This account made the fleet more a joint operation of the two

governments rather than simply representing the creation of a Chinese navy. In particular the British Government told Lay to ensure the Chinese did not misuse the navy, explaining why he created the tight line of authority. Lay believed that he represented the interests of both the Emperor and the British government in creating this navy and in ensuring that all orders for the fleet would come from the Emperor to him and thence to Osborn, crucial because it meant the fleet could not be commandeered by provincial governors and random officials for piracy and risky adventures. Lay believed that this arrangement had been approved by Lord Elgin and by Prince Gong, and did not seem to realize it was going to be a source of problems in the Chinese court because it gave Lay powers greater than Qing officials.

Some modern historians have suggested that Lay compounded his problems by assuming that he also had the right to refuse to transmit Imperial orders with which he disagreed, but it is hard to find evidence that he made such claims. In justifying his actions Lay emphasized the long period of support that the Chinese government provided to him while he created the navy, providing him with double his salary during his two years assembling the fleet in Britain in addition to £110,000 for the expenses.

In the *Morning Post* Hammond of the FO wrote tough rejoinders to Lay's account, imputing character flaws to Lay on the grounds of his resignation from the British consular service to work in the Chinese Customs, giving that as the reason Lay was clearly now unsuitable for any return to the British civil service. Lay responded with vigour, explaining that far from being a disloyal Briton, he had worked as a secret agent for the British even after he resigned from the British customs service in Canton to work for the Chinese government in Shanghai. He reported he was "consulted and employed" by both Sir Frederick and his brother Lord Elgin on behalf of British interests from 1857-1861 (Gerson, 1972). In the end it seems Lay's talents and skills were not sufficient to let him operate in a middle position between two empires.

Hannah's view of the situation, partly affected by her close family connection as Lay's mother-in-law, was that the dismantling of the Chinese navy "augurs badly for the dynasty... Mr. Lay's scheme was too perfect, too advanced". But Hannah also recognized the core flaw in Lay's plan: "we can scarcely conceive any nation allowing a foreigner to be the head of military affairs". Amid this huge uproar, Eliza Lay was soon expecting their first child. By 1864 Lay retired from the British diplomatic service and he and Eliza returned to the UK where he was called to the bar. In Britain he created a career in business and finance, and Eliza never returned to Hong Kong.

It is possible that Lay was subject to Sir Frederick's scepticism about the navy because of Lay's connection to James Legge, because Sir Frederick and his superior

Lord Russell were highly critical of the missions in China. A long article “Beijing diplomacy and Protestant mission” reprinted from *The Nonconformist* in the *Caledonian Mercury* in August 1863 reported letters from James Legge and Rev. Turner to *The Patriot* explaining how the use of violence in obtaining treaty rights for Europeans had created a huge barrier to the work of the missions. Legge’s letter was a response to the earlier letter Sir Frederick had written to his superior Lord Russell in which Sir Frederick tried to separate all British foreign policy from mission activities. The editor of the *Caledonian Mercury* commented that in addition to the basic problem that Legge described, “... to superadd to these gigantic impediments the cold scepticism, the adverse criticism, and the overt neglects and hindrances of British diplomacy, to see one man, and he an English official, standing between the missionaries” and their work, misrepresenting it in Britain, and declining to use his station to protect them even when the protection that was guaranteed by the treaty had created major problems for the missions in China. Sir Frederick was the man, and his critical view of mission work affected Lord Russell’s opinion in Britain, and was reflected back into the daily diplomacy with the Chinese imperial court, informing it that “Christianity in China “ is not a matter in which the British Government has an interest” (Author, 1863).

While a declaration of “no interest” was logical and acceptable, the newspaper writers feared that the message communicated to the Imperial government was an attitude of no sympathy, and this presented a danger to mission work. Further and in contrast, Sir Frederick’s brother Lord Elgin had carefully included wording in the treaty that explained that Christians both Protestant and Roman Catholic tried to teach the practise of virtue, and any persons teaching this in a peaceful manner were entitled to protection under the treaty. Legge was surely known to Sir Frederick, who may have decided to frustrate Lay’s plans out of a more general animosity to missions and people connected to them.

#### Major Charles Gordon, the Qing, Shanghai, and rebels: Legge’s views are criticized

Imperial politics and mission work also became entangled in the mission in Shanghai in the summer of 1863 where Dr. Hobson was working. He was faced with a stark political choice when a 30-year old British engineer and Major, Charles Gordon was seconded by the British Government to command an Imperial Army to help General Li Hongzhang fight against the local rebels. With Shanghai under imminent threat from nearby rebels that summer, Dr. Hobson agreed with a community resolution to form a defence force to protect both the foreign community and the Chinese settlement against

the Taiping rebels and local secret societies who took opportunistic actions during the conflicts.

As the forces of Gordon and General Li approached Suzhou in November, Gordon knew it would be best if the Imperial General were the officer to receive submission from the Taiping troops there, and offered to withdraw from the final engagement if General Li promised safe-conduct to the officers and troops of the Taiping garrison. General Li promised this and Gordon withdrew his forces to a camp a few miles away, then gradually learned that General Li had begun executing the officers who surrendered. Furious, Gordon rode back into the *melée*, tried to protect some of the rebel officers, then finally fled to save his own life. There was confusion in the reports as to how bloody the Imperial troops were in handling the Taiping rebels, with some reports of a terrible massacre.

The European community was outraged at General Li's breach of his promise to Gordon. British General Brown visited the Futai, a Qing provincial governor, and told him that all foreigners viewed the actions of General Li with horror and indignation, and that the massacres would affect relations with all the foreign powers. This news upset the Futai, and further incidents of failed promises and more bloodshed complicated foreign relations all December and into the new year. The *China Mail* early in December joined in the general fury, but soon reported that the executions had not been as bloody as originally reported. The editor then used this information about the events at Suzhou to scorn Legge for his views on maintaining neutrality when dealing with Chinese forces on both sides that did not have traditions of honour. The editor sarcastically commented on Legge's "prophecy" that nothing good could come from a British alliance, and warned "those who esteem Dr. Legge and attach weight to what he says, among which club we reckon ourselves, to see how far his language is profitable for correction or rebuke".

Legge's apparent crime was to have described extreme bloodshed by both sides in the civil war and thus to conclude that only more bloodshed would come of supporting either the rebel or Imperial forces. The editor believed that General Li had not been nearly as bloody as initially reported and this justified British troops joining in on the Imperial side, especially as British troops helped save Shanghai. This fresh attack on Legge in the very public forum of the main newspaper, hoisted rather artificially onto a comment on the Taiping rebellion, is rather puzzling because in other ways Legge was now recognized as a force for the general good in the entire community.

#### Building a larger Union Church on Staunton Street , and two new Chinese chapels

In 1863 the congregation at the Union Chapel was struggling with a dilapidated building and increased membership, so decided to build a larger new church rather than



do piece-work repairs and still have inadequate room. The trustees sold the old building and land for \$20,000 by early summer and bought the St. Andrew's School property at Staunton Street for \$10,000, with the balance to be used to build the new church. It soon appeared that more money was needed so Legge set out on a vigorous campaign to raise money, and by the end of the year he had collected another \$10,000 for the building, including a modest \$500 from Jardine Matheson. In the end the campaign yielded \$23,100. The *China Mail* editor approved of these plans and even urged the government to provide a substantial donation to the project, pointing out that the old church building had been "mostly taken over" by soldiers and sailors because Legge had provided "liberal accommodation to the men of H. M. Army and Navy". The usually critical editor even congratulated the Union Church for the "quiet unpretending manner" in which they went about this business. The design included a Gothic spire that was widely admired, and the building was constructed across 1864 to hold a congregation of 400, for a final cost of \$32,000. An old photograph of it shows it to be a large handsome Gothic structure, no longer a simple "Chapel". It was destroyed in the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong in WW II.

The new building plans included an adjacent house for the minister because Legge's own connection with the church also changed. He wanted the congregation to stand on its own, and told the congregation that summer that he wanted them to find a minister to replace him with its own minister, rather than borrowing services of a missionary. He reminded the congregation of its history, founded by the LMS to be non-denominational, but now in a position to decide for itself any question of denominational connection.

Late in the summer of 1863 there were sudden legal complications concerning the ownership of the church building, arising from the original 1844 document creating the first Union Church. Legge had to figure out all the legal issues, and wrote the congregation a document describing the details of the problem and the need for the LMS to create different wording for the new project. These complications continued late into the year and seemed intractable, so on the advice of the Attorney General and with the approval of the surviving original Trustees, Legge bought the new land under his own name. He used the money that had been realized from the sale of the old property plus the contributions raised from the community. He then had to create a new Deed of Trust with wording that specified the LMS interest in the property. He explained all this in a printed document distributed to the congregation and sent to Secretary Tidman in London for LMS approval.

This problem was a late legacy from the rather loose property-owning arrangements that had created problems earlier in the LMS missions, including the mess that Legge had faced in Malacca in 1840 after Evans' death. Left without clear business guidance the young men sent out to missions often had only a sketchy training in the business and legal matters that they had to manage when required to deal in property, and confusions, errors, and even some fraud littered this history.

In November Union Church offered the position of minister to Legge, at twice the salary he was receiving from the LMS. He refused, explaining that he had come to China to be a missionary to the Chinese, not a minister to an English church.

Two new Chapels had been completed for the Chinese congregations, opened in the spring of 1863, handsome structures whose debts were almost completely repaid. They had the capacity to hold congregations of 150 and 200 members, and were served by a preacher and a teacher. Legge and Pastor Ho were holding 12 Chinese services each week.

Legge continued his visits to prisoners, now a more exhausting endeavour because the most interested prisoners were those with long sentences and they had all been moved out to Stonecutter's island for the summer, a location that took Legge three hours to reach. He refused to "abandon these children of crime" and persisted with these arduous weekly visits. Despite all this activity he was apologetic that the mission had still gained so few converts. The earliest Chinese Christians baptized by Robert Morrison decades earlier were all dying off now, old Keuh Agong the only survivor. In his late 70s he had retired to his native village, where Legge sent him a small pension.

The new preacher and teacher for the new Chinese chapels were going to be paid out of interest the Union Church was going to be earning on the proceeds from the sale of its old property. Legge was able to create a mortgage of this money that would generate income for the church of 10% per annum.

Another old LMS property was being terminated. In July the LMS approved Dr. Lockhart's proposal to sell the LMS chapel and property in Singapore after years of neglect, and it sent the Power of Attorney to Legge to hold waiting for Lockhart to stop by Hong Kong en route from Beijing to Singapore, due to return to Britain in 1864.

Legge took on a new role in the colony by accepting the position of Examiner in 1863 for the first batch of government clerks, British Civil Service Cadets training in Chinese as preparation for their work for the government. Legge examined these cadets for a few years, after which others took on the task (Bickley, 2001).

Late in the year Legge was still eager to relinquish his job as minister to the Union Church and spend all his time working as a missionary to the Chinese. He knew that he

could not take on the enlarged work of the new Union Church and recommended that the church hire his nephew also named James Legge, son of Legge's brother John, for a salary of £300 in addition to the £125 that the Union Church had paid to James. The congregation agreed with this recommendation and Legge looked forward to welcoming his nephew in late 1864, but this never happened, possibly because of tuberculosis which affected a number of Legge's talented cousins and nephews.

In the spring of 1863 Legge received an offer of help with the Hong Kong mission from a mission doctor working in Ningbo near Shanghai. Rev. Daniel MacGowan (1815-1893) was a man of Legge's age, whose wife could no longer tolerate the temperature extremes there, making a move necessary. They really wanted to move to Xiamen rather than Hong Kong, but the LMS pressured Legge to accept them into his mission. He was reluctant to accept the plan because there was currently no room for another family in the buildings. Half of the mission house and home for the staff was currently under construction and when that was finished the other half would be under major repairs. Legge wrote the LMS explaining this and warning that renting in Hong Kong had become very expensive. He also argued it would be better to send out a younger family who could spend a few years mastering the language and building up the mission work before they had the problem of children. He worried that the LMS would decide not to send him a new young mission man if Dr. MacGowan moved to Hong Kong. In the end the MacGowans moved to Xiamen joining the Stronachs, without consulting the LMS. During his time in Ningbo MacGowan had shown some technical skills, trying to create a device for sending Chinese characters by telegraph, an interesting technical challenge that took some time for westerners, then Chinese to solve.

Legge was relieved to know that the MacGowans' situation was resolved in a way that did not impair the Hong Kong mission but was quite annoyed at the LMS for still failing to send him help. He wrote "The LMS is culpable for leaving me here alone for so long – I have never whined or complained to anyone; but it is not I alone who have "begged"" and made "urgent representations" to strengthen the station. He knew that both Lockhart and Chalmers had urged the LMS to provide another man to help Legge, and he could himself see full work for three men, one for Union Church, and two for the Chinese mission work. For the first time he acknowledged that his translation work was taking energy from his mission work: "Unless I should give up my work on the Chinese Classics... (which, God willing) I shall not do – the Chinese church and congregations cannot be attended to the way they should be."

While the MacGowans were content with their move to Xiamen, LMS secretary Tidman was furious that the men of the China mission made these arrangements

contrary to his wishes, and wrote a tough letter to Legge in December disputing the reasons he had argued. Tidman complained that surely by now the Hong Kong mission house was now repaired enough to provide for another mission family, and this was exactly what London wished to happen, as a means of providing Legge with the help he sought. Tidman charged “In fact, your refusal to accept MacGowan is not consistent with the way you characterise the conduct of the Directors. Even if you had proof of the culpability of the Directors in neglecting... Hong Kong – it was not “in good taste” to include that charge in your letter to the young missionary”. Tidman scolded Legge at length, then listed all the other China stations where illnesses and deaths had left mission work short-staffed. He ended in a marginally conciliatory way, acknowledging that the Directors were “painfully” aware of Legge’s needs. The question was not if they would send him help, but when that might be possible.

#### LMS press makes valuable sales to Chinese officials

Legge was pleased that his mission had received a superior new printing press in 1863. While it was not making as many type sales as in past years, he reported one that was exceptionally interesting. The son of the Governor of Canton province visited him in February and watched the printing process. He was so enthralled with the high quality of the Chinese text that he bought a whole set of the large Chinese fonts. Legge explained to him that these moveable metal fonts would need to be used on a “foreign” press, but the official insisted they could be done the way woodcuts were, with brush and Chinese ink. “He will find himself disappointed. I hope he doesn’t blame it on the idea of moveable metal types”. At the same time Legge was pleased with this example of Chinese officials beginning to take an active interest in foreign ideas and methods. He thought this indirect effect of mission work had “wide and beneficial effects”. An even more prestigious client was a member of the Hanlin Academy in Beijing, the equivalent of Oxford in its scholarly role in the life of the country. He bought a set of matrices for Chinese fonts so that they could create their own type.

#### Legge proposes a public library system

In the spring of 1863 Legge became active in plans to create a public library in Hong Kong, combining resources from smaller private libraries. After the bankruptcy of the MES in 1846 and its revival in 1853, it was no longer running schools. In 1863 Legge was the President, with new Central School Headmaster Frederick Stewart its Secretary. In its original move to Hong Kong the MES had brought its library of 3,800 books, but these were all falling apart with damage from the tropical problems of high humidity and bookworms.

In February 1863 Legge recommended the creation of a free public library in Hong Kong, with its core to be a reference library rather than a circulating library. It would specialize in books about China. He recommended that the MES donate its holdings from its own two small libraries (one from the defunct China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, and one a larger “Morrison Library”), to a new public and government entity. In May Legge and two other members formally submitted this proposal to the MES. They recommended that the government select a place and provide some support to establish it as a functioning public library.

In mid-June the *China Mail* editor found out about this proposal and wrote sarcastically that the books proposed for this gift were all in terrible condition, reminded readers of the need for many other public donations to operate the Sailors Home, the clock tower, and the City Hall, and hinted that many of the 3,000 books needing re-binding would prove to be useless “if inspected by members of the public”. The editorial criticized the proposed budget of \$5,000 initial and \$2,000 p.a. operating as “gigantic”, and hinted that such a scheme was really just a boondoggle to rescue the MES’s “decaying collection”. Legge however had started an idea that eventually bore fruit in a public library that has now become a vast modern system.

Chapter 52 Legge hires fugitive scholar Wang Tao

*In which a talented scholar flees from the Qing and Legge provides refuge and a job as research assistant.*

After Legge published the first two volumes of the classics, as he was working on volume III, the classic Book of History known as *Records of the Grand Historian* (*shujing*) written by Sima Qian in 91 BC, he had an unexpected opportunity to hire a talented Chinese intellectual as an assistant. Legge had never worked entirely on his own on the *Chinese Classics*, but his first assistance from a fairly well-educated Chinese (his pastor and friend Ho Tsunshin starting in Malacca), had not been a complete success because of Ho's somewhat limited education in Chinese literature. Legge's work on volume III was going rather slowly, and he struggled with it, explaining that the work "is swelling to larger dimensions, and I hardly yet see when it will be off my hands". Starting in October 1862 Legge received unexpected help with this massive project.

Wang Tao (1828-1897) was 13 years junior to Legge, and combined a colourful past with great intellectual gifts. Now a 34-year old bohemian scholar, he was fleeing persecution from the Qing government in Shanghai. Born in Suzhou, Wang had passed the first level of the Imperial civil service examinations (the prefectural level) with distinction when he was 17 in 1845, but he failed the next level, the provincial (*juren*) examination in Nanjing, where as a poor student he lived in the "gay quarter" where there were diversions of music and "sing-song" girls. At some point he joined the Taiping rebellion and took the Taiping civil service examinations after they had established a conventional bureaucracy in Nanjing (Lee, 1981). This time he passed with high honours, with the title of the third degree, *chuang-yuan*. Three years later he moved to Shanghai with his father and began working for the Shanghai LMS Press, helping Medhurst with printing and the various mission translations including the Delegates Version of the Bible. Wang was thrilled to meet British men who spoke fluent Chinese, loved the "charming" piano music played by Medhurst's daughters, and was impressed by the cleanliness and order he saw in the printing office with its ox-power press.

During his fourteen years in Shanghai (1849-1862) Wang became ill with tuberculosis then recovered and was baptized as a Christian, became a teacher with the LMS, and worked with the mission press as co-translator of many Western books into Chinese. These went beyond religious topics and included books on science and technology because his interests were wide. In the course of this work he developed a reputation as a fine scholar in the two languages despite his lack of official *literati*

status. When Wang's father died in 1849 Medhurst offered his job as editor for Chinese publications to young Wang and he accepted. Within a year he brought his wife and young daughter to live with him, although his wife soon died.

In Shanghai Wang became friends with Gong Cheng (Xiaogong), a colourful older scholar who shared Wang's enjoyment of drink and late-night talk. Gong was an expert archer in the Manchu style who had gone north to Tianjin with the Allied fleet in 1860 and was scorned for this when he returned to Shanghai. Local stories claimed he was the man who recommended burning the old Summer Palace out of personal revenge against the Manchus for having poisoned his father in a quarrel over a Manchu woman famous as a poet. In time Gong became poor, aggressive, and mad. With Gong, Wang certainly had worldly companionship.

After twelve years in Shanghai Wang returned to his native village in the interior. While he was there the Taiping rebels held his village, and when they were driven out by Qing troops in early 1862 the rebels left behind a document advising them how to conquer Shanghai. The Imperial forces believed Wang had written this and the magistrate sent out an arrest warrant for this treason, for which the sentence was death by decapitation. Wang needed to flee his despotic motherland for protection, for he denied to the end of his life that he had written the document although some modern scholars believe he probably did (Cohen, 1974), (Lee, 1986).

Medhurst recommended that Wang be taken into sanctuary and sent to Hong Kong for safety because of his known good character and the vicious possibility of decapitation. Medhurst's son Walter (1822-1885) was the British Consul in Shanghai and had known Wang for 14 years. Consul Medhurst agreed Wang was of good character and decided to shelter him in the Police office in the British concession, where he was kept in sanctuary for four months despite tremendous pressure from the Qing government. Wang's behaviour in fleeing to British protection in the "foreign concession" was considered especially provocative by the dynasty, and his case was discussed in Beijing by high court and British officials (Sinn, 1998).

Modern research into Qing documents suggests that Wang was eventually offered a deal by the dynasty. Prince Gong suggested that if Wang would repent the seized letter and the even more ignoble behaviour of seeking protection from foreigners, and would agree to spy on the Taiping rebels for the dynasty, the charges and the death sentence would be averted (Vittinghoff, 1998). Wang was apparently unwilling to make this deal so Consul Medhurst dressed him in a disguise, put him on a boat to flee to the safety of Hong Kong late in 1862, and he arrived on October 11.

Wang arrived penniless and worried about his sick mother. He knew no one in Hong Kong but the mission men had arranged for him to meet Legge. Wang was a Christian who felt guilty about his frequent backsliding, but he was also rationalist, a sceptic, and a very well-educated scholar. Legge must have been impressed from the outset, for he invited Wang to teach in the ACC on Hollywood Road and he provided Wang with food and housing there. In addition Legge invited Wang to work for him assisting in his translation work on volume III, offering to pay him \$20 Hong Kong per month for this work, and Wang joined Legge in this work.

Legge was explicit in acknowledging Wang's help in his Introduction to volume III. He wrote "This scholar, far excelling in classical lore any of his countrymen whom the author had previously known, came to Hong Kong in the end of 1863<sup>38</sup> and placed at (my) disposal all the treasures of a large and well-selected library. At the same time, entering with spirit into his labours, now explaining, now arguing, as the case might be, he has not only helped but also enlivened many a day of toil". One of Wang's major roles was the collection of various ancient commentaries and discussing their arguments with Legge.

Until Legge's permanent departure from Hong Kong in 1873 Wang prepared additional compilations of Chinese commentaries as information for Legge to use in his later work for volume IV the *Book of Poetry* (1871), volume V the *Spring and Autumn Annals* (1872), and for the *Book of Rites* later printed as part of Max Müller's major series *Sacred Books of the East*, 1885. Legge acknowledged Wang's help in each publication. Although Wang prepared a brief manuscript of divinations in the *Yijing* (popularly known today in the West as the *I Ching*), there is no evidence Legge ever used these, and in fact Legge's whole approach to that work shifted away from divination toward history as he worked on it at Oxford long after he left Hong Kong (Lee, 1986).

Wang must have been a difficult guest and employee when he first arrived in Hong Kong for he found everything about the southern Chinese there very irritating. In common with other educated northern Chinese he considered himself quite superior to southerners. He found the Cantonese language incomprehensible and relied on Legge to help him learn it. He looked with condescension on the local Chinese, whom he considered to be rustic (Sinn, 1998). He criticized their language, customs, food, and their intensely commercial behaviour. He had the arrogance of the scholar-officials even though he had not made an entire success of his own attempt to become one of them.

---

<sup>38</sup> This date was an error of memory as it was actually October 1862.



Despite his mission connections he had come from a worldly urban and bohemian life in Shanghai where he had enjoyed the friendship of drinking buddies who wrote poetry and visited brothels (Sinn, 1998) when not talking about how to reform China.

Perhaps because Wang was so alienated from the southern Chinese in Hong Kong he quickly established a very productive friendship with Legge. He also formed a friendship with the LMS printer Huang Shing, who spoke mandarin rather than just the local Cantonese dialect that Wang found so rough. This friendship turned into a productive scholarly and commercial partnership, and they eventually wrote and published reformist and technology books together long after Legge had retired from Hong Kong. Wang founded the first Chinese-owned newspaper the *Xunhuan Ribao* in 1874, and he is now regarded as the first Chinese internationalist, eager to help reform China based on the things he had seen in his eventual travels to and from Legge in Scotland (Lu, 2003). He urged China not to simply collect western technology as the means of helping China, but instead to collect men of abilities, help them to improve, and to improve governance. He criticized Chinese for incorrect beliefs such as their conviction that Western mathematics and astronomy came from China, and explained the facts (Cohen, 1967). In his later years he came to understand that westerners used military force mainly to expand trade, and that commerce (“wealth and power”) through reform and without the necessity of major military strength, could be the means of creating a strong national identity for China.

Legge and Wang shared a love of scholarship and a common goal of creating meaningful texts in the translations, and their partnership persisted across many years, during which Wang became a major public intellectual figure in Hong Kong. After a lifetime of excitement and productivity he returned to Shanghai after the Qing dynasty had become used to the idea of Chinese seeking sanctuary with foreigners and no longer sought his detention. He ended his days there as an opium user. As late as 1896 he wrote to Legge in Oxford: “I miss you and I have not a moment when I forget you” (T. Wang, 1886).

#### The Classics: Scholarly reviews of volumes I and II 1864

Legge was considerably surprised and pleased when the tough *China Mail* wrote its first scholarly review of his first two volumes of the Classics in May 1864, with high compliments. The essay alerted readers to the approaching publication of volume III, and commented on the content of the texts relating to Confucius and Mencius.

“Every page of (the works) contains maxims and aphorisms worth of being written in letters of gold”. The critic praised Jardine for his foresight in paying the publication

costs, “a better means of immortalizing himself could not have been found”, for although “the expense of assisting Dr. Legge in the production of these translations must have been considerable; but China merchants can not only afford to indulge in these “freaks” but are absolutely bound to assist litterateurs who are prepared to do honest and useful work in China”. The reviewer suspected that the sales had not recovered the expenses of printing them, and predicted “a hundred years hence Legge’s translation of the CC will be obtainable only at an enormous premium”. The writer concluded by urging all readers to buy the first two volumes for their wisdom, adding that “as a specimen of good translation there is every reason to believe that the work is unsurpassed”, and the “sense of the text appears to have been given with great intelligence and faithfulness”.

The Book of History, (*shujing*), volume III of the Classics, Pts. 1 and 2, 1865

Legge and Wang worked across 1862 -1865 on volume III the *Book of History*, named the *Shoo King* by Legge. Legge provided Robert Jardine with an outline of the contents of volume III and volume IV (the *Book of Poetry*), worried that this work was more difficult than the first volumes, involving a more complex literature of interpretations. He thanked Robert for his “kindness in continuing the generous assistance which your brother afforded to me”.

Legge began printing volume III in March 1863 but mission problems disrupted this for two years, and he returned to printing in May 1865, starting with the first sheets of the “bamboo annals”. These annals were documents about very ancient history in a section that preceded the main sections of the classic Book of History. The compositors at the LMS Press were struggling with the Bamboo Annals because Legge wanted it done in a new style in which the Chinese text was printed mostly using his small font, with the large font used occasionally for headings. Publication of volume III was completed in two tomes in July 1865, labelled volume III Parts 1 and 2 to indicate they were parts of the whole Book of History, rather than independent works. In later editions they were bound together as volume III.

In his introduction Legge thanked Wang Tao for his help and for the use of his wonderful personal library. He immediately sent the books as a gift to his friend Sir Harry Parkes, knighted in 1862 and now in Shanghai. In November Legge wrote advising the LMS Foreign Secretary Tidman that he would soon receive two copies of both books from the London publishers Jackson, Walford & Hodder, who were binding the books. One set was for Secretary Tidman’s wife, and the other was to be placed in the LMS library. Robert Hart, Inspector-General of the Chinese Customs in Shanghai since Horatio Nelson Lay’s firing in 1863, promised to buy 50 sets of the Classics, writing he

hoped “the author’s health and inclination may enable him to complete a work which does so much credit to the Chinese scholarship of the day”. It seemed that Lay’s behaviour had not alienated an important member of the British elite in China from James Legge.

Later that year Legge also sent a set of volume III to Robert Jardine in England, his benefactor for the costs of publishing and now the head of Jardine, Matheson & Co. In his letter to Jardine Legge explained that as his collection of research material had expanded into a large mass of material with more information, he had begun to learn that some of his earlier translations had to be revised and these on-going changes took time.

Legge provided Jardine with an accounting of how his grant money had been used. Legge had asked Jardine’s agent Mr. Whittall to provide a list of all the money sent by the Jardines to Legge since 1858, which amounted to £9,365.25. Legge knew this was a very substantial sum and explained how he had managed it. When he was preparing to print volume I in 1857 he had prepared a short specimen of the work for Mr. Dixon of Shortrede & Co. of Hong Kong, asking Dixon to estimate the total printing costs. Dixon replied that the printing work would cost \$4.00 per volume for 1,000 copies, not counting the binding costs. But Dixon was a helpful man who candidly told Legge that if he did the printing on the LMS press, the costs of paper, ink and printing would be only half that. Legge provided all this information to his original benefactor Joseph Jardine, and they calculated that if eight volumes were needed the print costs would be \$32,000, rising to \$40,000 if ten volumes were needed. They decided it was better to halve those costs by printing the works on the LMS press, and that had been done.

Legge further explained he had purchased the English type he needed during his 1858 visit to Britain and had started printing in Hong Kong in 1860. As of November 1865 he had now completed the printing of four volumes and the costs were close to expectations. Legge estimated that when the printing of the two tomes comprising volume III was finished he would still have \$2,300 worth of paper, and he had already drawn out money from the Jardine account to pay for the binding of volume III.

Legge expressed regret that he still had to draw on the Jardine’s grant account, explaining his original expectation that if he were able to sell all the copies of the first half of the 7-volume series, he would be able to cover the costs of the remaining half out of his own accounts. He still hoped that might be the case, but explained that despite very favourable reviews in France, sales in England and Europe had “not been great”. Noting that the “literary public has not yet laid hold of it as I wish it would do”, Legge was pressing his binder/publisher in London to publicize the latest volume more

energetically. In conclusion Legge thanked his second Jardine benefactor with eloquence, ending by congratulating him on his recent election to Parliament, hoping that Jardine's experience of parliamentary life was satisfying.

The first scholarly review of the Book of History, volume III of the Classics

Once the two parts of the Book of History were published, the *China Mail* reviewed Legge's work in December 1865. Compared to the *China Mail's* initial desultory and even combative comments on his volumes I and II, this review actually paid attention to Legge's scholarship and commented on the critical analysis of the texts that Legge provided in the Prolegomena and Notes.

The reviewer recognized that Legge was the first scholar ever to evaluate the traditional claims regarding this famous text, the first to try and sort out myth from more probable statements concerning authorship, authenticity and dating. In adopting this approach to the text, critically examining evidence both within the documents and external to them in other historical documents, Legge was creating an entirely new and scientific way of presenting these classic texts to the world. The reviewer was so impressed with Legge's analysis in his Prolegomena that he compared it favourably with the classic writings of Barthold Niebuhr (1776-1831) on Roman history. The reviewer concluded that because of Legge's exhaustive examination and evaluation of the historical and literary material "we may tread firmly and with safety on the ground of this early history of China".

Chapter 53 Family life, Union Church problems, voyage up West River, ship disasters

*In which the family thrives but severe illness and poverty intrude, there are problems in Union Church, Legge does a voyage up West River, and ship disasters affect friends and the Classics.*

During his work on the Book of History 1863-65 Legge was still responsible for family and mission life. In 1864 his household consisted of three young children, Edith now four, Jamie three, and Tom one. Marian was living in England with Hannah's brother Tom, and the two older daughters were married. Eliza and her husband Horatio Nelson Lay left Shanghai for England early in 1864 after the debacle of the Lay-Osborn flotilla. Young Edie was more fluent in her mother tongue, pidgin, than in English. She often dictated to Hannah as she wrote letters back to Marian, and all Edie's dictations were in pidgin. "Tell Marian, tell all that little girl come play my". Hannah was amused by this, and reported the sentences unbowdlerized.

In a February letter to his sister-in-law Betsey, Legge was convinced that Horatio Lay was going to receive official honours for his work with the flotilla, apparently unaware of the extent to which Lay's reputation had suffered. Legge was convinced that of all foreigners, Horatio was "the most able and willing to do (the Chinese government) good service". In the weeks he and Eliza spent with the Legges in Hong Kong before leaving for the UK, James was impressed with how well Horatio looked, although "I was not satisfied with Eliza's appearance". He wrote happily of each of his young children, all thriving in different ways, Jamie had a "fine free easy way with him, which will make him a favourite as he grows up", and Tom was "trotting about and is as happy as his little being can be".

Governor Sir Hercules Robinson was urging Legge to write another public letter on Chinese policy, but he had been "burned" before as a result of the letter in which he had criticized Sir Frederick Bruce, and he was not inclined to make himself a target again.

The mission financial situation was better than in previous years now that the LMS was providing money to pay for mission hospitality costs, and Legge hoped to generate additional income when volume III was published in two parts later in the year, accurately expecting each to consist of between 400 and 500 pages. He also expected volume III "to make more of a stir" than the first two volumes, but was not troubled by this any more than by "Dr. Tidman's being somehow disposed to give me the cool shoulder". LMS Foreign Secretary Tidman was not content with Legge's scholarly work, and still regularly sniped at him in his supervisory letters.

Illness and poverty in the missions 1864

Members of both the Hong Kong and Canton missions continued to struggle with illness that created financial problems. In Canton Rev. Turner's wife became so ill she was ordered back to England by the doctors but was too frail to take her two children, so Turner had to accompany her. As the costs of the trip were not considered to be LMS expenses, Turner used his salary for the duration of his voyage back to England to pay the costs of the passage for his wife, a Chinese servant, one child, and himself, totalling £180, on a clipper that was expected to take 120 days. He fretted about the LMS requiring him to spend his time in England giving lots of speeches when what he really needed to do to help the mission was to spend the time improving his Chinese.

Turner urged the LMS to send a replacement to Canton and also someone to help Legge in Hong Kong. He pointed out that Legge alone was running a mission for 100,000 Chinese, and his health problems in attempting to do this were "alarming". "Even his unusual energy and strong constitution are much over-taxed", and all the local mission men were "surprised" that Legge was left alone to provide services to such a vast population.

Chalmers now alone in Canton, was also ill most of April. His doctors recommended a trip north to the cooler climate of Xiamen, but with Turner gone from the mission Chalmers could not afford the time away. He recovered when cooler weather returned and never did make the trip. A small committee now supervised the LMS hospital in Canton, but it was rather lethargic and Chalmers was not optimistic that it would last.

In Hong Kong Hannah was pregnant across the stifling summer of 1864. Although she had been free of her debilitating headaches for three months early in the year, these returned in the spring and made the summer heat extremely difficult for her across her late pregnancy and delivery of daughter Anna Georgina on 4 September. Across the year she was in ill health for increasing periods of time. She was even forced to leave a wonderful dinner party where she had been entranced by the gowns of the other women (one "dressed in a superb cerise damask satin dress with black lace trimmings and headdress to match"), because her migraine had become impossible.

Across his first two decades in Hong Kong Legge's intense work schedule began to affect his health. He still rose at 3 AM and worked five hours on his Chinese Classics before the family breakfast, then spent all his day and evening hours teaching, doing congregational work for the mission, and overseeing the operations of the LMS Press. In June he again complained of problems with boils, "the great plague of life in China". His killing work pace increasingly affected his health, but he remained completely

obsessed with accomplishing the tasks he considered necessary and refused to stop working. By July he reported “My overburdened shoulders cry out for the prospect at least, of relief, and certain sensations in the liver, which I have not felt since 1844 and 45, enforce the cry”.

In addition, from early 1863 James suffered increasingly serious visual problems to the point that he was nearly blind by October 1864 and Hannah feared he would become permanently blind. These visual problems may well have arisen from the high doses of quinine that he was taking against the “Hong Kong fever” from which he frequently suffered. In addition he was losing his voice from a heavy schedule of public speaking, and by the end of the year he had to confess that his work for the mission had suffered because of his frequent attacks of illness. He attached a medical report from Dr. Kane for the LMS, listing phlebitis in his leg and repeated attacks of “intermittent fever”, and stressing that Legge needed a change to a cooler climate or “your health will fail altogether”. These illnesses had also hampered his work on volume III, but Legge was not as worried about his own health as he was about Hannah's serious problems, and he argued that he needed to take her north to a cooler climate before the summer heat set in.

When a chance came for Legge to go into the mainland for a four-week holiday with some friends in November 1864, Hannah was tremendously relieved because by then she understood that the enforced rest of such a voyage would be the only way in which James could be deflected from his work.

#### 1864 Mission, ACC, Union Church, and LMS Press

Legge worked as the Principal and as a teacher at the ACC in Hong Kong for more than twenty years, but he retired from his role as Principal in 1864 when he left it to help create the Hong Kong public school system. His departure from the ACC led to a crisis through lack of an effective successor, and for a while it ceased to operate, its operations and history eventually recreated in a modern Hong Kong middle school under its Chinese name, the Ying Wa (Ying Hua, or English-language) College.

The plan to sell the old Union Church property in order to buy land elsewhere for a new bigger church had stalled for a long time because London failed to send Legge the Power of Attorney he needed to make the sale even two months into 1864. The core problem was that the existing documents did not make it clear whether the property was owned by trustees of the church, or by the LMS. Finally Legge received word in April that the LMS would be giving him authority, although the documents were still to come. Legge had sent many documents to the Directors in London including printed texts he

had created for the use of the congregation, and he complained of “all the anxiety and troubles” this documentation had caused him, even with great help from members of the church. Finally in May Tidman sent him a letter of explanation. The LMS lawyers, in a lawyerly excess of caution, had decided that the Power of Attorney agreeing to the sale of the old land had to be signed not only by the current Trustees of the Hong Kong property, but by all the survivors of any trustee who had any connection to the property. The Directors were hunting down the old trustees and the heirs of the dead for these signatures. Tidman commented archly that it had taken him a lot of trouble and effort to get all the signatures needed to give Legge Power of Attorney.

The Power of Attorney finally reached Legge in July, but the LMS failed to supply the Trust Deed to him that was needed for the new church. Equally vexing, Tidman coolly informed Legge that he would have to pay the LMS solicitors' bill of £32! He reminded Legge that once the lease from the Crown was signed conveying the new church site to him, he must send this original document to London. Once all the property dealings were concluded Legge intended to work afresh on the search for a new minister for the church. In his annual accounts for 1864 Legge reported that the mission account had loaned out \$14,750 in mortgages, earning \$1,500 in interest on the loans.

In June Legge wrote the *Missionary Magazine* describing the two new Chinese chapels that he had established, for which he now ran 12 services in Chinese each week. He felt guilty that converts had still been very slow to develop, with a baptized congregation of only 78 of which 1/3 were women. Some of the recent converts had been prisoners he had been seeing in his visits to the jail. He was still incensed that the Chinese government had done nothing to redress the 1861 harms to Che and his congregation, but the Chinese Christians had returned to Che's region and had money to build two small chapels in villages near Boluo that were opened in February 1864.

The mission Press was busy but Legge had to take on major duties there when printer Huang Shing left in August to move to Shanghai to become an English teacher in the Chinese Government School. Still, “We parted in mutual affection and esteem”. Legge warned London that they would soon be getting a bill for a ton of type metal and some English type from Edinburgh, for use in the Hong Kong press.

#### Holiday Voyage on the West River November 1864

Late in 1864 Legge was persuaded by Hannah and some friends to go on a holiday voyage up the West River (Xi Jiang), to give him a break from his exhausting schedule. This vast river enters the sea just to the west of the peninsula of Macau, coming nearly 2,000 km from hinterlands high in the west and south of Canton. The party of friends



included Drs. Kane and Palmer, merchant James Banks Taylor, Mr. Bradley, and Legge's secretary Tsang, a member of his congregation whose home village was on the river.

They first went up the Pearl River to Canton, where they hired a luxurious "Tsze-tung" houseboat. Chalmers saw them off, teasing that one doctor was notably stout and the other a wit, while "the Doctor Divine" (Legge) lugged along reference books and notes for his work, and their fourth friend ensured everyone's comforts. Although Hannah's hope was that this trip would allow James to recover his eyesight with its enforced isolation, in fact he took a hefty supply of work with him, material for the Prolegomena for volume III.

Their boat was fitted with ebony furniture, carved woodwork, embroideries, and 20 lamps hanging from the ceiling of the main saloon, similar to the roomy Victorian houseboats that have provided holiday pleasure to visitors to Lake Dal in Kashmir over the past century. The crew consisted of the Chinese skipper and his family (wife, son, two daughters) and six men who rowed, tracked, and pulled the boat depending on the state of the river. The boat frequently came to ground on unexpected sandbanks or shallows. The route was demanding, for they had to work their way westerly from one major river system through small cross creeks and canals, to get to the next one. The job of the captain's wife was to scream directions to the crew and light joss sticks when troubles developed, while one daughter's job was to ensure the on-board shrine was well tended, and that candles, incense, and gilt paper were kept in good supply.

After a few days they reached the West River and anchored so that they could climb a beautiful mountain (Ting-hoo, Dinghu now) and visit a huge waterfall and lake to stay in a Buddhist monastery overnight. There they followed the strict vegetarian rule although they were allowed to open some of their tinned food. Legge was eager to see the library, but after frequent requests and vague delays by the monks, a little boy told him "no one reads books here". The monks seemed to be quite lack-lustre, with visible physical and apparent mental disorders, and they lived in great squalor. Their only redeeming feature was their skilled gardening. On the downward hike the friends talked with girls working in the fields and were told of their miserably hard life, while in a high mountain village the people were notably bright, healthy, and energetic. At one point they climbed to abandoned temples in a region with limestone rocks in which remarkable grottoes formed.

The only priest in all the abandoned temples had an unusually shrewd and worldly expression on his face. In discussion with them he explained that he had been a prominent rebel then leader of bandits, who had been offered a choice between

execution or priesthood when he was captured. Friendly gentry who liked him “as a good fellow”, had brokered the deal, and he had lived quietly as a priest for the past 10 years. One man in a small Christian mission recognized and saluted Legge as being the righteous man who had refused money from the rebels, referring to the events of 1859 and Rengan’s offer of money. In a Daoist temple downstream they encountered an old man whose astonishing fingernails varied from five to seven inches in length. At times locals came to their boat for medical care, which the doctors readily provided as they had brought their medical bags. The men thrilled at discovering the 200-foot waterfall, and went swimming in the clear mountain streams. Kane and Legge both suffered a long fall into a gully in a maze of creeks, but without serious harm and to the laughter of their friends and onlookers.

By the end of a month the trip was completed by a somewhat circular route back through small creeks to Canton, and the travellers headed back south to Hong Kong. Legge was invigorated from this three-week trip and in 1866 he published an account of it using a local printer, its sales proceeds to be given to “charitable objects”.

#### Continuing health problems, a visit to cooler Japan provides a fresh view of Asia

While the mission across 1865 struggled with problems at Union Church and with Tidman, and while Legge worked long hours to get volume III published, both James and Hannah continued to suffer many serious health problems. By May Hannah was so ill from the heat and severe migraines that James sent her and the children Edie and Jamie to Shanghai for the sea voyage and cooler weather. There she became so much worse by early June that he decided to send her and two children farther north to Japan for relief, planning to join them there in Nagasaki in July. Baby Anna stayed with James in Hong Kong and he wrote of her playful life and spirits on the morning of his final visit to the convicts. Unfortunately in mid-July Legge himself became prostrated with severe fever for 10 days but he was even more worried about Hannah, still determined to join her for a three-month break. He left for Japan on July 12 and reached her on 25 July. They moved to Yokohama where Hannah and the children stayed for six weeks while James went on a trip to the most northerly port open to foreigners.

Japan had been forcibly “opened” to the outside world by American Commodore Perry in armed skirmishes beginning in July 1853, and many groups within Japan were still very opposed to this opening. At the time of the Legges’ trip Japan was under shogun rule, and in 1863 the Shogunate had issued an “Order to expel barbarians” after an English merchant Charles Richardson had been murdered in the notorious “Namamugi Incident” in August 1862 by a party of samurai from Satsuma, in a confused

incident apparently arising from linguistic incomprehension and arrogance by both parties. The British responded by demanding reparations and bombarding Kagoshima the same year. Although the Tokugawa government paid some reparations, unrest and further attacks against foreigners led to an allied bombardment in 1864. James and Hannah were visiting at a time when these events were fresh, and feelings in Japan were still raw. Despite the rockiness of this new “open” policy, American merchants and missionaries quickly established themselves.

Hannah wrote Marian in late June from Nagasaki where she had arrived on 17 June with Edie and Jimmie. They were all seasick on the trip. On shore Hannah was armed with letters of introduction to merchant Glover from his partner in Shanghai, and from the head of Jardines. She soon found a place to live in a temple on a property of a Dutch merchant Mr. Verbick, whose house was nearby. The verandahed housing was charming, with a series of connected rooms around a garden with a pond and decorative bridge in it. Hannah liked the soft tatami floors covered with four inches of wadding underneath, “so like walking on mattresses, but the fleas are innumerable” and kept them awake most of the night. The doorframes were too short for her but she approved of the house construction that built everything elevated above the ground and thus dry. She was intrigued with the way in which the room was put together each evening for sleep with bedding pulled into place, then “as if the whole house were coming about one’s ears” in the mornings everything was taken up and put away again.

The fragile paper walls and sliding doors initially frightened her because she realized they were no protection from robbers. She was awake all the first night in fear, alone with her young children and amah Ahing. “Strange noises kept me constantly on the alert, dogs rubbing themselves against the shutters, to deliver themselves from the fleas, rats gambolling about the prince’s shrine, the rich sonorous bells of the temple, & now & then a terrible barking of dogs. I had heard so much of the bloodthirstiness of the Japanese, & was not favourably impressed with the looks of the two-sworded gentlemen whom I had met.” Hannah was told that these swords were sharper even than those of the English. When she told Mrs. Verbick of her fears Mrs. Verbick responded “Oh, I’ll give you a revolver just to put under your head & then you have only to show it & they’ll run away, we always sleep with one under ours, but very likely you won’t be disturbed”. Hannah was not so sure and asked her host to hire a watchman. He agreed to this, but things further eased when Mrs. Verbick moved her futon bed into Hannah’s house where she slept with her own baby and revolver.

Once all that was settled, Hannah completely loved her setting, describing it as a retreat for body and mind. The cool air perfumed with jasmine invigorated her, and she

had not had a migraine across the first two weeks of her visit. Even Edie's toothache could not spoil her enthusiasm, although she wrote her brother Tom that it was hard to be separated from James "and my sweet chick" (her baby Anna, not quite one year old). Hannah was happy that Edie and Tom attracted friendly attention from the Japanese as the family walked in the clean, swept streets. Young Tom was pestering her to let him buy a sword, as the gentry were allowed to wear two as a normal part of their clothing, and made a swashbuckling impression on him.

James, Hannah, and the children eventually returned to Shanghai in late September. Hannah and the children went to Hong Kong, while James headed up the Yangzi river to Hankou, planning to return to his family by 20 October. Both of them had recovered some good health, and James was relieved that his fever was all gone. Hannah's illness returned however, and across November and December she was confined to bed half the time. The main good news was that Legge's daughter Mary Legge Hawke, now 23, gave birth in London to a son on 21 September, James' first grandchild.

In November 1965 Legge gave a talk to Union Church about his visit to Japan. It was clear he had loved the experience. He explained that the cooler climate was far more healthful than Hong Kong's and he had quickly recovered from his fever after arriving. A British ship, the *Adventure* arrived bringing "the skeletons of our soldiers and their wives and children from Hong Kong", and they too had recovered after looking so pathetic upon their arrival. He went on long hikes of many miles into the country among farmers' fields, and was thrilled with the profusion of flowers, with violets, pinks, clematis, and camellias everywhere. The ruddy farm girls reminded him of the "bonnie lassies" of Aberdeenshire, and some of the Japanese men had "noses as good as myself". The scanty clothing worn by both sexes somewhat unnerved him, but he was impressed how much cleaner the Japanese were than the Chinese in both public places and in their temples and homes. Responding to English scorn about the Japanese use of paper for handkerchiefs, he explained that the paper used was very soft and smooth and much better than the grass cloth used by the British in China. The love of the Japanese for their grog-shops stuck Legge as intemperate, but he was not overly censorious after remembering a cabbie in London telling him that civilized men "take their gin of a morning". He was impressed by the amazing honesty in which small commercial transactions were done on an honour system with purchasers leaving money in a little box completely unattended across the day. Not all was wonderful however, for soon after the Legges' return to Hong Kong two British officers were murdered in Japan in

late November, and trade prospects there were still unsettled despite the quick response of the Japanese officials after the murders.

Legge concluded by praising the work of the Jesuits after their arrival in Japan in the 16<sup>th</sup> c., revealing his less than sectarian attitude. He explained that nearly two million Japanese had become Christians, including some of the feudal princes. Eventually Christianity was made illegal after a too-zealous Christian prince attacked non-Christians and thousands of his Christian followers were killed in 1637 in a famous battle at the Island of Pappenburg/Takaboko, near Nagasaki. When Legge visited, many of the Protestant and Roman Catholic missionaries were being asked to teach English and French to Japanese officers, though the use of Christian texts for this language training was forbidden. Despite official regulations against Christianity Legge was approached privately by some merchants who wanted Christian texts to give to their employees. Mission efforts in Japan were entirely American, with not even one Protestant European, and Legge concluded it was a place of great opportunities for the faith.

Legge was revitalized by the things he had seen during his visit to Japan. He wrote Tidman that any scholar of Chinese would find it very easy to learn Japanese, observing that most foreign residents were easily able to acquire it. He loved the cooler climate, and pointed out that there was not one mission from Britain. Tidman wrote in December pleased that Legge had met other missionaries there and had also recovered his good health. Tidman agreed that Japan would be a fine place to open an LMS mission, but warned this could only be in the future because of the problems the Directors were having in supplying men to the China missions.

#### Class consciousness in Hong Kong

Legge's position in Hong Kong as a nonconformist in a society run by and for the benefit of those within the established Church of England led to many aggravating situations that reveal the extreme class-consciousness of the colony in that era. Legge did not write about this, but Hannah was much more open in her letters to family in England. She reported that their "friend" the Anglican Bishop George Smith, although a "good man", had objected to Legge being appointed Vice-President of the Royal Asiatic Society in Hong Kong because "his social position" would not properly represent it. She raged, "In other words he was a low dissenter whereas if he had chosen to belong to his (Smith's) church he in all likelihood would have been my Lord Bishop instead, or if not in the Church would have become a millionaire in Hong Kong." She had developed a strong awareness of her husband's talents and was outraged at the snobbery of the colonial society in which all rewards hung from strings operated by the colonial

Governor and Bishop. Bishop Smith himself was a “low churchman” and Hannah reported that the gossips of Hong Kong “often think it would be better if he left and a high churchman came”.

Ship disasters affect the Classics, and friends the Eastlakes

Legge was expecting £100 worth of printing ink for his last volumes to arrive on a ship the *Maiden Queen*, when it foundered on rocks far out at sea in the middle of the night in 1865. Friends of James and Hannah were on board, Mrs. Eastlake and her son Franky. In the dark they were awakened by scraping and heaving as the boat ground on the rocks. The ship stayed on the rocks for 54 hours and more than 200 tons of cargo were jettisoned as the crew tried to float the vessel.

“They waited for hours. The captain said they were to put on their warmest clothes, and be ready any moment to come when he called. Then the three boats were lowered. In the Captain’s boat were Mrs. Eastlake and Franky, Mrs. Abbe and two children, two amahs (nurses) and seamen; making nineteen in the little boat. They landed, but the natives looked so savage and piratical, and boats began to spread their sails, that the ladies begged the captain to commit them to the sea rather than to the horrors of being taken by these men. So they embarked again and were nine days in this boat; the Captain became delirious, and Mrs. Eastlake had to steer the boat herself. They were wet through. Then they were picked up by a Chinese junk and stowed down in the vessel with five hundred naked Chinese, and the filth and vermin of all sorts were past conception; rats continually crawling over them; and they were a mass of sores from the bites of the insects. They had only filthy rice and water, and at the end of thirteen days they reached Tai-gon. They were taken on board the *Viscount Canning*, and two days after Mrs. Abbe died.” (H. E. Legge, 1905).

When Hannah visited Mrs. Eastlake and her son after their rescue she found the young boy terribly thin and looking two years older. During the crisis Mrs. Eastlake had written a farewell note to her husband Dr. Eastlake in Shanghai, putting it into a bottle, all knowing that every voyage faced such risks.

Another time Hannah was startled by the appearance of two friends who had been married only a month earlier, then were shipwrecked within a week on their voyage up to Tianjin. Pirates quickly came on board, knocking all containers open to steal their contents before the boat sank, and stealing everything of value. The pirates treated the

passengers more kindly and did not follow the custom of murdering everyone, but brought the survivors back to Hong Kong. Hannah's friends were resilient about this adventure. Although they arrived back for Hannah's care without any clothes, they then boarded the next boat back north again, this time on a troop steamship. Another time a staff man from the mission was also shipwrecked and lost all his possessions, returning to Legge in a terribly distressed state. James opened up his own closets and drawers and invited the man to take anything he wanted. Legge's 1865 loss of printing supplies in the wreck of the *Maiden Queen* was not the only time his publication work was delayed by shipwreck.

The lives of the British in Hong Kong were still strongly linked to the challenges of travel by sea, and shipwrecks and pirate attacks formed part of everyday discussion in the Legge family in 1865. Hannah had feared that James and their son had been lost at sea when they were on a trip from Hong Kong to Shanghai and Japan in 1865 while she was visiting Japan. The news came through that en route one steamer had foundered on rocks and gone down, while two others had been lost in a typhoon. The newspaper listed the names of some of those lost and Hannah recognized friends. She tried to figure out which ship might have been taken by her family. Finally her fears were undone when James and her son appeared at her hotel the next morning.

In May 1865 Alexander Wylie visited James while he was printing the *Bamboo Annals*. Wylie was "weary and woe-begone" from a disastrous trip inland to China to distribute books. After going up-river 3-4 days their boat was stormed by more than 30 pirates who were furious after they discovered the bundles on board were not opium but books. They resorted to simple robbery then left; Wylie was mostly annoyed that they had chopped up his desk to get into the hold.

#### Legge learns of a bank heist plot, and rising population brings burglars and pirates

Crime also affected life on land. Life in the colony in the mid 1860s went beyond the high life with its caste system, to include much colour from low-life, and Legge often found himself caught up in strange ways. Pirate-burglar attacks came under increasing pressure from the naval authorities in Hong Kong, so burglars soon developed a new, advanced technique for larger targets. They began tunnelling from the large sewers into the premises of interest. At one point there was the rumour of a "gunpowder plot" to place a load of gunpowder under the Anglican cathedral (St. John's Cathedral, still in place now), and to blow it up when the Governor, the Bishop, and the congregation were all in attendance (J. Legge, 1872a).

Although the truth of this was never determined it was a reasonable fear because other crime-linked tunnels had been discovered. In 1863, 22 prisoners were successful in tunnelling from their gaol out into a sewer. Not long after, Legge was told by prisoner Lee Wunfoong of a similar plot, and “I did the service to the Government of disconcerting a scheme on a larger scale, by which within a few hours, eight - nine men would have got away”. The prison officer had the floors taken up and found two convicts busy excavating, with the mining on a large scale. The officer asked Legge to join him in recommending that the Governor give the informant a reward. Legge was impressed with the talents of the blackguards, and paid them a compliment: “The secrecy, skill, and perseverance with which the mining operations had been conducted were astonishing, and made me think it was a pity the ability of the scoundrels could not have been utilized in Cornwall and other parts of Great Britain”. The Governor rewarded Lee with a pardon, with the requirement that he leave Hong Kong very quickly and before any other prisoners found out about the events. Tunnelling for treasure was popular with criminals in British colonies, and two years later in India a robber-gang successfully tunnelled for several weeks into the Central Bank of India, stealing \$100,000 in gold bullion and securities.

Burglars in Hong Kong sometimes threw a stinkpot into a home they were planning to burgle, to cause maximum confusion while they did their work. They also used that technique in a July attack on the signalman at the Peak, injuring him badly, but they were quickly frightened off by the sight of a revolver. Stinkpots also became a standard tactic of pirates. Multiple junks operating as a pirate flotilla would bear down on a ship, surround it, and throw the stinkpots in to create chaos as they boarded. Any who resisted would be impaled on spears or hacked with swords. The pirates usually looted the vessel then set it on fire.

Residents in Hong Kong were indignant knowing that pirates stashed their loot in China, then sailed into the protection of Hong Kong harbour using a Chinese flag that allowed them free access into the port without any inspections. The *Overland China Mail* complained that the Chinese authorities were much stricter with Chinese pirates. Mandarins would quickly identify pirate boats, execute their crews and burn their junks. Pirates fleeing this often took steamers back to Hong Kong and claimed status as political refugees. Until Hong Kong took more vigorous steps, one letter-writer complained to the *Overland China Mail*, “It is simply a shabby, low, rascally place”.

Hong Kong in 1865 was now a city of 120,000. A new bank was founded “on sound Scottish banking principles”, the Hong Kong & Shanghai Bank of China, now the HSBC, still an active agency in China although it moved its headquarters to London in modern



times. The increased population continued to bring some turbulence. *The Overland China Mail* complained of the crime problem in Hong Kong. The official crime rate was 3.5 times greater than that in England, and the unofficial rate was “probably 18 times a great” because Hong Kong lacked good detectives and many criminals escaped.

It listed other problems in the justice system. Many Chinese would not testify in court, the police did not know Chinese, and the magistrates were too lenient. The essay ended with a call to bring back flogging. In fact flogging did still take place, and in a famous case of 15 pirates, the two found guilty received 130 lashes over three sessions, along with five years in prison. Punishments in the colony for Chinese criminals were much milder than those in China, and members of the colony often complained that criminals fled from China to Hong Kong to seek refuge for that reason. The “runner” of the Sailor’s Home that Legge had helped found, was guilty of embezzling \$300 and sentenced to nine months imprisonment.

Disaster in the form of typhoons, plagues, and fire was also a continuing feature of life in the colony, and in November 1865 another terrible fire swept through the town when tubs of oil caught fire in the hong on both sides of Queen’s Road. There was not enough water or emergency police to handle it and it had to be allowed to run its course. In the end more than 1,000 people were homeless and many fine hong were destroyed, with the lost property representing a value greater than half a million dollars. This added to the problems with the business depression that Hong Kong had entered, and there was much uncertainty about the fate of the colony.

Legge responded to the disaster with his typical vigour and initiative. He and his co-pastor Ho prepared an information sheet in Chinese seeking contributions for helping the homeless, then for over a week Legge went into nearly three hundred small shops throughout the community explaining the need and seeking donations. He was thrilled with the response and wonderfully interested to meet so many merchants who shared his interest in the Chinese Classics. “I was astonished at the amount of wealth and extent of business manifest in many of (the shops). The owners and many of the employees were gentlemen, according to the ways and training of China. For the most part I got a most cordial, even flattering reception. Many knew me by sight; others knew me as “the great scholar who was familiar with all their Classics”.

### Qing quells the Taiping rebellion

1864 was momentous for China because the Qing Imperial forces with help from their British and French mercenaries, were finally able to end most of the Taiping rebellion after the capture of Nanjing in July, although remnants of the rebels continued

to be active on the fringes of the empire until their final destruction in 1871. Scholars estimate that between 20 and 30 million Chinese civilians and soldiers died, mostly of famine or disease, although individual battles were often very bloody and many captured populations were beheaded by the army. This civil war represented “total” war in that the competing sides destroyed food crops and compelled civilian efforts. In modern times Mao Zedong regarded the Taiping rebels as heroes attempting to dismantle a feudal system, while more recently scholars have recognized the great harms done to China by the massive scale of the destruction done by both sides.

The Qing dynasty ended the Taiping separatist state but there were still regions of conflict in 1865. One remnant band of the insurgents made a last attempt to recover power but lost. In Xinjiang Muslims were rebelling and laying waste towns and farms, managing to take territory steadily eastward toward the coast, reaching the coastal province of Shandong. A Manchu regiment had mutinied in the northeast, there was bloody ethnic strife in Canton province between the Hakka and Punti, and a rebellion of the Miaou in Yunnan in the south. Foreign ruffians who had looked for criminal opportunities in China during the civil war were being pushed back into the treaty ports, continuing their lives of crime from the relative safety of the foreign settlements and rousing local Chinese anger when the ill-equipped consular stations failed to control them. The Mayor (Taotai) of Shanghai pressed the foreign consulates to close their gambling establishments because they had become the locus of many other criminal activities that harmed the Chinese. “Mixed Courts” comprised of Chinese and foreign judges were set up there that quite efficiently brought in the rule of law, and crime decreased. Other foreign remnants of the Taiping rebels joined the large Chinese pirate fleets along the coast (Kingsmill, 1865).

The Qing court tried to re-establish unified power over the country by representing foreigners as the enemy, even considering a move to exclude foreigners from the Imperial Customs Service although under Hart this rigorously honest office was bringing in the most stable income in the country. Mastering the arts and sciences of making guns, mortars, rifles and all the materials of war now became a major goal for the government, ensuring that at least some relations between specific officials would be cordial. Prince Gong, the sophisticated Foreign Minister, was briefly dismissed from all his roles in the Qing court by the two Empress Dowagers on 2 April for his alleged arrogance and other crimes, then fully reinstated by November after many court officials protested his innocence and praised his skills. British investors were trying to interest the Qing government in the development of railway systems, and telegraph connections from Europe across Siberia had reached China’s northern border while the Persian Gulf

Telegraph had completed a southern route. The telegraph line built from Shanghai to the sea-mouth at Wusong, to be used to help shipping, was resisted by locals who complained the poles upset the *feng shui* of the district, evidence being the dead body of a man who had died in the shade of a telegraph pole. A court official was sent to America to purchase steamers in a new attempt to create a Chinese navy.

While China was no longer at war, the expatriate community was uneasy because the dynasty was now headed by an incompetent young man still supervised by his powerful regent-mother Cixi, soon known to the outside world as the Dowager-Empress. She was determined to refuse calls for reform, and decades of more internal struggle continued until her death in 1908, a few years before the final collapse of the dynasty.

The world was entering a new phase across the Pacific Ocean when the US civil war ended with victory against the separatists, but with fresh alarms when President Lincoln was shot and killed in April. His Secretary of State William Seward (1801-1872) was stabbed on the face and neck in his own home by a co-conspirator at the same time. Seward was a very talented man whom Legge was to meet in a few years.

#### Legge's mission report, increasingly annoyed with Tidman

Legge wrote his annual report on the mission to Tidman early in 1866 and it showed his anger over Tidman's sarcastic and lackadaisical responses to Legge's activities. He started with sober reportage, proud to report that the Taotai of Shanghai had ordered a complete set of the LMS printing matrices in the two sizes of Chinese text. This man had earlier lived in Canton and had visited Legge and his LMS press, impressed with the quality of the printed texts. "I never dreamt that such a small thing would bear such fruit".

This order was something of a double-edged sword for the LMS press. On the positive side it showed recognition by Chinese intellectuals that a western product offered significant advantages over any Chinese product. Even at this relatively late date Chinese books were still printed in the traditional and very rigid way with a woodblock cut for each page. In addition, this amazing order could be filled for a substantial price and thus generate profits for the LMS. Legge explained that Chinese scholars and government officials were now aware of the value of moveable metal type in publishing because his Chinese Classics books were circulating within China. This was a subtle attack on Tidman, who was not sympathetic to Legge's work on the Classics. On the negative side, selling the matrices from which individual characters would be cast using hot lead, would reduce the possibility of future printing orders for the Hong Kong LMS

press, but Legge was less concerned about that as he never thought of the mission's activities in terms of long-term corporate profits.

Legge became more directly tetchy when Tidman made him justify his charging the LMS \$500 for his trip to Japan. Legge pointed out that his health problems had been so severe that the trip had been essential for his recovery, and he had a doctor's certificate confirming this. He pointed out that his actual costs for the trip to Japan were \$805 although the true charges were \$1,500 from which he had received many discounts. He reminded Tidman that he had been prostrated with severe fever for four weeks preceding his departure, with the worst in the final week, and continued to be unwell during the voyage. The cooler and more healthful climate of Japan had been crucial to his recovery and "the malarious influence" he had suffered across the past two years seemed to be entirely "cast out".

While Hannah's health had improved in Japan, since their return to Hong Kong she had been again confined to bed most of November and all December, and the doctor decided she needed to return to Britain before the next Hong Kong summer. Legge was initially reluctant but her prolonged suffering with pain was so obvious that he booked a passage for her and the four children on a troop steamer the *Orontes* leaving in February 1866. If she recovered in Britain then the plan would be for her to leave the three oldest children there and return with infant Anna to re-join James in Hong Kong. If their return to Hong Kong became impossible, Legge explained to Tidman that it would not be possible for him to stay in Hong Kong for many years longer.

Becoming more annoyed as he wrote, Legge noted his disappointment that the Directors had not pursued hiring Gillespie to help at Union Church, and that the church was still without an LMS replacement for himself. Anderson's appointment to the mission was not enough because the Directors had not even told Legge that Anderson was not expected to do any English preaching as his effort was entirely directed to the Chinese mission. The station was thus still short-handed if it was expected to provide a pastor for Union Church. Legge reported his embarrassment at the Union Church annual general meeting, trying to sustain favourable attitudes toward the LMS while having only silence from it in response to the congregation's urgent requests, "though I repeatedly reminded you". He was especially annoyed that Tidman had not communicated any of the Directors' staffing plans to either Gillespie or himself.

The new Union Church building was now finished, "the handsomest edifice in the Colony", and Legge planned to send photographs of it to the Directors<sup>39</sup>. He expected

---

<sup>39</sup> A photograph of this handsome church still exists.

the final costs to be £39,000. It was beautiful, “lofty and light” according to Hannah, in a graceful gothic style with a high spire, stained glass windows, and pews from England. The ship bringing in some decorative iron gates was feared lost at sea, not having been heard of for eight months. The new church could seat 450 but it could hold up to 600, and now that Legge was back in the pulpit it attracted “many of the most intelligent” members of the colony. Legge reported that his congregation of around 300 was not the wealthiest in the colony but it had “many of the most intelligent” people, so it needed a good preacher. Anderson had been surprised by this, and “seemed to have the idea it would be of a different class, not needing much effort”. Legge reminded Tidman that it would be impossible for a new mission man to learn Chinese while at the same time serving as a minister and preacher to Union Church.

By this point in the letter Legge had decided that he would be leaving the mission, pressing Tidman to fill the Union Church position because “I could continue at Union Church except I will be leaving; I’d be very glad to (help a new Union Church pastor) to ensure his success because I know that congregations are often upset at changes. But I would want him to succeed”. Legge ended moving into a more aggressive mode, telling Tidman that if a larger salary was needed to recruit a good minister, then send the man and the church will raise the extra money. If the LMS cannot provide a minister then it should break its connection with the church.

### Chapter 54 Hong Kong life, Hannah leaves

*In which new men Anderson and Eitel join the mission, there are LMS money problems, Legge works for public education, and Hannah's illnesses precipitate a return to Britain.*

#### The new Union Church, new man Anderson

In April 1865 the new Union Church on Staunton St. and Hollywood Road was opened, but the legal complications continued to fester and the Deed of Trust that Legge had asked London to send in July 1864 was still not back in Hong Kong. Legge was still annoyed at Tidman's silence on the urgent Union Church property and staffing matters, but Tidman was also prickly on the topic of which documents he needed to provide to the Union Church, arguing that Legge did not need any Resolution from the Directors in support of additional staff. Tidman commented as if placating a querulous minion, "But as you seem disappointed that no Resolution was sent I will get the matter to the next Board meeting".

Tidman softened later when he had to confess in April that the Deed of Trust so crucial to the Hong Kong mission had "somehow been mislaid and nothing done until your urgent inquiry", admitted a failure of "some oversight", and finally apologized for the inconvenience of the delays. A special committee was now set up in London to expedite the Hong Kong land transactions and all their documentation. Finally in August 1865 Tidman apologized for the long delays, explaining that the LMS solicitor had consulted a Chancery Barrister over some of the clauses. Finally the documents were complete, arriving in Hong Kong in November 1865 after nearly two years of pleas. Bleak House comes to mind.

Legge was exhausted with the Union Church work in addition to his work with the Chinese mission, and in February 1865 he chaired a major meeting with the congregation, telling it that if the LMS would not send a minister for the Union Church, the church would have to seek a minister on its own behalf because he needed to give up all connection with the English services to concentrate on work with the Chinese congregations. This meeting revealed a bitter division, with a few strict Presbyterians fighting against any role for the LMS in the selection of a minister. Tempers were so roused that the meeting had to be adjourned and reconvened when calmer consideration might be possible.

Legge was still desperate for help with the mission, asking the LMS to send him two men, and was distressed "beyond measure" when he learned in late February 1865 that the LMS would not be sending anyone. In early 1865 Tidman had not been particularly sympathetic, coldly commenting in January that perhaps Legge should not

have opened two new Chinese chapels until he received another colleague “so you could have the relief you have so long desired...” Tidman emphasized the number of missionary deaths in the past year, then seemed mildly embarrassed to report the real problem: there were not enough missionary students to meet all the needs. Tidman quickly turned from apology to attack, commenting that Legge reported fewer converts than in former years, taunting about them, “what is remarkable, these have for the most part been convicts in the jail. Thus God, in his mysterious providence, sees fit to pass by the worldly wise, the self righteous, and the outwardly virtuous, and to dispense the riches of His grace upon those who would be commonly accounted the lost and the abandoned”. Legge’s work with convicts continued and in June he was getting up at 4:30 in the morning to go to a group of seven Chinese who were awaiting execution for “an atrocious case of piracy & Murder”, all going to the scaffold protesting their innocence.

In June Tidman hinted that he was considering sending a man to Hong Kong to work in the mission, a man who was currently completing studies in Edinburgh and should arrive by the end of the year. London vaguely expected the man, James Anderson, to work both in the Chinese mission and in the English church. A problem emerged in that Anderson did not want to provide English services to an English congregation, but wanted only to spend all his time learning Chinese. Tidman confessed “He is I fear not a strong man”, so perhaps he would need all his strength to learn Chinese. Another man, William Gillespie was also under active consideration for Union Church. Dr. Lockhart had met Gillespie in Edinburgh, and wrote Legge recommending that the LMS send Gillespie to take over the Union Church, which he was willing to do. Gillespie had worked in the Hong Kong mission in the 1840s and had some Chinese skills, but was a somewhat rough diamond. In late June Legge wrote the LMS expressing interest in this plan, noting that Gillespie was a strong preacher in English, and in July 1865 the Union Church agreed with his recommendation.

That same month Granville Sharpe in the congregation wrote directly to Tidman describing the tumult in the church. Reviewing all the problems, Sharp stressed that while the congregation had great respect for Legge and would prefer that he remain as its pastor, they agreed to seek a new minister only because it was in accord with “Dr. Legge’s wishes” that he be relieved. Sharp explained that the new church was beautiful, the music was much improved, but stressed that the congregation needed a young minister of good education who could give short (his emphasis) sermons and prayers in order to attract young people.

Sharp also tried to make the London Directors understand how valuable Legge had become in the colony. "If Dr. Legge were willing to disengage from the LMS he could have £1,300 per year; he has already refused some very flattering job offers from the government". Sharp reviewed the talents of the possible successor, Gillespie, who had spent two stints in Hong Kong and could speak fluent Chinese. Sharp concluded that although Gillespie, "could not write a better sermon than Dr. Legge, he could preach one better", but that despite his estimable qualities it would be better to send a younger man rather than someone who had been in China 21 years ago. Sharp believed Gillespie would not be the best man for Union Church because Chinese language skills were not crucial and a younger man with vigour was needed.

Sharp summed up Legge: he was held "in universal respect & love" and argued that the LMS should send two men just for the Union Church, one to help Legge, then an additional one to take on the rest of Legge's work when he left the Union Church ministry. Legge told the LMS that if it was going to send the mission a man for the Chinese mission work, then a separate pastor for the Union Church would not be necessary, implying that Legge and the Union Church congregation would be happy to have him continue as pastor in such a case, thus somewhat muddying Legge's intentions.

In October Legge was relieved to learn that the Directors finally were sending Rev. James Anderson (1840-1894) to the mission. Anderson had studied theology and obtained a university degree in Edinburgh, and arrived with his wife in December after a miserable voyage. They were stuck for 10 days trying to fight winds to get out of the English Channel, were almost wrecked on rocks at St. Paul's Island because of fog, and the captain was hostile to Anderson's Sunday services. Anderson described the Captain and the First Mate as "both very wicked men". The First Mate tried to lead a mutiny but the crew refused to join him and the mutiny "was at once suppressed".

Alexander Wylie of the Shanghai mission had also had nautical misadventures in May that year. He and another mission man had set off up-river into China to distribute books. After a few days on the river a pirate boat drew up alongside and 20-30 men armed with swords and knives stormed aboard. They were expecting the boat's bundles to contain opium, and were completely disgusted when they discovered only books. They robbed the mission men and released them without further harm. Local mandarins came to the travellers' assistance and Wylie ended up mainly annoyed that the pirates had chopped his desk up in order to get into it.

For the Hong Kong mission Tidman argued to Legge that the Union Church congregation would never accept any other LMS man as long as Legge was there, and



explained he had not pursued Gillespie after Legge had accepted Anderson's appointment. Tidman considered the Union Church to be comprised of "intelligent and refined" people, thus Gillespie the rugged evangelist to Scottish slums was inappropriate as their minister. If Union Church still wanted their own preacher from the LMS and were willing to provide full support, they should write and tell London the salary they would offer.

#### Eitel and the LMS in Hong Kong

A new man joined the South China missions from a different and surprising direction, although he gave no relief to Legge. Ernest Eitel (1838-1908) was a young missionary with the Basel Society, supported from Germany. He had recently fallen in love with Miss Eaton, an Englishwoman who was headmistress of a girl's school in Hong Kong. Eitel wanted to marry her but anti-English sentiment was strong within the Basel mission and his colleagues issued an ultimatum. Within 14 days he must break off with Miss Eaton "to preserve the good reputation of the mission", or he would be required to quit the mission. Eitel was determined to marry, so needed a job. He was fluent in Hakka, the language spoken in Boluo, the town where Che had been murdered, and was eager to join the LMS to provide help to that inland mission.

Legge had been onboard with Eitel in 1848 and knew that he was very talented and would be a great help. Legge also knew that the Church of England mission already had expressed interest in him. Legge hired Eitel immediately for work in Boluo on a six-month probationary arrangement, and wrote London recommending that Eitel would be even more valuable working in the LMS mission in Canton. He added that while the Germans of the Basel mission customarily carried arms during their mission work, Eitel had agreed to set his arms aside for his work in Boluo. In July Tidman wrote from London approving Eitel's appointment for LMS work in Boluo, which helped the mission work in South China but did not bring relief to Legge in Hong Kong.

#### Mullen replaces Tidman, visits Hong Kong, and reviews LMS salary problems

In July Tidman announced his retirement from the job as the LMS Foreign Secretary, to be replaced by Dr. Joseph Mullens, who was leaving a career of mission work in Calcutta that started in 1844. Mullens would close his Calcutta office and go to Hong Kong to visit the China missions before heading to London to take up his new position. Legge was fully aggravated with Tidman and could only look forward to his replacement with a new man. Mullens reached the Hong Kong and Canton missions in December 1865, and he held an important meeting in Canton with the south China mission men, Chalmers, Legge and Eitel. In the course of Mullens' visit Legge realized

he would now have an ally in the heart of the London LMS, a man whose views of his mission and scholarly work were considerably more sympathetic than those of Tidman.

The meeting was productive and the south China men made a number of resolutions to remedy problems in their working conditions and salaries. First, they asked for a standard salary scale for the LMS men in China, for example £200 per annum for a single man, £300 for a married man. There were still serious variations in pay for mission men both within South China (Hong Kong and Canton), and across the missions in the south and north (Shanghai and Xiamen) in which the South China men were being paid less than those in the “north”. Further, salaries within the north were also inconsistent. Stronach in Xiamen received £300 p.a. while Macgowan in Shanghai received £338. In addition the men asked for a standard child allowance applied to all mission families. The child allowance was a problem in that in North China and India missionaries were given the allowance for every child, while Chalmers in Canton was given an allowance for only two of his four children. Even that had come at the cost of a miserable battle in 1855-56 with London in which the LMS had grudgingly allocated him £20 per child for only some of his children and only as a specific grant (rather than as a standing allowance), and only after Legge’s vigorous intervention describing Chalmers’ poverty. Legge received a total annual salary of £425 from the Union Church congregation and the LMS.

The group resolved that any medical missionary sent to Canton must agree not to set up a private practise but to work entirely for the LMS, and must agree to participate in the community life of the mission, reflecting the problems they had with Dr. Wong Fun. They decided that the Hong Kong and Canton missions would hold regular meetings, and asked London for money to aid Eitel’s work at Boluo to include £50 for some furniture for him and his wife, the normal allowance for missionary furniture. This was more urgent than usual because when Eitel had separated from the Basel mission his colleagues there had burned all his furniture in fury at his departure. He had been required to turn over the entire contents of his mission to the Basel group, allowed to keep only his clothes and books.

Mullens stayed with the Chalmers family and Mr. Eitel for a week in Canton and was very favourably impressed with their work. As peace was being restored on the mainland with the crushing of the Taiping rebellion, Mullens was pleased that the Cantonese now treated foreigners with courtesy. Eitel had moved to the Boluo station where his efforts led to the baptism of 201 new members, and in 1866 he opened a medical dispensary in addition to the chapel. Legge was not happy that Eitel’s work in Boluo was being charged against his Hong Kong mission budget rather than as a

separate mission supported directly from London. Mullens considered that running the small station at Boluo only 25 miles from Canton was not worth LMS money because the congregations in the Boluo region were capable of supporting their pastor with their own resources.

After that meeting Mullens reported to the London Directors that the new Union Church in Hong Kong was “the prettiest Church in China”. It “is elegant in every way, in its form, its design, its fittings”. He was additionally pleased that it had cost the LMS nothing, as the congregation and local community had paid all its costs of \$24,000. Mullens was impressed with the scale and quality of Legge’s work in Hong Kong, its “excellent working”, doing much more than he would expect “considering it’s been so short-handed for so long”. The Hong Kong mission was now comprised of two mission houses in good condition, the new Union Church for the English congregation, three “admirable” Chinese chapels in the native town with an “efficient system of services where Legge takes a chief part. I was much pleased at what I myself saw of them”. The native churches had three native pastors and 97 members including several very rich families and Mullens “had the pleasure of hearing a sermon preached” by veteran Pastor Ho. Mullens described the work of the Hong Kong LMS Press, admiring the “great beauty” of the larger of the two sizes of Chinese fonts, each consisting of 6,000 characters with the full set of punches and matrices for making more. The buildings of the Press were in good condition, and its productions of Bibles and pamphlets for other missions yielded a regular profit to the mission.

Mullens urged London to provide another man for Hong Kong before adding to the Shanghai station. He commented on Hannah's persistent ill health “I was sorry to see Mrs. Legge so great an invalid. She suffers greatly from nervous attacks which prostrate her for a week at a time”. He expected that she would probably return to England with her children in the spring of 1866. If Legge could go with them, it would give the new man “a fair opportunity” to get to know his new congregation.

### The LMS and money

From the earliest days mission men had written the LMS explaining that its system of salaries and special allowances was unfair, and the levels not sufficient. The elder Milne had written in 1822 explaining that the system of a low salary £200 per annum and a child allowance of \$10 was not sufficient to pay for mission travel and for the costs of health care. Rather than a complex system of special allowances, he argued that a better salary would be most efficient. Milne explained that lacking an adequate salary, mission men would be forced to run English boarding schools on the side, taking away

time from their mission tasks – a scheme which he himself had promoted in Malacca. When one man was allowed to draw an advance on his salary in the Malacca mission in 1822, the others assumed they could also do it, complaining that they were so poor that even the notoriously hard-boiled ships' captains gave them free parcel freight out of sympathy.

Legge now moved into this contentious topic of the policies about mission salaries. He was clearly furious with the LMS. His colleagues in the south China missions of Canton and Hong Kong had sent their 1865 "Resolution" arguing for standard salaries after they learned that only the missions in Shanghai and Amoy had been given salary increases. He thought it "was shabby" that when the LMS granted these they sent no communications to the men in the south. He was outraged because the expenses were as great in the south, but because they had not actively campaigned for salary increases the Directors were content to keep silence and let the men there "grin and bear it". He reminded Tidman that he well knew that without the extra salary from the Union Church, Legge would be in debt, just as Chalmers was.

The question of child allowances was even more aggravating. In December Dr. Mullens had told Legge he was surprised to learn that across Legge's 26 years of service to the LMS he had never received a child allowance. Legge only learned in 1865 this was supposed to be uniformly provided to all missionaries with children. Over the course of his life, eight of his 11 children survived for various time periods and he struggled to provide their support, often mentioning their financial struggles in his letters to the LMS. Whenever his pleas had led to a small grant he had been led to believe this was a very special one-time grant, and it took Mullens' visit for Legge and Chalmers to learn the truth about the child allowances in other mission stations.

Legge wrote that although he was grateful that the Directors sometimes gave him a special grant when "I made my necessity known", this did not compensate for the basic unfairness of their treatment over child allowances. "I should never have reached such necessity if I had known it was the general practise of the Board to provide a child allowance. Indeed (since finding that out) I have wondered at my simplicity in the matter". "When my wife died in 1852 I was in debt. The misery of many years (of financial struggle) is a melancholy retrospect. Through the blessing of God, by a legacy of my brother of Leicester, and by the sale of the *Chinese Classics* I am better off now. Let our resolution be complied with, and whatever allowance the English Church makes me, shall go to the Society's funds. I have written freely, because I feel that my years of missionary service entitle me to do so". Tidman provided no apology for this miserable

history and insisted that the Resolution from the south China committee for a fixed child allowance of £20 per child would have to go to the Directors.

Backing off this fury, Legge counter-punched Tidman by reporting the great honour that the Hong Kong government had given him in November, with its presentation of a silver tea and coffee service along with an inscription praising his “many valuable public services readily and gratuitously rendered”.

### Legge and Central School

In addition to his mission and scholarly work Legge was continuing as a major force for educational reform in the colony. In March 1865 he wrote an official report in his role as Chairman of the Board of Education describing its work in 1864 to Governor Sir Hercules Robinson, who was leaving his post that month. The Board supervised the Central School and a collection of free village primary schools. The Board closed a number of these because they did not have enough students attending. Problems included the difficulty of finding good teachers, in finding students of good character, and in convincing children to attend regularly. Many of the Chinese in Hong Kong were living on boats and the uneducated parents expected their children to inherit their lives of manual labour, unconvinced that education could be of any value. Legge compared the traditional rote memorization method of learning Chinese characters with a new and better method being used in one of the village schools, but it was hard to change teachers. One lazy teacher in the Girl's School had to be threatened with dismissal before he began to put effort into the classes. The Central School was operating more effectively because the students all had passed entrance examinations and had to pay fees, so they and their families placed a higher value on the schooling and put more effort into it.

The next month the (*Overland*) *China Mail* wrote an article commenting on Legge's report, finding his views agreeable. The article noted that the Board of Education had closed many of the free village schools because not enough students were attending, and identified two core problems, already well known to Legge. Apart from the poor quality of the teachers, which discouraged parents from sending their children, the fact that the schools were free was a problem because “Chinese parents only value what they have to pay for”. It dismissed as untrue, rumours alleging that these schools were avoided because they forced students to read the Bible and thus alienated Chinese parents, pointing out that the mission schools that did require Bible study actually had more students. The author noted that Central School was thriving, did require fees and did allow students to study the Bible if the parents agreed. The new public education

system was struggling to combine traditional and modern approaches, working to find its way now firmly under the leadership of Legge and Frederick Stewart.

### Legge Reminiscences

In November 1865 James and Hannah were invited as guests to a grand formal dinner where the Governor thanked him for “the many valuable public services readily and gratuitously rendered” to the community, presenting Legge with a handsome silver tea and coffee service. This was for all his volunteer work, but especially for his creation of the much improved public school system for Chinese students, for which he had refused all offers of payment. Legge’s laconic comment was “These services were little more than duties of citizenship”, then he gave a speech in which he reviewed the important goals that he had formed when he had first arrived more than 20 years earlier.

From his earliest days Legge had understood an important need was public officials who could speak Chinese and English. Means to this first goal had been created from each side of the linguistic barrier, in the creation of a cadet corps to train young Englishmen, and through the success of the Chinese students from his own school. The second was an improved public education system for the Chinese that would be “generous, comprehensive and far-reaching”, set into motion during the Governorship of Sir Hercules Robinson. The third was the establishment of a Christian ministry within the prisons. Legge had taken on that task himself starting in 1852, hoping that men leaving jail would have a deeper idea of right and wrong if they had been taught to consider the afterlife. As part of this public ceremonial event he also read out his some reminiscences of his life in the early years of the colony.

1865 ended with a raucous St. Andrew’s dinner in mid-December that featured bagpipes, Robbie Burns’ poetry, dinner that included cockie leekie, haggis, and minced collops, along with “the national beverages” of Glenlivet and punch. The meeting “was prolonged to an early hour” according to the *China Mail’s* long account. Legge attended these annual Scots dinners, comprised of the substantial body of Scots filling the needs of every occupation across Britain’s empire. The predominance of Scots across the British Empire was of interest to those in Hong Kong, and one newspaper article in 1868 commented that with Russia again threatening India (in the Great Game), “we can expect the Scots to do their duty” (Author, 1868b). That article noted that while the English monopolized all the higher offices of Britain “in distant lands”, the Scots prevailed at the second level because of their “roving and adventurous disposition, bold hearts, and strong arms”. Modern commentator Christopher Hitchens linked their

widespread economic success as well to their dour and economical character in combination with a romantic, passionate and rebellious streak (Hitchens, 2004).

### Hong Kong's economy falters and Legge foresees political problems

Massive bankruptcies began to affect British firms in Hong Kong in 1866 with the end of the American Civil War and a shift in the economics of cotton. During the Civil War British Indian farms and Russian cotton firms in Central Asia moved into the world trade to fill in the gap left by the lost cotton from the US South. With that civil war ended and the resumption of US cotton production, these and other world financial problems began interfering with life in Hong Kong. There were failures of huge commercial banks and in large trading houses in Britain and in Hong Kong, and by the end of 1866 business losses were so extensive that various charitable foundation accounts were unable to generate interest income to fund their charities. Legge feared for further losses of Britain's reputation with the United States because British actions in Ireland "accompanied with much injustice", sent hundreds of thousands of Irish immigrants to the USA, bringing their enmity against England with them. He understood that these events created "a constant danger of collision" between the United States and Britain.

In China the British Ambassador Sir Alcock Rutherford in Beijing published a notice that Legge believed would be "fatal to Hong Kong ". Sir Alcock ruled that all Chinese born in Hong Kong were British citizens and therefore had no more right than Englishmen to go into the interior of China without passports, and could not settle and hold property there. Legge expostulated "Fancy Tsun-shee's (Pastor Ho's) children being unable to settle on his paternal acres!" It seems this notice was intended to placate the Chinese government, with little understanding of the implications for Britain or the Chinese migrants long-settled in Hong Kong but still connected to families in China. Sir Alcock soon left Beijing, sent to Japan as Britain's first ambassador there.

New Governor Sir Richard MacDonnell arrived in Hong Kong in early 1866, nearly a year after Sir Hercules Robinson left, promoted to be Governor of Ceylon. In MacDonnell's initial naïve attempts to improve things he created new shipping regulations that Legge realized would cause significant problems. The effect of the new rules was to make Chinese captains reluctant to come to the colony, and even the ships bringing provisions were staying away. Legge's reservations about the new rules were well-known and one day the Governor stopped him in the street to discuss them, "full of anxiety" about their impact. Legge's reputation as a wise man was established.

Across 1866 the Qing government still had some bloody struggles with rag-tag rebels, the Nienfei, but the remaining scale of insurgency was quite small. Foreign businessmen and merchants were now helping the Chinese government plan specific railways and telegraph lines out of Shanghai. Prince Gong, now firmly in charge of the Qing Foreign Office, had recognized that western nations had much to teach Chinese administrators and sent a technical mission headed by Robert Hart to Europe. There was great anticipation that this would result in the creation of a Chinese Embassy in London.

#### Hannah's illness forces a return with the children to England

Hannah's persistent health problems led to the decision in January 1866 that she and the children would have to move to England. They left in February, with James accompanying them to Singapore. He was very concerned about her condition but was not able to accompany her because of his pressing work with his LMS congregations, and the research he was doing with Wang Tao in preparing his next volumes of the Classics. He was also under pressure from his travelling companion and friend Dr. Kane to write up their West River trip.

Hannah and her four children Edie, Tom, Jamie, and Anna returned to London, and in April Tidman reported they had arrived safely. The LMS provided them with temporary accommodation in London but Hannah soon moved them to her family in England, then to Huntly.

Legge was still running the mission household in Hong Kong and reporting to Hannah. In March he wrote that a friend had brought him three pairs of fantail pigeons for Edie for which he was busy building a coop out of an old storage room. In May he wrote her of an unusual meeting with Jack Jardine, a brother of Robert and Joseph. Jardine asked Legge if he had heard from Hannah recently, and when James said "yes, on April 15<sup>th</sup>" Jack burst into tears. The story emerged that Jack had always admired Hannah, she had once spoken to him "like an angel", then on the 24 March he had a dream in which he was in heaven and Hannah was there. She greeted him "Well Jack, you are here. Why did you ever doubt?", and he became convinced that she had died in the UK. His tears were of relief. Legge's response showed his brisk Scots attitude. He told Jardine, "Well, you had the dream & were still alive. Why should you have thought that Mrs. Legge was dead?"

Legge was still very active with his Chinese congregations, and presided over a marriage of a very young couple in it, noting that Chinese parents ensured their sons were married very young so they would not pick up "depraved and dissolute habits",



then moved the young couple into the paternal household so they could be closely supervised. The wedding involved a feast for 150 guests, and Legge was so intrigued by the wonderful food he wrote down the names of all the dishes. "I have eaten less enjoyable dinners at the first hotels in London and Richmond". He also continued preaching in the Chinese chapels, in May to a huge crowd at the Wanchai chapel. His friend Mrs. MacGowan told him she had never "seen anything like" they way he was able to capture their attention. He defended the costs of mission work against their constant detractors, pointing out with indignation that the British government "squandered millions of dollars which might all have been saved by foresight and discreet management." He estimated that mission work achieved ten times the value expended on it in comparison with the value spent on "government and war".

Darwin's 1859 book *The Origin of Species* was known to Legge, and he wrote Hannah about some of the ideas he was considering because of it. His work with the Chinese language and through it to its ancient history convinced him that there were linguistic features it shared with Sanskrit and the Semitic languages. To him this suggested ancient common ancestors for the Jews, Aryans and Chinese, "together one family in some prehistoric time. Now, if types of the human family so diverse as the Chinese & ourselves had yet a common ancestry, why should we not hesitate long before we say that the Africans &c are altogether from a different stock? I do not think they are, but let no conclusions from Scripture stand in the way of scientific investigations & inductive conclusion". Legge was open to new ideas, not a Biblical literalist.

### Union Church problems

In late January 1866 Scots evangelist Gillespie wrote Legge telling him that he had decided against coming to China as minister to Union Church, and in desperation Legge asked new mission man Anderson if he would do the preaching there. Anderson gave a very firm "No", insisting he needed to spend his time learning Chinese. Shortly after that Legge's cousin John Legge, (1837-1879), the son of James' uncle John, wrote James from Australia suggesting he could visit in May. James encouraged him to come and to consider serving Union Church as minister. Some years earlier young John Legge had gone to Australia with his sister for his health, as he and all his siblings had tuberculosis. As a student in Aberdeen he had become recognized as an outstanding scholar of Latin, and in Australia he had begun doing church work

Anderson wrote Tidman at the end of March, explaining that the Union Church congregation had been terribly upset when they received the letter from Gillespie turning down their job, and the congregation now had very bad feelings toward the

LMS. Anderson offered to help out by preaching occasionally if the congregation would reimburse the LMS for his services. What he did not explain was that he really did not want to do any preaching at the church, possibly after meeting the congregation and realizing it was a powerful and critical group, more educated than he had expected. Although the congregation may have appreciated Anderson's scruples about the money, they were annoyed with the LMS and objected to their money going out of the colony to the Directors in London. In the end they reached an agreement. Anderson would preach once each fortnight and their payment for this would be given to the mission's girls' school. It had been closed for two years but was now run by his wife, with the help of a Chinese teacher for the 14 girls.

Anderson and his wife were deeply unsettled after their house was robbed one evening while they were out. The robbers stole almost all his wife's wedding presents and all their other valuables, and they had not been recovered. He urgently needed better "bolts and bars". He commented on the salary problem, explaining that while his salary of £250 might be adequate for his first year there because he had brought so much with him, Hong Kong was so expensive that it would be difficult to manage on the salary after that. "Hong Kong is even more expensive than Canton".

In June Mullens, now the LMS Foreign Secretary, sent Legge the Board Resolution supporting the plan the south China LMS men had proposed six months earlier, seeking further mission staff for the Hong Kong station. He mentioned that no decision would be made concerning a minister for the Union Church until the expected visit from James' cousin John Legge. Mullens wondered if John could be hired to join James in the Hong Kong mission work. The same month Mullens wrote a separate letter to Chalmers as Secretary of the south China missions local committee. Mullens summarized the Directors' decisions concerning all the issues the local committee (plus Mullens) had proposed to the Directors in December 1865. Eitel was granted £50 for furniture at Boluo, to be paid to him upon his marriage to Miss Eaton, and Pastor Ho would continue to be paid out of a special fund. Funds were approved for the Chinese chapels in Hong Kong.

Crucially, no decisions were made on the Resolution demanding standard salary scales and allowances, which would have given the south China men increases. The Directors were "waiting for information" from other missions. This had to be a deeply disappointing letter for the south China men because they had only been asking to be treated the way other missions were, and had a deep sense of unfairness in London's management of their salaries. This decision could only imply that their efforts were inferior in some way. The Directors might have argued that Legge was fortunate in

having his salary topped up by the Union Church, but that extra income cost Legge significant extra effort, and this reasoning failed to deal with the question of standard salaries and allowances across all the missions. The matter of child allowances was also still festering, for although they approved Chalmers' request to go home to Britain after 15 years in the field, the Directors via Mullens scolded Chalmers for having withdrawn £22 for each of the previous two years for his children, calling this overdrawing "very irregular". They did not comment on his complaint for having received only a portion of the child allowance that others received, and decided to pay him only £10 each per year for all his children. This must have been completely infuriating.

The problems at Union Church were not solved by Anderson's offer of occasional preaching because his preaching was poor, and by June Legge wrote the deacons a letter apologizing for not calling a Special Meeting sooner to deal with the preaching problem. He simply could not figure out how to provide them with the full services of an effective minister. The congregation itself was split, with Granville Sharp and Mr. Davis at odds with the rest. Legge proposed two options. If the Union Church and Anderson were agreeable, the congregation could offer to hire him for three months of regular preaching as a means of deciding whether to hire him as their minister. Tidman wrote in the spring that he was agreeable to Anderson becoming the Union Church minister, and Legge offered to go north for three months to Shanghai to keep out of everyone's way. Alternatively, if either the Union Church or Anderson did not like this plan, Legge was willing to continue as minister for 18 months if his health held and his family had no crises in England. If Union Church wanted that, it must write Tidman immediately to announce the salary that they would offer to the new LMS replacement upon Legge's departure. The new man would not be a helper to Legge but a replacement. He urged the congregation to decide what it wanted "without worrying about my feelings".

At its meeting the congregation rejected his first plan. The Union Church and Anderson were not a happy match, and Legge understood that Anderson's preaching would not help the congregation thrive. Instead, the congregation wanted Legge to resign from the LMS and become its minister for 18 months, and to seek a new man from the LMS for Legge's departure. A meeting was called to decide on the salary for that new man, with the decision being then sent to London. Legge set his time limit for 18 months because he had decided to join his family in Scotland.

Legge was confident in the sympathy he expected from Mullens, "We all have huge trust in you Dr. Mullens, to help us and understand us in London. You know what we need at Union Church – a good man, "an able preacher, with a natural address and elocution, without peculiarities (his stress) unless they should be the peculiarities of

undoubted genius & power". All this underlining suggests that Anderson's preaching was peculiar as well as unsatisfactory. Legge would recommend that the church offer a guaranteed salary of £500 p.a. and a house or house rental for two years.

Legge wrote Mullens in July explaining that the London plan for Anderson to preach once every two weeks provided almost no help to James because he normally preached at morning and evening services every Sunday, thus Anderson would relieve him from only one of four services every two weeks. He would have preferred Anderson to take over a complete Sunday to provide Legge with a stretch of 13 days to work in the Chinese mission or to go to Canton and help Chalmers. Worse, even the two sermons a month that Anderson provided were highly unsatisfactory. "He is the reverse of strong". It quickly became clear that even this limited work was too much for Anderson, and he soon told Legge he could not continue any English preaching. Legge's huge problem was made only worse, he told Mullens, when Tidman's April letter had arrived with its complete silence on the topic of a new minister for the Union Church.

Tidman's continued criticism of Legge in that letter made everything worse and Legge was clearly resentful at Tidman's patronizing and scolding attitude. The help that James had hoped for from his cousin John Legge had also fallen through, as John's tuberculosis had become worse and he would not leave Australia. Chalmers and members of the Union Church pressed Legge to leave the LMS and take on the Union Church job as a full-time effort, with a promise of excellent support. Although he initially gave a "hesitating agreement" to this, longer reflection led him to worry about the mission.

In part this reflected problems with Anderson and strains that developed in their relationship. Anderson wrote Tidman in July, complaining that Mrs. Legge intimated Anderson was unwilling to preach in English. Anderson explained he had initially refused because he expected Gillespie to arrive soon, but after that plan failed he had agreed to preach once every Sabbath. Anderson failed to mention that Union Church held two services every Sabbath, and claimed that Legge eventually told Anderson his services were needed only once in a fortnight. He was "astonished, although by no means disappointed at the request for (only) one sermon a fortnight". This seems disingenuous and a reflection of Anderson's inability to recognize the poor quality of his preaching. The Union Church and Legge now equally realized that Anderson's preaching was not an asset to the church but Anderson apparently resisted this interpretation, and instead insisted to Tidman that "several of the leading men in the Church had entreated me to preach often". Unfortunately his activities were now starting to create divisions within the congregation, and when a big Special Meeting of the church was held under

the chairmanship of Chalmers, Anderson told the group that if he had known the LMS wanted him to do English preaching, he would not have come. Confusion continued, and when someone in the meeting asked if Anderson would be willing to take over Union Church when Legge left, he refused, explaining that by then he would be fluent in Chinese and working with the mission. He told Tidman that any young man would have a problem at Union Church “as long as Dr. Legge is here”, and confessed that the problems had created a coldness between himself and Legge.

Quite apart from the Union Church problems, the LMS was deeply worried about the financial crisis in Hong Kong. The Commercial Bank in Hong Kong had failed and was in bankruptcy proceedings in London, and both the Hong Kong and Shanghai missions had deposited some money in this bank, from which they earned interest. Legge had placed \$4,500 of the old church land sale proceeds with the Hong Kong branch, while the LMS in Shanghai had deposited even more. In June Mullens asked Legge and the Shanghai LMS station to collect all their other bank deposits and send that money to London. Legge sent proofs of the LMS deposits in the failed bank, and the legal authorization for the London LMS to present these to the bankruptcy court. Mullens was apologetic that the Directors were unable to change the payments for mission work Pastor Ho was doing at Boluo, because these were coming out of a special dedicated fund that was fixed.

On a more positive note, Mullens mentioned that the Directors did appreciate the good profit of \$2,000 in 1865 that the LMS Hong Kong press generated under Legge’s oversight. Legge was almost pathetically grateful for this recognition. It was “the first reference or acknowledgment of the kind which has ever been made in my experience”. He was proud to report that the press was working hard on an order from Wylie, now working for the Bible Society, for 20,000 copies of the Chinese New Testament, and if his press were larger he could take on even more orders from them. Legge was again the Superintendent of the press, pointing out that when he came to the east he knew nothing of printing. “But I’ve learned a lot and can keep it going”. He asked what plans the Directors had for the press when he left, urging them to hire an English printer as the Superintendent. Obviously there was no relief for the press to be expected from Anderson.

The most that Mullens could offer concerning the broader complaint about unfair salaries in the south China missions was that the Directors would be reviewing all those salaries. In the meantime they were authorizing another special grant to Chalmers. It must have disheartened Legge to discover that nothing was mentioned about the failure of the Directors to provide child allowances to himself, who was still supporting his

children even though they were now living in Scotland. He was now supporting two households.

In July Legge wrote Mullens, having learned from Hannah that the LMS was going to send out a Mr. Morris as the new minister for the Union Church. Mullens was sympathetic about the pressing work at Union Church, and praised it and the LMS press in Hong Kong. He knew it was the only remaining LMS printing press in China and hoped that Andrew Wylie in his new job with the Bible society in Beijing would send in good orders for work. It might even be possible to convince the Bible Society to pay the salary of the Press Superintendent. Mullens also seemed to be more effective in London than Tidman in settling the pressing matter of the legal documents the Union Church needed concerning its new building, the Declaration of Trust concerning its property, and Resolutions supporting those of the Union Church of a year earlier. This cheering news was offset by Legge's health problems when he became ill with malaria again in July and across August.

In October the south China mission men sent their bank deposits to the LMS, along with a certificate for \$4,452 describing what had been their deposit in the failed Commercial Bank. The London Directors only mildly acknowledged the problems arising from the losses to the missions from their deposits in this failed bank, and pressed the mission to send further sums, funds loaned out by Legge on behalf of the LMS as mortgages; he returned £335 of these and was awaiting two final repayments.

The Union Church congregation was finally able to guarantee a salary to a new minister by late October, and Legge sent their promise to the Directors; all were hoping that a new man would be sent at once. Mullen's best news arose from the benefit of his visit to Hong Kong and Canton nine months earlier. Pressures from Legge and the Union Church had managed to convince the Directors to send another man to the Hong Kong mission specifically for the Union Church, to compensate for Anderson's less than effective work. Even his studies for the Chinese mission were not going particularly well as Anderson reported only slow progress in learning Chinese after a year of efforts. Mullens urged him on with technical advice; "when you are able, I hope you will follow Dr. Legge's good example and employ the Blackboard".

In October the Directors confirmed what Hannah had already told Legge, that they had hired Scot Rev. D.B. Morris as pastor for the church. He would be leaving on the expensive overland route via the Red Sea on 20 November. They described Morris as "a nice fellow, about 28 or 30, hearty, genial, cheerful, an earnest preacher and a kind friend", with first-class health. Once Morris was arrived, the Directors asked Legge to ask the Union Church to reimburse the LMS for the £144 costs the Directors had

advanced him for his trip. Mullens did not want to emphasize the pecuniary aspects of Morris' appointment, but the Directors expected the Union Church to pay Morris £300 and to provide him with a house. Mullens pressed Legge on a remaining financial problem, as Legge, on behalf of Union Church, had still not sent the Directors the £38.2.6 they sought as repayment for the solicitors' fees they had incurred in completing the legal documents for Union Church. In the meantime the solicitors' firm had dissolved, but the Directors wanted the money forwarded. "I'm sure you just overlooked it". The directors clearly considered Union Church to be an independent entity required to pay its own expenses even though it existed as a creation of the LMS, staffed by LMS men.

The Directors praised Morris in a way that provided a backhanded insult to the men in the mission field. Mullens reported "some think him too good to be lost to the home ministry". This was the same prejudice that Legge had encountered in theological school decades earlier and ironically revealed the snobbery against missions even within the LMS. Nonetheless, Legge could now be relieved that with Morris he had a replacement for the work at the Union Church, and with Anderson he had a helper for the Chinese mission work.

#### Mission work in Canton

Canton saw steady changes in the mission in 1866. Eitel married Miss Eaton on 2 January 1866, was pleased to be accepted into the LMS for work in Boluo, and soon began sending long reports about his plans for that work. In February Turner returned to Canton from furlough, met Rev. and Mrs. Anderson in Hong Kong, and expected that Eitel's move to Boluo might take longer than expected. By April Chalmers was applying for furlough, his health weakened over time. Most of Chalmers' children had been in England since 1858 and his wife was eager to see them again.

Progress in the Canton mission was still erratic. Turner wrote of his frustrations with the complex language demands. Chalmers and Turner learned one dialect, Punti, but many people spoke Hakka. The mission was having trouble finding a good Chinese teacher for its school and wondered if it would be allowed to hire a secular Chinese teacher because there was no local Chinese Christian available. The very slow pace of progress in Canton disheartened Turner, and by August Eitel in Boluo was also sick and discouraged. Some members of the congregation there were involved in crime and litigation, and two were suspected of kidnapping men and secretly exporting them in the vicious "coolie trade" that was springing up for labourers in the gold fields of Australia and California. Turner's sick wife in England had recovered to the point that she wanted

to return to China and join him in Canton, and he sought LMS permission for this, asking approval for her taking the steamer route via the Cape. The overland route was more expensive, and the passenger trade in sailing ships to China had virtually vanished, so she would have no company on a sailing ship other than the captain and crew. Turner reminded Mullens that on the 1864 trip that Turner and his wife took returning to England when she was ill, the lack of passengers and a doctor, combined with rough treatment by the crew had harmed his wife's health.

Illness now affected Eitel, who suffered serious bowel disorders that persisted across the summer and into the fall, and by late September the other men were beginning to worry about his survival. Even the help of friendly Dr. Kane in Hong Kong had not really cured him. In mid-October Eitel's wife gave birth to a son, and Eitel began to recover. The Chalmers had a third daughter born in December and the mission was soon looking forward to the arrival of Mrs. Turner, whose steamer trip had been approved. Turner began publishing a weekly Canton missionary newspaper that was distributed to 10,000, although it is not clear who comprised this large circulation. Late in the year he wrote Mullens to report that both Legge and the Union Church congregation had met Morris, the new Union Church minister, and had found him acceptable. Despite these hopeful events, the local committee wrote London pointing out that with the anticipated departure of both Chalmers and Legge early in 1867, the south China missions were again facing a shortage of staff.

#### Legge works with prisoners

In the Hong Kong mission James wrote Hannah of his heavy workday in July, preaching at four services then visiting five pirates in jail sentenced to death. There were problems and rivalries between different churchmen over access to prisoners. According to the colonial rules the Chaplain had "exclusive rights" to the prisoners because of his official government appointment and Legge accepted that policy, but he argued that if the Chaplain failed to do the job then others should be allowed to visit prisoners of their own creeds. Informally, other churchmen were allowed to visit, and James complained about the Roman Catholic priest being "permitted to grind away all night on one poor pirate", seeking a convert. The Anglican Chaplain to the jails complained to the government, indignant that both RC priests and Nonconformist ministers were allowed to visit prisoners. The problem was that the Anglican Chaplain "couldn't be bothered to visit any of them and turned the task over to his deputy Mr. Warren – who also couldn't be bothered".



Legge took the prison work seriously, again risking his standing in the British community by becoming a champion of a prisoner Legge was convinced was being treated unjustly. In mid-summer he became certain that a prisoner scheduled to be hanged as part of a group of pirates that attacked the *Caesar* on 14 June, was in fact innocent. Legge became obsessed with documenting the problems with Wong Meishing's case, starting with reading the details in the logbook of a ship the *Onhing*. In late July he pressed information that proved the man's innocence in a long correspondence with the acting Colonial Secretary, Auditor-General W. Hepburn Rennie. Legge pointed out that the Court had accepted the Captain's log as "satisfactory", yet that log book listing ports of call and pay lists proved that Wong Meishing had been employed on the boat working elsewhere at the time of the pirate attack. The Court's error had been in a mistaken identification of Wong by a Malay in the pirate group. After some months seven of the nine prisoners in the condemned group were executed, but the man whose innocence Legge had argued, was spared and he was reprieved.

Pirates had just recently burned to death another LMS missionary, Robert Jermain Thomas (1839-1866), under circumstances that Legge found cast a highly dubious light on that mission man. Thomas' wife had died three months after their marriage and just after their arrival in China. He was apparently somewhat unreliable, was fired from his LMS work and took a job in the Chinese Customs Service before seeking a return to mission work, asking for a posting to Mongolia, to set out from Beijing. His death occurred on a boat loaded with arms on a secret trip to Korea, in a Korean river, far from where he should have been. The Korean navy warned the boat to stop but Thomas urged the Captain to continue his course up the river to the capital, so the Koreans boarded it and set it on fire. All were roasted to death. Legge wondered what Thomas was doing on that boat because he was supposed to be in Beijing. His "errant tendencies led him to pay a terrible price".

### The LMS press

The LMS press in Hong Kong was continuing to thrive and it generated annual profits that now exceeded a missionary salary. It had become even more important when the LMS press in Shanghai was dismantled and all the equipment sold. Its brilliant scholarly printer Andrew Wylie had resigned from the LMS a few years earlier to join the British and Foreign Bible Society as a printer, moving to Beijing as its agent in 1863. Legge complained that now that the Shanghai press no longer existed, the BFBS

now expected his Hong Kong press to do all its work even though Legge did not have the equipment to do the quantities it needed.

Chinese Classics: volume III is selling, Legge works on volume IV

Legge wrote Hannah news about the latest books, the two parts of volume III, the *Book of History*, published in July 1865. The information from Trübner was modestly pleasing. By April 1866 they had sold six sets of the now four-volume set in one week, and 60 copies of the new two books of volume III in the first six weeks after publication.

Legge was busy re-writing large sections of his earlier translation of volume IV, the *Book of Poetry*, which he named the She King (*Shijing*), as his translation and research skills had improved since his initial version. He hoped to have the new text completed by June, and to begin ordering paper and ink from England. He expected to complete all his Notes by the end of the year, leaving him with only the introductory essay to complete while the rest of the book was being printed. Then in November 1866 he was unsettled to discover an unfamiliar Chinese Commentary that discussed every poem in the Book, written possibly 2,000 years earlier. Arising from that discovery he had to translate that Commentary for his own research use, to make sure that he understood each poem with the advantage of this additional perspective. He knew this would make his Notes longer but wanted to ensure they were as accurate as possible even if they were just “for the one person in 100 who will not find them to be a bit too much. For that hundredth man I ought to write; & it is only by doing so that I can make the whole book of permanent value, something that will be referred to hundreds of years hence”. By now he was fully aware of the magnitude of his accomplishment and of the value of the volumes yet to be completed.

Legge was still enthralled with the work even though it cost much effort. “My heart often shrinks within me when I think of all the labour to be done on this one work in hand. But page gets trotted after page – it is just like ascending the Peak – if you stand at the bottom and dwell on the distance and the steepness of the ascent, the feet almost refuse to move. The total seems too great to be undertaken. But gird up your loins & go at it, you pant & groan & perspire – but ere long the summit is attained”. He described a day in which he was constantly interrupted by callers and problems in the mission, but by 9 PM became fully engrossed to the point of being exhilarated. He found the work on the Notes and essays as “very absorbing but not straining”, in comparison with his struggles in translating the poetry or the essays in the volumes on philosophy, when he had to “create lofty rhymes” or elaborate on philosophical discussions.

The constant mental activity excited him, especially when his critical examinations “throw light on general topics & then there is the effort to find the place of China in the

scheme of universal history & thought". He hoped his research would clarify the importance of Chinese history, and was thrilled when "it came out beautifully how entirely fabulous the accounts are that carry the history of China up to more than 2,000 years before Christ. ...the first founder can be traced coming out from the wild hordes towards Thibet some 1600 years BC as plainly as the first Napoleon emerges from Corsica in the last century". He was clearly relishing the scholarly work and trying to link the texts with the broader world of scholarship concerning the origins of human cultures.

#### Piracy of Legge's Classics by Baker in USA

The success of Legge's first three volumes quickly led to outrageous thefts of his work through publication piracy. In 1866 Mr. Baker in Massachusetts published Legge's work in the United States, brazenly making only a tiny reference to the fact that the work had been done by Legge, and omitting entirely to seek Legge's permission or to share the proceeds. In October his publisher Trübner forced Legge to reissue the books in an effort to reassert copyright, this time in an edition that eliminated the gorgeous Chinese text so as to appeal more to the general educated public. In his preface of this 1867 edition of volume I Legge made scornful reference to Baker's piracy, pointing out all the errors in Baker's knowledge and the flaws in his judgments and reasoning. This was not the last time his work would be pirated.

#### Legge's life alone and exhausted

Legge's days were full but he missed Hannah and his children since their departure in February 1866. He considered every bit of completed work as bringing him closer to a reunion with her, "Ah my darling, if you could only see my heart – how you are entwined about every fibre of my being..." He added a charming story about the power of females, starting with the chickens in his coop. The hen flew the coop and made the cock angry. James enticed the hen to return by laying a trail of food and got her back inside, but the cock ignored her for a day and usurped nesting on her eggs. Finally after a day she was back on her eggs and they were "unusually affectionate today. So are domestic quarrels in human circles happily made up. The lady had done wrong but she managed to bring her lord to her feet". Legge's daughter Mary and her husband Richard Hawke went to Hong Kong toward the end of the year but Legge lived alone.

Legge's separation from his family led him to be introspective in a letter to his brother William in November 1866. He reminisced about his first awareness of spiritual matters as a young man, first through seeing great beauty in nature, expanding to transcendent feelings beyond the beauty of forests to include "the beauty of woman's face, and reverence for female character took delicious possession of me". Legge's health

was currently stable for even though he realized he should lose 30-40 pounds, he was feeling well and assured his brother that he still had the vigour to walk from Aberdeen to Huntly as well as in his youth. Writing to Marian at the end of the year he mused on Hannah's absence. "Sometimes I am ready to murmur that she is not here, but one thing now and then occurs to me – that you have been rendered much happier by her going to England. I dare not nurse my murmuring thoughts. It was necessary that she should go home & that I should continue here for a time. My prayer is very earnest that God will watch over her and you and Edie and all the others, and over me, and give us a sweet reunion. ... You are my dear child and I love you dearly. Ever your loving father".

Despite encouraging news from his publisher, Legge was sinking under his workload at the mission and all the conflicts at Union Church, reporting anxieties "more than I can bear". By late 1866 his health had become erratic, he started to suffer debilitating pain in his right arm from his long hours of daily writing and decided that he could not continue any more in Hong Kong. His work as minister to English and Chinese congregations, LMS mission chief, and printer, and his work for the government Board of Education were all demanding, but his thoughts were with his sick wife in Scotland. He told the UC congregation that he was planning to return to United Kingdom to be with his wife and children, and published a Notice in the *China Mail* announcing his plans to leave the colony. The LMS had finally found a successor for Union Church in Rev. D. B. Morris, but the fractious congregation was having trouble collecting the amount needed for the salary.

Legge was unable to attend the annual St. Andrew's Day dinner in December but was surprised to learn later that his name had been included in a list of those honoured in the toasts to Robbie Burns and other favourites. He was told that when his name was read out "everyone applauded". Legge was going to tease the toastmaster that "he must have taken too much toddy when he spoke in such a way". James Legge was no longer the Nonconformist outsider in the rigid hierarchies of colonial life.

### Chapter 55 Final days in Hong Kong, Union Church troubles

*In which Morris comes to Union Church but problems arise, Legge leaves Hong Kong, and his legacies in public institutions are honoured.*

News reached the LMS in London in early April 1867 of the death of David Livingstone, its famous missionary in Africa. He had been accepted by the LMS in 1838, one year before Legge, hoping to go to China but deflected by the first Sino-British war, going instead to Africa in a vigorous anti-slavery campaign. Livingstone left the LMS in 1857, this 1867 death report was a false alarm, and he continued his explorations until his death in Africa six years later.

### Massive explosion in Hong Kong

On 14 January 1867 Legge was visiting friends Mr. and Mrs. Cairns when all were startled as the windows suddenly blew in and “the glass all smashed to shivers by a tremendous convulsion in the atmosphere, accompanied by a horrid noise of some explosion and a rumbling underground movement which was very frightful. Was it an earthquake? Was it preliminary to some general rising of the Chinese? Mrs. Cairns disappeared instantly. Her instinct had carried her to her baby. Cairns turned pale and jumped about the room” (H. E. Legge, 1905), p.173.

What had happened was a huge explosion in the 80 tons of gunpowder that were being stored by merchants on an old hulk anchored near the prison island, the Stonecutter’s Island. A schooner had come alongside it to offload more powder and somehow it had ignited. A huge black cloud of sulphurous smoke rose and gradually filled the air from the island to Mount Davis on the western tip of Hong Kong, “heavy, gloomy, grand, and terrible. Below, nothing was to be seen. Of the two vessels, and two junks that had been near, not a fragment could be discovered.” A huge wave was triggered that rolled onto the Hong Kong shore.

The blasts were so powerful that every building in Hong Kong was harmed, including the Mission house which lost 20 panes of glass. The air pressure forced a door open with such power that the screws on the hinges tore out an inch of wood as they burst free. It also caused the roof of the Chapel in the Chinese bazaar to collapse, and major repairs were urgently required to protect the building from the rain.

### Legge’s final sermon at Union Church,, and new minister Morris arrives

Legge conducted his last two services in Union Church in January 1867. On the 8<sup>th</sup> he gave his “usual annual sermon to young men”, so inspiring that the *China Mail* reported it at some length. He told the congregation he was “amused and grieved” to

find anthropologists in England and Emerson in the US selecting bits from his texts and writing “as if Confucianism were something better than the Bible”. He countered that there was no difference in what was good, “whatever is good and true in the writings of China and other nations, ... is of God”. Nevertheless the Bible was special in that “it makes known God’s plan of salvation, lays down the way of happiness, and irradiates the path of duty”, with words that are for all ages and all classes. He praised the vigour and selflessness of young men, recognizing that after 30 years away from his father’s house he was no longer young “but thank God, I have not lost the freshness of the heart which falls like dew, and out of all the lovely things we see, extracts emotions beautiful and new”. He sympathized with them, many separated from the loving influences of their families and the congenial friendships of their childhoods, encouraged them to take on leadership in the community without developing a spirit of “worldly ambitious covetousness”. He quoted Confucius on the three sins that must be guarded against at the three stages of a man’s life: lust in youth, quarrelsomeness in midlife, and covetousness in old age.

Legge’s final sermon as minister to Union Church on 13 January was also published in the *China Mail*, which seemed finally to have accepted his positive contributions to the community despite editor Shortrede’s persistent and often sarcastic anti-mission stance. In that final sermon Legge explained that when he set out as a missionary to the Chinese he had never expected to become pastor to an English congregation. He had also never expected to see the chapel grow from its original “old house” used by the congregation for 20 years, to the “edifice” now so large it needed its own full-time minister. He wished the union between the church and Rev. Morris to be “greatly blessed and long abiding”, and expected to remain as a member of the congregation across his last year with them.

Rev. D.B.Morris, the new LMS minister to Union Church came from Scotland where he was in the rather hierarchical Church of Scotland, although the LMS and the Union Church congregation were under the impression he was English and congregationalist, as that is where he was working when he was accepted for the Hong Kong posting. His first meeting with the church trustees in early 1867 was not reassuring to Legge.

Legge’s misgivings were amplified late in January when he held his last meeting with the Union Church committee, turning over the chairmanship to Morris. Members gave speeches, not all of them successful. “Warren spoke well & short, but he has no humour and less wit. (Interim minister) Anderson, as Cuddie Headrigg said to

Rumbleberry, “fleytit (scolding) and sontit like a fleeing dragon”; and Mr. Morris “went all abroad, and was feeble without any point”<sup>40</sup>. The best speech was made by Yankee Capt. Barrett “who used fine Yankee wit”, the best Legge had ever heard, “I have not had such a hearty laugh for a long time.” Despite his reservations about both the new LMS men Anderson and Morris, which Legge privately wrote to Hannah, he was pleased with the tone of the meeting and tried to be hopeful about the affairs of the church.

Now free of all formal obligations, Legge decided to preach in the Chinese chapel the next Sunday, and by chatting with people in the street before the service he collected a good crowd including many who stayed to talk with him after. “I enjoyed the whole thing a great deal more than if I had been preaching in Union Church”. He felt free on Sundays for the first time in his life.

#### A job offer in Japan

Legge’s old friend Sir Harry Parkes, now the first British Ambassador to the court of the Japanese “Tycoon”, the Prime Minister, soon offered a fantastic job to Legge. He wanted Legge to start a government college in Japan, but Legge decided he was no longer young enough to take on such a big job “outside Europe or the United States”, a job that would demand considerable mastery of Japanese language and culture. Now that volume III was in general distribution Legge was taken aback by the voluminous and demanding correspondence across 1866 about his Chinese books from the great French Sinologist Stanislas Julien of the Sorbonne. “His letters to me bristle with compliments”. Julien wrote long letters in a tiny precise hand in French and Chinese, seeking comments from Legge on translation problems.

#### Legge applies to leave Hong Kong at end of 1867

In late January 1867 Legge wrote Mullens in London asking permission to join his wife in Britain, to leave Hong Kong by the end of the year. This would mean an end to his mission work for the society in Hong Kong after 27 years of efforts, but was not phrased as a formal resignation from the LMS. Legge’s plans may have been uncertain, as he knew that he would have to return to the Hong Kong to complete the printing of some of his books, and asked “a very important favour”, permission to continue to use the LMS Press to finish his massive project. Expert printer Huang was returning from Shanghai and could take over as Superintendent of the LMS Press. Legge ruminated that he had suffered for six years working alone at the Hong Kong mission, blaming

---

<sup>40</sup> Cuddie Headrigg was a Scots countryman known for pithy dialect comments in Sir Walter Scott’s Old Mortality.

Tidman for the disregard of his difficult situation. His feelings of being neglected and alone were made even more intense since he'd had to send Hannah and his children back to Britain, and this letter had a morose tone that was not typical of Legge.

#### Union Church inducts Morris as minister and ends with good wishes to Legge

In early February 1867 the UC inducted Rev. Morris as its new minister, and the congregation held a lively reception to welcome him and to say goodbye to Legge in a series of speeches. Everyone understood that this was also the final formal connection between the church and Legge, and although no one realized it at the time this event also marked the end of his work as a missionary for the LMS. Legge welcomed Morris, noting that he had seemed "somewhat frightened at the barrenness of the island". While Legge agreed it was barren, he thought the view of the bay was the finest in the world. Men of the congregation were proud to report that they were able to provide the new minister with a noble building and a "pulpit gown".

Morris responded with a speech that included a number of feeble jokes, and tried to establish his scholarly credentials by emphasizing the genius of his Glasgow Prof. William Thomson, later knighted as Lord Kelvin. Morris explained he was a Scots Presbyterian who had ended up only by chance as a pastor of a congregational church in London. This was a delicate point as the Union Church was certainly a congregational church that disagreed with the hierarchical church structure of the Scots Presbyterian church. This gave Legge the opportunity to talk about his father Ebenezer in a subtle way contrasting his own egalitarian traditions with the more hierarchical tradition that Morris was bringing to the job. Of Ebenezer, Legge said, "Though he could not speak anything but Scotch... he was as great a genius as Prof. William Thomson, weak in body but strong in mind, with a heart as big as the whole world". Ebenezer had always opposed the Tory aristocracy and the Scots Presbyterian Church, a congregationalist who considered "the kirk as a kind of Satan", far to the extreme from the established Presbyterian Church in which Morris had been reared. Legge concluded with an emollient, emphasizing that Union Church was home now to people of many different denominational backgrounds. Turner from Canton made welcoming comments justifying missionaries doing work with both Chinese and English congregations, and Rev. Lechler, the German who had played such an honest role during Legge's problems with Gutzlaff nearly 20 years earlier, concluded the event by hoping that the "people might thirst after the truth".

After settling in at Union Church Morris reported to Mullens that Legge had been helpful in the transition "to the utmost of his powers", and explained he planned to



enlist the help of the Union Church congregation in local mission work. In mid-February Morris' report of his new job in Hong Kong was still a bit tentative, "I like it much better now than at first sight", again praising Legge's help. On March 1<sup>st</sup> he was still unsettled but repressing this, "I begin to feel at home and happy in my work". A new topic emerged, with Morris pleading with Mullens "to send out my sweet angel to me" along with a guardian, by at least September. Just who this sweet angel was, was a later surprise.

#### Hannah ill in Dollar urgently needs Legge, and the South China missions reorganize

But Legge's plan for a year in Hong Kong with more time for quiet scholarly work with Wang Tao on the Classics was suddenly thrown into disarray when James learned in early February 1867 that Hannah was gravely ill in Dollar. The news was so dire he needed to leave immediately, and booked a passage for 1 March.

This sudden change in the mission was a major blow to all the LMS men in the local committee, and in late February they held an emergency meeting to decide how to manage Legge's unexpectedly early departure. Agreeing with his recommendation, they decided that James Anderson age 26, (who had been so unsuccessful with the Union Church and who was having trouble learning Chinese), should move to Canton where it would be easier to learn the Cantonese dialect. Turner was hopeful about this plan, noting that Anderson's separation from Union Church, where his conflicts with Legge had taken place, would remove him "from the scene of many vexations". In a swap, the older and more experienced Turner would move from Canton to take over Legge's mission duties in Hong Kong.

Union Church held its annual general meeting in late February and members again thanked Legge for all his work. In his response he made fleeting reference to the fact that he was leaving Hong Kong "little richer than when he came", but was gratified by all that had been achieved with the church.

Turner lamented the great losses to the missions with the departures of both Chalmers and Legge. Turner had some idea of how demanding the Hong Kong station was, including the additional work of supervising the large LMS Press, but he soon learned there were other problems with the mission. The old original Chinese chapel in the bazaar had been badly damaged by the big gunpowder explosion in January, when half the roof fell in and also damaged the floor. In April Turner asked LMS permission to use \$2,000 of the old Union Church property sale funds to build a new Chinese chapel, as architects advised him this would be cheaper than repairing the old building. Originally the maintenance and repairs of this building had been supported by the

interest earned by the £3,500 from the sale of the old Union Church, but now that money had been sent to London as the LMS tried to draw back cash from the missions.

Turner's situation improved when his wife and children arrived 10 days after Legge's departure in March. Mrs. Turner had become so ill in Canton in 1864 that she and the children had returned to Britain, and Turner was anxious for their return. Their voyage had been a nightmare in which their ship *Agamemnon* broke down three times, then collided with another ship near Singapore, wrecking, and forcing them to transfer to a mail steamer for the final leg of the trip.

Hapless Anderson had mixed feelings about his move to Canton, for although "I may say that I have for some time felt disappointed in Hong Kong as a mission station – it is not China", yet he had made English friends there and was now afraid of being alone in Canton with the departure of Chalmers, having had only one year in which to study Chinese. He began preaching short sermons in Canton in late April, and was relieved to discover that congregation numbers did not drop off too much after Chalmers' departure. Then new problems affected the staffing in Canton. Mrs. Eitel was seriously ill with tuberculosis, confirmed by a certificate from Dr. Wong that ordered her to go north to a cooler climate. The Eitels headed north, and by the time they reached Xiamen she was so ill a doctor there said her disease in her right lung was so severe there was no hope of recovery. The Eitels decided to stay in the north for six months across the summer, with longer-term plans undetermined. Anderson now alone in Canton, complained his position was "now very hard. Please send another man" to help.

Legge's last LMS report to Mullens from Hong Kong summarized his success in retrieving as instructed, all the outstanding money from mortgages, six weeks early. This meant he was able to send London the final £3,500 of money generated from the land sale of the old Union Church. He was asking his son-in-law businessman Mr. Hawke, to handle any remaining financial Hong Kong transactions to the LMS and supported Turner's request to keep \$2,000 available in Hong Kong for dealing with the collapsed Chinese chapel.

#### Legge is feted by the Chinese and British at departure

Surprised by the suddenness of Legge's departure in 1867, members of the Chinese community (not just his congregation), commissioned a large silver –bronze memorial plaque engraved with a lavish message thanking him for his years of work teaching them, and praising him for his knowledge and virtues. In part the inscription read:

“Not only is he endowed with extraordinary powers, investigating things to the root, pushing his researches into the classical writings and ancient monuments of our literature, and then translating them for the benefit of the world; but he is also humble, cordial to scholars, loving all creatures, and benevolent to the people. His services have been freely given to the utmost extent of his strength, on every application, whether it was from the Government of the Colony, or from any scholar, merchant or common individual. Hardships have been redressed by him; perplexities resolved; doubts removed, and evils that had long festered dispersed. The kindness and compassion of his heart, and the harmony and generosity of his deportment have made men admiringly look up to him. All the residents of Hong Kong, both Chinese and others, with different tongues, but a common sentiment, speak his praise to each other”. (H. E. Legge, 1905) p. 203)

This tablet was made by engraver Liching on a sheet of silver ten by twelve inches, hung in a substantial mahogany frame. The text was decorated with two dragons guarding the lower corners and two birds decorating the upper. The handsome tribute was put on display in Lane & Crawford’s premises in September 1867, shortly to be sent to Legge in Scotland.

The British community also planned honours and sent out a public notice in the newspaper inviting donations for a gift, soon sending Legge a cheque for £500 along with a warm letter signed by 240 members of the community as a token of gratitude for all his work for the well-being of the colony. Legge left Hong Kong on 1 March and in July he sent a letter of thanks from Huntly, to be published in the *China Mail*, implying that this generous gift would be used to educate his children. He reported on Hannah's improved health, apologized for the imperfections of his work in Hong Kong, and expressed the hope that he and his family would return to Hong Kong to work on his Classics and to return to mission work. Legge was 51 and still in the middle of life, and it seemed he still saw mission work in China in his future.

Chalmers had planned to leave the Canton mission on the ship *Agamemnon* on which Mrs. Turner and the children had been expected. When it failed to arrive because of its shipwreck, Chalmers and family decided to take witty Capt. Barrett’s American sailing ship the *Windward*, planning to cross the Atlantic from South Africa to New York. From there they would take a steamer to Glasgow and a train to Aberdeen. Chalmers, a faithful and effective worker for the mission for 15 years, was dismayed at his Canton mission being left in the hands of the incompetent James Anderson. In the

event, Chalmers' ship became stuck on a sand bar six days out of Hong Kong and had to return for repairs.

#### Canton mission problems after Chalmers leaves

The Canton mission in 1867 was now in fragile condition with ineffective Anderson alone there. He soon quarreled with the British Consul, who was trying to prevent the LMS having access to its property in Boluo, access that was justified on the basis of the 1842 treaty, and access that had not been any problem when Eitel was working there. Anderson pointed out later treaty revisions made it clear the Protestants had the same rights of access to inland China that the Roman Catholics had, and the Consul should support this right. In October Eitel and his sick wife returned to Canton from their health leave, and he returned to work in Boluo, an early task being the sorting out the "true Christians" from the scoundrels in the three villages in which there were chapels. Eitel warned Mullens to ensure that in the budget for 1868 the LMS included \$300 child allowance for him consistent with Mullen's agreement of \$25 per month per child in their December 1865 south China missions meeting in Canton.

#### Turner has accounting, building, and Press problems in Hong Kong

In April 1867, one month after Legge's departure, Turner in Hong Kong began to realize how many different tasks Legge had handled in running the complex mission. Turner was flummoxed by demands from the LMS to provide a budget following "current rules". He had no idea how to do a budget, had never seen any rules, and asked for more detailed instructions. When Legge had confronted complex financial records in Malacca after the sudden cholera death of his station senior Evans, he handled the whole business quite masterfully using double-entry bookkeeping in his reports to London, probably having learned it as a teen-ager helping his father's business.

There were other problems in Hong Kong. Turner discovered that only one wing of the mission house was habitable, with the west wing unbearably hot and airless, crowded by other buildings that had been erected over time. Legge and Turner had discussed the problems with this old building and agreed it should be sold, although not until the financial situation of Hong Kong improved and better land prices could be expected. Turner now asked LMS for Powers of Attorney for himself and Morris, so they could sell this old building as soon as the market improved.

The Printing Office was also turning into a major problem for Turner because printing supervision and financial records were requiring much of his time. Most of the printing was for the Bible Society, and Turner agreed with Legge's argument that the Bible Society should hire its own printer and send him to do the work using the LMS

press. Turner learned that Legge had charged the Bible Society the costs of the materials and work plus 10%, which kept the cost of the Bibles very low for their purchasers. Printer Huang however, explained that this pricing system was insufficient to cover the true costs. Legge's pricing was not commercial but altruistic, and did not take into account the wear and tear on the punches, types, machinery, building repairs, taxes, and the salaries of the printer and his assistants. The profits generated by the press had been solely derived from the sales of type made in the type-foundry, not from the printing. Turner told the LMS that at a minimum the Bible Society should pay £100 of the LMS missionary's salary for all the supervision he was required to do for these big printing jobs.

The press was also having problems arising from new competition. Turner learned that the American Presbyterian Mission in Shanghai was now selling Chinese type and matrices much more cheaply than the Hong Kong LMS press could, so the past profits on this product could no longer be expected and there might not be enough income from the press to support a European printer, long Legge's hope. With further dismay Turner discovered that Huang was now making his own set of printing matrices using a new cheaper electrotype process, and when these were completed Huang would compete for business with the LMS press, reducing the market value of the LMS matrices. In Turner's report there was no hint that Huang was doing anything improper, although there turned out to be significant ambiguities in Huang's project that soon turned into a nasty problem.

Turner wrote Mullens of his financial struggles in the Hong Kong mission. He was as annoyed as Legge had been by the continuing failure of the LMS to acknowledge that all the salaries in the missions should be on a standard scale. He knew their situation in south China was unfair because the north China and Indian mission staff were still all paid more. He had even heard that the LMS was going to refuse the local committee's request, and warned Mullens that unlike Legge, he did not have any access to private money to help him out. Turner was even more annoyed when he discovered that when he had gone to England to take his sick wife home, the LMS cut his allowance during his England stay more than they cut the allowance of other China mission men when they had gone to England. "I ended up in financial embarrassments from which I have not yet freed myself". In Canton alone he had just barely been able to manage with his salary, but now his family had returned to his household, increasing his expenses and Hong Kong was more expensive. Turner apologized for pressing the matter with Mullens, but his situation was urgent and his needs imperative. He realized the LMS

had money problems, but hoped that with Legge's retirement from active service, the money thus released could be used to give himself an increase.

Mullens' June response to Turner was not helpful. He explained the LMS was very short of money and everyone was being asked to reduce expenditures. Still, now that Legge had arrived in London and Chalmers was expected soon, the Board would meet and consider Turner's requests, including the Child Allowance. Turner's August report was tetchy. The LMS had still not sent him any guidance about how to prepare a budget. He was even more annoyed that LMS refused to approve expenses for Canton mission work in Boluo that the local committee had assigned knowing there were funds available to support these expenses. The Hong Kong mission was still a major challenge to Turner because it involved considerable business administration, and he had "no guidance at all" (his stress) from the LMS, instead having to improvise using precedents from Legge's work.

Turner still had no word from the LMS by early October concerning his April request for funds to replace or repair the damaged Chinese chapel in the bazaar, and his temper was rising. The Press was bleeding money from the under-priced jobs for the Bible Society and type sales were down. The building was becoming dangerous from the leaky roof and infestations of white ants, and needed urgent repairs before the rainy season. Turner told Mullens that if he did not hear from the LMS about the expenditures for this work he would simply go ahead and do them. Printer Huang recommended the whole operation be moved to Canton where wages were cheaper, they could use Hobson's old hospital, and Eitel was willing to superintend it, but Turner knew that building could not be insured because it was "too close to Chinese houses". Turner's anxieties were increased by illness affecting his wife and himself, and the strain of an anti-gambling campaign he had initiated.

Finally late in October Turner received the LMS decisions, but they were aggravating rather than helpful. The Board refused to send Turner the Power of Attorney to permit sale of the Press as Turner had requested; "this is quite premature". This seems to have been an error, as what Turner asked for was legal authority to sell the main Mission building. Mullens outlined many details of ways of cutting back on expenses, scolded Turner that the Hong Kong accounts had to be tidied up, required any outstanding loans out of LMS money to be drawn up as formal Bills to be repaid, and again ordered full accounts had to be sent.

### Morris creates problems in Union Church

Morris in Union Church was now becoming a problem. Late in 1867 Morris wrote the LMS of the dismal economic situation in Hong Kong, explaining that conditions were so depressed that membership in Union Church was down, resulting in a reduction of Morris's income. The directors ruled on two of Morris's requests. He should prepare himself for mission work in south China with an LMS mission salary and "the usual allowances for a missionary", all less than he had been promised by Union Church. In the meantime the LMS told Morris to do direct mission work with the Chinese people in Hong Kong for which the LMS would supplement his Union Church income during this "temporary problem". Morris could study colloquial Chinese and help Turner. The LMS was willing to rescue Morris from his financial problems and still was in effect his default employer, even though Union Church had committed to provide full support. The loss of church membership was a hint that there might be other problems.

### LMS Directors decisions re money and work

Finally in December 1867 the LMS Board sent out a long document outlining policies relating to many of these property and financial problems. It also dealt publicly with salaries, and awarded the south China mission annual salaries for married men of £300 p.a. (\$1,440), and a Child Allowance of £15 (\$72) p.a. This was still a problem, for as long ago as 1847, Gillespie, Hobson, and Hirschberg had been receiving £400 p.a., reduced in a later hardship period in 1848 to £250 p.a. for married men. If Morris was not now receiving income at the LMS level from the Union Church, Turner was authorized to supplement it to the level of the regular mission stipend. The board was outraged by the Canton budget with Eitel's claim for £60 p.a. (\$300) for Child Allowance in 1867 and budget plans for the same in 1868. "In the entire history of the LMS no child allowance was ever that high". They hoped it was a mistake even though it had been written twice. The Board scolded the south China missions for spending money on doctors and medicines, "and last year Mr. Eitel's payment was very large. This is not done in other stations. You should pay for your own Dr. and Medicine". If a special and protracted illness developed, the missionary should apply to the Board for a special grant.

On Turner's request for LMS payment for Chinese language teachers, the Board spelled out its policy. It would pay for language lessons for five years for new missionaries but will not give Turner any, as he was neither a beginner nor a translator. Turner had been in Canton for four years, had returned to Britain for two years with his sick wife, and had been back in China for one year, so he just missed meeting that

criterion. The Directors also refused to pay for mission expenses such as watchmen, labourers, property taxes on mission buildings, or water rates. They scolded, these are all personal and domestic expenses and you should pay for all of them, not the LMS. The society would pay only for buildings used for public purposes. The problem with this ruling was that many missionary families lived within their mission houses, but if there was no room for a new family it had to get its own housing, leading to inequalities in expenses, a situation now aggravated with this ruling.

The Board was similarly imperious and aggressive concerning Turner's request for money for the Press. It noted that Dr. Legge "gave us large profits" from the Press, scolding Turner for not showing similar profits and now even seeking money for repairs to the roof. It seemed the Board had not paid attention to poor Turner's detailed explanation of the money problems at the Press. It demanded to know if Turner could not pay for the roof, the insurance, and the taxes. It complained that Pastor Ho was getting an allowance from the Hong Kong mission for housing, yet "that is not allowed elsewhere". They would not stop the payment, but Turner should not do it in the future; Ho should pay for his housing out of his salary.

The Directors ruled they would no longer pay for the Chinese school teachers in the small village schools established by the LMS; these would now have to be self-supporting "at the local level", as would any "native helpers" at the mission. The Chinese chapel in Canton was criticized for having been done on "too expensive a scale", and Turner was told that although the Chinese bazaar chapel was his most useful work, it was also too expensive. The only parts of the Chinese chapel expenses London approved were the rents, the salaries for the chapel-keepers, and repairs to the entrances. The Board approved a budget line for voyages for the Canton and Hong Kong missionaries so they could meet as a local committee, but all longer trips had to be approved both by the local men and by the Directors. They decided the Boluo mission was too costly, and assigned \$400 for Eitel's visits, with all other costs to be supplied from the local congregations.

In addition to managing all these financial problems, Turner was troubled early in the year by political events in Hong Kong, when the strong-minded new Governor Richard MacDonnell proposed to license gambling. Turner knew that the Chinese Christians would see this as a very bad sign revealing the immorality of Christians. It would be as bad as the opium trade and a "great disaster for mission work". Turner's analysis was that Governor MacDonnell proposed this as a way of reducing police corruption because the illegal gambling houses bribed the police to look away. Even so, illegal and secret gambling was much to be preferred as 1/100 the scale of the problems



that would arise from licensed gambling places. Turner explained that Governors had practically despotic powers as long as the home government supported them, so he urged the LMS to put pressure on the British government against this “vile scheme”. He wished Legge were still there to aid in his campaign, for although Turner had “fearlessly” criticized gambling he was not hopeful. Morris helped in the cause, preaching an intense sermon against gambling in August that the *China Mail* scorned for failing to bring “an overwhelming number of arguments to bear upon the position he assumed”. The December letter from the LMS Board held only one piece of good news for Turner: the Colonial Office had forbidden the Hong Kong government to raise any money from gambling.

At the end of 1867 Turner’s annual report of the Hong Kong mission noted that the printing press was losing money just as he had predicted in October, and the Shanghai mission press was now closed down thus no longer buying metal type or matrices, the only products that generated profits. He had hoped to use the Hong Kong press to print some of his own works and other important essays, but it was working at full capacity printing Bibles for the Bible Society, all at a loss. Turner was also eager to publish Pastor Ho’s Chinese Commentary on Mark, which had been ready for the press for two years, but was still in limbo. In the meantime a new American mission press in Shanghai was aggressively moving into publication, using its own type foundry and matrices for the hardware, and publishing a list of works far more extensive than the LMS press. They were actively marketing their type, and had produced a much greater variety of fonts than the LMS presses.

#### Shortrede reviews the Hong Kong library, schools, and missions

Shortly after Legge left Hong Kong, Shortrede of the *China Mail* wrote an editorial in May proposing a scheme to create a more effective library for the colony. Shortrede noted there were three small libraries run by men’s clubs for their members, (English, German, and Portuguese), there was the old Morrison Educational Society book collection rarely used by its collapsed membership, and the Victoria library run by a society annually on the verge of dissolution. Each library had problems. Shortrede proposed that the MES and Victoria libraries amalgamate, and that publishers be invited to send free “review” copies of new books to them. The new library could spend its members’ fees by publishing a catalogue of new books every six months, a catalogue that could be compiled by an educated volunteer. The proposal was basically a refinement of the ideas that Legge had proposed in 1863 when he had realized that the several small private libraries were not being helpful to the community.

Editor Shortrede continued to publish more proposals based on Legge's ideas in different ways, often adding his own critical comment. Legge had written to the MES early in 1867, summarizing his own educational efforts in the colony. Shortrede admired Legge for disregarding any "temptation to exalt his own labours or those of his class at the expense of facts". Legge concluded that the 13 years of effort he put into the Theological Seminary had basically been a failure even although the young men were successful in their studies, because none had gone on to do mission work in China, the aim of the Seminary. Shortrede agreed, adding that graduates did not go into mission work because they now had skills that they could use to earn much better incomes in other jobs. Legge "had gifted them with a knowledge which raised them above the mass of their fellow-countrymen, and ... the temptation to leave the toilsome and self-denying vocation of the church was the fact that their acquirements enabled them to command comparative opulence in secular employments." He urged missions to understand this in planning.

Legge had argued that mission work in China had been conducted with "more wisdom and efficiency" than secular, military, and commercial affairs but Shortrede disagreed, although he acknowledged that many governmental efforts in Hong Kong had been quite a mess. But in China he argued, the main problem with the Protestant missions had been their failure to cooperate with each other and sectarian jealousies seriously impaired their work. Legge had experienced some of these jealousies first hand, notably in the long conflict with Gutzlaff and in the struggles over the new Bible translation, but his own mission society had been founded exactly on the idea of combining men from diverse churches into a group that could work sharing only a few core beliefs. The class structure in Hong Kong laid substantial barriers to such a congenial approach, with the Church of England Bishop having formal governmental authority and support in a way that the non-denominational LMS did not. Peculiar turf wars arose for example, over access to the prisoners when the Established churchmen considered it their fiefdom but did not want to do the work, classic turf-war.

Arguments arising from Shortrede's essay continued in the next *China Mail* after some mission men defended the specific nature of denominational beliefs as the reason for separate missions, such as the Church of England's belief in the divine nature of its episcopal organization, or the Baptist fervour for total immersion. Shortrede disagreed and said that the overall expenditure in relation to the outcome of 30 years of effort was out of proportion. He dismissed justifications of differences in theology as trivial, scorned missions who sent out "ex-tinkers and tailors" simply because they were honest and men of zeal, or highly educated "university men such as in the Church of England

who inflict their wearisome speeches, misnamed sermons week after week upon our unwilling ears". He argued that missions needed the "very best talent and the very best discretion joined to the zeal and goodness which at present distinguished the mass of missionaries in China." It seems he now recognized Legge's value but remained a tough critic of missions.

The Central School that Legge had been so instrumental in creating had been thriving under its energetic Scots headmaster Frederick Stewart for six years, but as the economic depression continued in Hong Kong it was running short of money. As young Chinese men were unable to get jobs, their parents were more interested in sending them for more education, a phenomenon still seen in modern times, but fees were not enough to support all the students. In his report for 1867 Stewart noted that he had only two English masters and needed more. Worse, he now realized with despair that neither the students nor their parents expected the boys to learn anything about the world, about science, geography, arithmetic or history; the students' sole aim was mastering enough English to be able to get a better job. He was also discouraged to report that many of his schoolboys began to take on "airs" and associate only with other English-speaking boys, getting into mischief and acting in arrogant ways the school did not want. They had begun to appreciate their special status and to act with arrogance and entitlement in a way that did not reflect the values of the educators. Stewart even began worrying "I do not expect to find any great or lasting results in my time". He just hoped that the master who eventually succeeded him did not have to undo too much of his work.

Stewart was even more discouraged about the education in the Chinese village schools, in which rote learning of the sounds of Chinese characters was still being taught without the children having the slightest idea of the meaning of the characters. They could rattle off from memory the "Four Classics" without a flaw but also without a clue because the tradition-bound teachers were still using traditional methods. Stewart deplored "this sterile region of sound without one glimpse at the knowledge which it contains", leading to students unable to evolve one new idea, only able to quote from the ancient.

The *China Mail* triggered some testy and educational responses from readers when in an editorial on 1 February 1868 Shortrede argued that Roman Catholic missionaries accomplished more than Protestant missionaries because they went inland and lived with the people, dressing, eating, and living with their flock and speaking the local languages fluently. The first response challenging this included mention of Dr. Legge as an example of a Protestant Missionary who extended more influence over the Chinese

than any current Roman Catholic. One letter explained that one of the main reasons for devoted RC congregations was their expectation of being shielded from Chinese justice by the priest when they broke the law, a practice long forbidden in the Emperor's Edict of Toleration, but still operating inland. Another writer spelled out ways in which the PMs had done more and better work, including the most translations of Bibles and other Christian texts into Chinese, the most histories of China, the most Chinese dictionaries, and creating and operating the most hospitals. The writer noted that the Roman Catholics never preached in public and never opened the doors of their churches to the public. The main reason that PMs lived in family comfort was that they were allowed to bring their families, not required to be celibate; the value of this was its demonstration of Christian family life. The writer emphasized that everything the PMs did was open and visible to all in the treaty ports, while what the Roman priests did far in the interior was not known by anyone. Where they did live in the treaty ports their members were similar to the Protestants in effort and intelligence. After months of more letters, the criticisms of the PMs were renewed in the North China *Daily News* of Shanghai, focusing on the lack of harmony within the Christian community.

One problem with Shortrede's original critique was that the Chinese were still opposed to letting foreign PMs live in the interior, and later that year the LMS made a major presentation in Britain to Lord Stanley, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, pressing him to include a more specific provision in the next treaty being negotiated. They wanted the right for British missionaries to live in the interior and purchase land, rights they long had in the treaty ports. The LMS reminded Stanley that the French missionaries had had this right since their treaty of 1860. A direct example of problems the LMS faced in the interior concerned Boluo, where they wanted to buy property consistent with Article 12 of the British Treaty which provided that "British subjects, whether at the ports or at other places" might buy land or build or open houses, warehouses, Churches, etc. In fact they were denied permission to buy by the local mandarins on the grounds that "other places" did not mean the interior. They pressed Stanley to include more specific language in the revision of the treaty.

### Part 10 Legge works on the Classics in Britain

Legge took the overland route to Britain in 1867, via Marseilles, which would allow him to visit the French Sinologues Mohl and Julien in Paris en route. On board he was joined in his voyage by Issachar Roberts, formerly a fan of the Taiping and still a colourful, boastful, fanciful and adventurous spirit, if one not anywhere near the mainstream of Christian theology. They parted company at Alexandria, a major stop on the Overland route. Legge left no record of their conversations although Roberts claimed to have been part of Legge's visits to missions en route.

### China begins to look outward: the Burlingame embassy from China to USA

While Legge was heading to Britain, America was getting interested in having a powerful role in Chinese affairs. In 1861 President Lincoln had appointed Anson Burlingame as American Ambassador to the Qing dynasty, but late in 1867 he left that job when the Qing government hired him as its envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary. He soon set off from Beijing at the head of a Qing mission to the Western world, planning to make formal visits to the US and the major European capitals. His group consisted of a large retinue of 30 including two Chinese Ministers, 6 Chinese students, and an English and a French secretary. Robert Hart, the Inspector-General of Foreign Customs in the Qing government had urged Beijing to send such an embassy to the West so Chinese leaders could learn more about the world beyond China.

Under Prince Gong's leadership of the Qing Foreign Office, China was finally prepared to go out from the Central Kingdom to look at the world, but the powerful Viceroy Zeng Guofan (Tsen Kwofan, conqueror of the Taiping capital at Nanjing) and his mandarins in the Qing court had an entirely different goal in mind for this "embassy". They wanted this trip to be used as a stalling device to fend off pressures to renegotiate the 1858 treaty that was supposed to be done at the 10-year mark. Secret memos from the Viceroy to the provinces stressed that cunning must be used, actions must be taken "without giving these parties reasons to suspect our plans", which were essentially to oppose all trade-related proposals. After reaching Washington DC in March 1868, the US and China signed a formal "Burlingame Treaty" in July.

Burlingame was representing Chinese interests during this trip, not American interests, and was successful in getting many Articles into the Treaty that the Chinese wanted and would use later in their negotiations with Britain. Burlingame's success in gaining concessions for Chinese interests with America upset many Europeans, and over time they supported Sir Alcock Rutherford in taking a harder line in negotiations with

China. The Chinese success with the Americans led them to take a harder line with the Europeans, and by 1868 Sir Alcock was in despair at the way the Americans had undercut all the other Western powers in a way that would affect future treaties. The Chinese now had the upper hand, successful in gaining rich concessions from the Americans with limited effort, and were feisty in resisting any broader treaty provisions with Britain or the other European governments. A new treaty with Britain was signed in October 1869, preventing any foreign inland warehouses or steamers, and leading to new kinds of mission harassments in the treaty ports that led to a horrible tragedy within the year.

#### Legge visits Julien and Mohl in Paris

As Legge passed north in France from Marseille, he visited Professors Julien and Mohl in Paris. Legge was now an internationally recognized scholar of Chinese, seen as a colleague and competitor to these university scholars who had much longer reputations as Sinologues in Europe. Stanislas Julien (1797-1873) was the senior scholar of Chinese language in Europe, having been the superintendent of the Chinese section in the French national library since 1839. Across the years he had done various translations of Chinese into some of Latin, German, English, Italian, Spanish and English, across scattered topics. He was working on a Chinese grammar in French that would be published in 1869. Julien was known for his bad temper and bitter controversies with other scholars. Julius Mohl (1800-1876) was a German who had abandoned theology to study oriental cultures and languages in Paris, where he had developed a major reputation for his work translating the Persian classic history poem by Firdausi, the Shahnameh. Mohl was just on the verge of publishing the sixth volume of this series, but had broad interests in other oriental languages and cultures. Early in his career he had published a new Latin version of two Chinese classics that had been translated by Jesuits a century earlier.

Legge was taken aback with his Gallic welcome from Julien, "I was ready to smile, when in French fashion he kissed me first on one cheek and then on the other". James described Julien as a stoutish, nervous old man. "He received me with much empressement, and we exchanged ideas on various Chinese subjects, yet I fancied we acted like a couple of prize-fighters, who come together in the ring for the first time, and take or attempt to take the measure of each other's strength or prowess. Mohl is another of the literary celebrities of Paris. He came to London to see me 9 years ago. I found him looking much older." Legge was a bit shocked by Julien's worldly language, and wrote Hannah "I was sorry he called "the devil" to witness two or three times".

Legge meets the LMS Directors in London

The LMS Board met with Legge on his arrival in London in late April 1867, giving him an “affectionate welcome”. They congratulated him on the completion of the handsome new Union Church and were pleased that the congregation had accepted Morris’s services. They honoured him for the steady progress made on his work on the Chinese Classics, hoping he would be able to complete the project. Finally their Minutes recorded recognition and honour for his 30 years of work as a missionary. It seems that Tidman’s dour view of Legge was now affecting the LMS Board less, and Mullens’ more favourable evaluation was inserting itself into Board thinking.

Mission salaries automatically stopped the minute a missionary went on board for his voyage home, but in early June the Board decided to grant Legge a salary for 1867 at a rate of £250 p.a. during his stay in Britain. Legge, however, immediately declined this salary, explaining that he had drawn \$720 as an advance for January-June expenses, of which he had used \$550 to cover his passage to Marseille, with enforced delays en route in Ceylon and Egypt adding costs totalling \$600; he asked only that the Directors would cover some of those travel costs. He declined to accept any further LMS stipend during his stay in Britain, expecting his book sales to support the family. “It gives me a lot of satisfaction to be able to support myself without drawing on society’s funds while I am absent from my mission”. If he did any work for the LMS in Britain he expected reimbursement only for any expenses. He told the Directors that he had invited “a Chinese friend and scholar” to join him in the work on the Classics, expecting Wang Tao to arrive by the end of 1867.

### Chapter 56 In Britain: Robert Jardine & Wang Tao

*In which there is more piracy of the Classics, Legge's published volumes are reviewed, and he and Wang settle in Dollar for more work.*

Now that Legge legitimately could spend his days on the Classics, his next important meeting was with Robert Jardine in the spring of 1867 in Hull, where his stepdaughter Marian lived with her uncle Tom and cousins Bessie and Frank. Jardine and Legge discussed his work on the Classics and Legge asked Jardine to cover the costs of bringing Wang Tao from Hong Kong to join James in Scotland to work on the remaining volumes. Jardine agreed to cover these travel costs and to support Wang's family in Hong Kong. Printer Huang would assist in the arrangements, including providing Wang's family in Hong Kong with \$20-25 per month. Legge expected Wang to come on a P. & O. steamer, second-class, direct to Southampton, while his large library would be sent as freight in a Liverpool steamer around the Cape, and additional money would be sent to Huang to pay for this freight and insurance. In June Legge advised the LMS of this project, explaining why he needed Wang's help.

### Piracy of the Classics continues, and literary reviews of volumes I, II, III are published

Piracy of Legge's published work on the Classics continued. In 1867 Rev. Augustus Ward Loomis, another entrepreneurial American, published a compilation in San Francisco and New York, most copied directly from Legge's books, including his extremely valuable essays and notes. In his preface Loomis jocularly expressed the hope that "Dr. Legge" would regard the publication as "a friendly office". The *China Mail* reported all this without concern in October, although it poked fun at some basic errors in Loomis' commentary that revealed his ignorance.

Legge's labours of three decades were simply being stolen, published by entrepreneurs for their own profit, with only the flimsiest of explanations and no compensation. In that era copyright law across nations was shaky and Legge and Trübner had little legal recourse. It must have been very depressing to have his efforts stolen and to lose the income that he had expected to come with publication of his decades of effort. To try and reassert copyright in 1867 Trübner published a new book, *The Life of Confucius*, based on volume I of Legge's original translation but revised to modernize it, deleting the Chinese, the Notes, and Indexes. Work on this revision interfered with Legge's plan to work on volume IV, the classic *Book of Poetry* (the *Shijing*, which he titled the *She King*).



Trübner was so perturbed by these continued thefts of Legge's work that it republished the first three volumes in 1875, more forcibly to reassert copyright after the American Baker again announced his plans to republish the texts he had stolen in 1866. Trübner again deleted all the gorgeous Chinese text, but supported Legge in also announcing their republication of other volumes of his work, to try and counteract Baker's brazen piracy.

Late in 1867 Legge and his publisher were heartened by a positive review in the very influential *British Quarterly* of volumes I, II and III of his Classics, and in September 1868 they were further encouraged by a positive review in the *Spectator*.

### The family in Britain 1867-69

After his crucial meeting with Robert Jardine and his family reunions, Legge's first few months in Britain were loosely-structured while he waited for Wang to arrive. Now freed up from his endless mission tasks he relished his return to family life in Scotland. Hannah had taken the children to Huntly to live during this period of uncertainty and by the time Legge arrived there he found that her health had significantly improved. In October the children were all thriving and helping in the harvest. James and Hannah revisited the places of his childhood, riding on donkeys. Hannah had a terrible time on Kitty, who "bucked and bucked, and frisked and teased till at last papa got hold & we thought we had conquered him, but when we got to the belt of water it went to drink & there in less than a second it hoisted round with a bound & galloped back as hard as it could go. Dr. Legge dare not try to catch it for fear it should throw me off. I held on & up it went to the stable and then stopped". They exchanged saddles, both donkeys became content, and they had a "beautiful ride, and I so enjoyed Polly's gallop". Light-hearted gossip in Hannah's letter to Marian showed that attendance at Chapel was not as rigidly expected in Huntly now, nor as solemn, and she joked about the way chapel attendance was aiding romance.

Marian had gone on a long walk of 16 miles each direction the previous winter from her home in Hull, suffering exhaustion from this folly. Hannah worried, "papa says it is too far. Do not make such plans again". James also wrote Marian with great affection. Early in 1868 he marvelled for her at the transit speed of a recent letter sent from London on December 26, 1867 to Shanghai arriving there in 49 days. Forwarded back to him in Britain it left Shanghai on 25 February via San Francisco and New York and reached London on 1 May, a total round-trip of 166 days around the world. He was thrilled with the speed. His initial hopes for Hannah's health were soon crushed when he realized she was still struck incapable by two-day migraines separated by a few weeks

of clear health. The whole family was thrilled to watch displays of the northern lights that James found “splendid, streaming, dancing, glancing, brightening all the north and west of the heavens”, a sight never seen in tropical Hong Kong.

Marian, now 15 and living with Hannah's sister in Hull, had a scholarly bent and James wrote a response to her discussion of a lecture by M. Caillard in which he called for French to be taught as the second language in school rather than Latin. Although Legge's life-course had been enhanced by his own prize-winning skills in Latin, he agreed with Caillard that for most boys French would be more useful. He understood that most boys never developed the level of fluency in Latin to make reading it a pleasure across life, “so it becomes wasted effort”. Latin would be more justifiable only for boys intending a university career because it helped create “mental discipline”, although a good training in English grammar would also achieve that end if it did not just involve memorizing lists of rules. He castigated most English grammar books for their boring deadness; “I wish a bonfire could be made of all the Murrays and Lennies that are in print”. He always signed these letters to Marian, “Your affectionate Papa”. His letters to Hannah were similarly tender, signing off with “all love, my sweetest one”.

Legge's stubborn son-in-law Horatio Nelson Lay in London wrote in June 1868 asking Legge's help. A company was being founded to build a telegraph between England and China, along with other modern public works technologies such as railroads (spreading around the world after Scot George Stephenson proved how they could operate in 1829), and Lay had been invited to become its managing Director. His interest in China thus aroused, Lay instead sought and received support from Robert Hart in Shanghai for an attempt by Lay to offer his services directly to the Qing government for this work. Lay wanted Legge to write a note in Chinese to his main contact, Wan Siang, offering to again provide Lay's “services to the Chinese government in the management of customs affairs and jointly with Mr. Hart to assist as I did before”. He obtained an interview with Lord Stanley in July, arguing for the benefits of trade in manufactured goods with China, and for the development of railways and telegraphs to achieve this. Lay seems to have had remarkably little awareness of the reputation he had gained in the fiasco with the Osborne fleet.

Legge's letter apparently achieved the interview that Lay sought and in July 1869 he wrote Legge from Shanghai about his meeting there with Wan Siang and two other senior officials. “They were a good deal embarrassed, and were evidently exclaiming mentally “confound this fellow, he will detect what we are up to, and will go away to poach upon us”. Lay was unable to convince them to support his proposal and soon realized it was hopeless. He viewed the mandarins as extremely clever negotiators and

ranted that the British government failed in negotiations with the Chinese because it didn't send out "first-rate" men who couldn't be easily tricked by the mandarins. In the end his plan came to nothing. He was deeply moralistic and was convinced that the Chinese government "if permitted to go on in its perverse ways, will involve us in another war". His judgment that the Qing dynasty was fatally incompetent in facing up to the new global realities was accurate but premature, only born out after another four decades. In later years Horatio Lay went to Japan trying to convince the Japanese that he had a major loan from the British Government to help build a railway from Yokohama to the new Eastern Capital Tokyo, but his plan came to nothing when it was discovered he did not have nearly the credit backing he had implied (Barr, 1967).

In Huntly James' brother William was elected a Commissioner in September 1869 to examine the accounts of a bankrupt jeweller, and to organize the settlement of the accounts. William Legge was a highly respected merchant and was selected for this position of trust a number of times.

James Legge wrote a famous Scots author George MacDonald in 1868, asking for his help in London on some matter, and in September MacDonald wrote to confirm he had done the task, thanking James for his "kind words about Louisa" his wife, and for "pleasant memories of past kindness". George MacDonald (1824-1905) was becoming famous for his fiction for adults and children. He was also born in Huntly, 9 years after Legge, and also attended King's College in Aberdeen and Highbury Seminary. He left a career as minister after some of his small congregation objected to his theology, in particular his disagreement with the doctrines of predestination and of eternal hell. His wife Louisa was a tiny woman who produced eleven children, making her an object of great curiosity when the couple went on a lecture tour in the US in 1872-73 in which they performed Pilgrim's Progress. MacDonald was basically a moralist in his writing, but his works were infused with a spiritual and more modern loving style contrasting with the tough Calvinism of his childhood. MacDonald told Legge that the *Spectator* magazine of the first week in September had written a short but respectful review of Legge's volume on Confucius.

#### The Legges move to Dollar and the Dollar Academy

Legge's health improved in Huntly, as it had much earlier in life when he returned to Scotland, and finding a good school for the children was the next important task. James and Mary had sent their daughters Eliza and Mary to the Dollar Academy in Scotland in 1848-9 during their stay in Britain, and in May 1867 Legge went to Dollar to

make arrangements for the family to live there and for the children to attend the Dollar Academy.

They rented a house in Dollar, and the children attended the school for some years starting in 1870. Dollar, a charming Scottish town about 10 miles north-east of Stirling and just north of the giant Firth of Forth waterway, was famous for its wonderful senior school, still thriving today. It had first come to national attention in 1868 when four of its graduating boys were successful in the extremely demanding British Government Foreign Office examinations for the Indian Civil Service, part of the complex civil service examinations established in 1853. Normally these examinations were won only by graduates from the great English public schools.

The Legge children were enrolled 1870 - 1874, including Helen Edith age 11, James 9, Thomas 7, and Anna in 1872 age 7. The Academy archives show their grades in the demanding school, which used five bracing categories, (Unsatisfactory, Satisfactory, Modest, Good, and Excellent). The Legge children specialized in grades of Good and Excellent; they were very good students.

The family lived on a main street in a substantial stone house of ten rooms with windows. The Scottish census of 1871 shows that their household consisted of Hannah, age 48, her four children, and three helpers: Anne Osborne Governess age 33, Catherine McGrath cook from Ireland, and Janet Allen, a Scottish nursemaid age 15. The house Viewfield, is still in use today. After the Legges left Dollar, an Episcopal church was built beside the house and it was purchased to become the Rectory.

James Legge, now surrounded by his family, was able to become more involved in family activities in Dollar. He took his children to see important Scottish sites, relishing taking his two young sons to stand on the Bruce's grave. He was freshly entranced with the beauties and behaviour of Scottish birds. He was also preaching in the local church and doing so with some charisma. Hannah passed on to her daughter Marian a letter written by Mrs. Macdonald in Dollar reporting "Minnie Holden the manglewoman has taken a violent fancy for Dr. Legge. She says she is "that fond of him". Her heart is divided between the established Church Minister & he. "Eh, but he was grand on the Tree of Lebanon at the kirk".

#### Chinese students in Dollar Academy

With Legge acting as a sponsor, the LMS mission in Hong Kong sent a number of Chinese boys to Dollar Academy in the next few years. In 1868 three transferred there from Stonegate School in Leicester: Wei Yuk (*Wen Yu*, later Huang Shing's son-in-law), Wong Yongching (named William at the school, son of LMS printer Huang Shing), and

Woo Asee (*Ho Asee*), the son of a Chinese opium merchant. Two of these students had all their costs paid for by their fathers in Hong Kong, the first Chinese parents to finance the educations of their children abroad. In February 1869 printer Huang wrote Legge providing various accounts to him including £100 for costs for his son William. Wong was pleased to learn that the tea he had sent Legge arrived in good condition, and commented on photographs James had sent. Huang asked James to take an active role concerning Woo Asee, whose father only wanted his son to learn English; Huang wanted the lad to learn about Christianity as well.

In 1869-71 these Chinese students were joined by John Chew. All the boys continued to wear traditional Chinese dress during their time at the school. A letter of that period by a schoolgirl there reported that one of the Chinese boys "got very fierce one day... because one of the boys pulled his tail", the Manchu queue required of all males during the Qing dynasty. During his visit to Scotland, Wang Tao visited the boys at the Dollar Academy and attended a dance there. An 1870 dance card shows the Chinese students had acculturated very successfully, as they did the Highland fling and various Galops. They all returned to Hong Kong in 1872 after graduating and doing a European grand tour. Wei Yuk became a wealthy banker in Hong Kong and was knighted in 1919 as Sir Boshan Wei Yuk, proud of his Hong Kong mansion "Braeside" named in fond memory of his years in Scotland.

#### Wang Tao and James Legge in Scotland

Legge was now healthy enough, and with enough unscheduled time that he was able to turn his great energy back into his scholarly work on the Classics. Wang Tao was soon to join him. In the years since Wang's arrival in Hong Kong in 1863 Legge had developed a great admiration for his Chinese assistant, writing that Wang "far excelled in classical lore any of his countrymen whom the Author had previously known."

Wang left Hong Kong in December 1867 for Scotland, taking advantage of his ship's ports of calls to visit Singapore, Ceylon, Penang, Aden, Messina and Cairo before debarking at Marseilles, not the route directly to Southampton that Legge had expected. Travelling north he took a train to Paris where he stayed two weeks, visiting the Louvre and Julien at the Sorbonne. He crossed the English Channel and took the train to London where Legge took him sightseeing that included the British Museum, Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum which showed Commissioner Lin, and St. Paul's Cathedral. Some days he took a train to the Crystal Palace, stopping to drink at a favourite pub where he enjoyed the attentions of a pretty barmaid. He then joined Legge in May 1868 to live in Dollar for the next two years.

Wang was entertained and interested in all he saw. He wrote a lively account of his travels in Chinese that was republished in modern times, and made quite handsome sketches of some of the major buildings he encountered. In Oxford he was invited by the Chamberlain of the university to give an address to the graduating class, which he did in Chinese (probably with Legge translating), in which he talked about the value of cultural exchanges, and his belief that the world was moving toward cultural unity, a utopian concept found in Confucius.

Wang and Legge planned to work intensively on volumes IV and V of the Classics. Volume IV, the Book of Poetry, was to be created as two parts. The first was “Lessons from the States”, which Legge titled the She King, while Part II was the book of classical poetry, or Book of Odes, ending with all the usual fabulous Indexes to the combined Parts I and II.

Wang stayed for more than two years living with the Legge family in Dollar where they worked very well together. Legge asked Wang to assemble almost all the commentaries relevant to a particular text, and would then study and debate their meanings with Wang. Wang began to write his own views on these commentaries and ancient texts and later published ten books of these in Chinese, eight of which had their origins in the notebooks he created while working with Legge. A modern Chinese scholar describes their work together as “one of the most remarkable relationships between the Chinese and Westerners in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (W. Zhang, 2002). It is clear that Legge did not simply adopt all of Wang’s opinions as his own, as in the Notes he at times criticizes an interpretation that Wang and other commentators favoured while Legge held a different view. In volume III Notes (p. 412) for example, Legge regarded Wang’s sexual interpretation of a line that all other commentators agree is a metaphor, as a straying beyond the text.

Wang did a bit of business during his stay, selling off part of his library to the British Museum. He sold 45 Chinese works in 421 volumes for more than £55 in November 1869, his identity recorded in the museum’s records as “Weng Taou of Soochow”.

Legge and Wang travelled around Scotland during breaks in their work, to Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Huntly, Dundee and Glasgow, and Wang encountered things that puzzled him. After they saw some pastors living under frugal circumstances while others lived in luxury Wang questioned Legge, who explained. “There are two things, brains and dollars, which would you prefer to have?” Wang recognized the values issue and decided “If I could not have them both together, I would have the brains”. Legge included long walking trips in these travels, with one in which he walked along the west

side of Scotland from Tarbet down along Loch Long to Helensburgh and south, a tramp of about 25 km. before sailing off to several islands including Iona, an island with a special place in the history of Christianity in Scotland. Wang also participated in the social life in Dollar, even attending a dance at the Academy in 1870 watching the four Chinese students dancing .

At some point during this stay in Britain, Legge learned the shocking news that Robert Jardine would not provide any further support for the publication of the remaining volumes to be completed when Legge returned to Hong Kong in 1870. He was deeply worried. “...(Jardine) has done so much in the past that I can hardly contemplate the failure of this help without absolute dismay”.

Chapter 57 Union Church and LMS struggle, and Legge is honoured in Britain

*In which Morris struggles in the Hong Kong mission, Wylie publishes a book on Chinese literature, and Legge is honoured in Britain.*

Morris has problems with the Union Church and the LMS

After Legge's departure from the LMS and the Union Church in Hong Kong, the congregation became fed up with their new minister Rev. Morris. He had come as an LMS appointment with their agreement, but as his limitations became more troublesome, the disaffected congregation started criticizing him on the tangential grounds that they did not want an LMS missionary because mission work was "regarded with very little faith and favor in the commercial and official circles of the Colony" (Miller, 1990). Some further restlessness with the LMS connection may have arisen because Union Church now had to house the LMS Chinese congregation because its old chapel on Queen's Road was in a district that had become so unruly that respectable Chinese women would not go there. The problem with this attack on the LMS (rather than on Morris) was that the LMS through Legge's work had been the founding agency of the church.

Across two contentious years under Morris the congregation seriously dwindled, eventually losing so many members that it could not raise enough funds to meet its obligations. The loss of support from his congregation did not stop Morris from giving the key speech toasting the Literati of Scotland during the annual St. Andrew's Dinner on November 30, 1868, a speech summarized in the next day's *China Mail*. It was a flat recital, and the *Mail* added no comment to the dry review Morris provided. Normally these dinners were boisterous and noted for raucous word play, but it seems Morris was not any better in a secular performance than he was in his ministerial work.

In May 1869 the Union Church trustees accepted Morris' resignation to take effect at the end of the year. By then Morris was also at odds with the local LMS committee, and after his resignation from Union Church they allowed him to attend their local LMS meetings only as a visitor rather than as a mission man. After appealing to the LMS for help, the Union Church trustees decided to call Legge to return. In August 1869 Legge responded to this overture in a letter from Scotland, offering to resume his work with it under certain terms. In September the Church trustees wrote "deeply grateful" that he had consented to resume work as its minister, "cordially" accepting his terms.

Morris was furious. He preached an angry final sermon at Union Church on 3 January 1870, raging at the congregation that no longer wanted him. He wrote a nasty letter to the Union Church committee, complaining of their treatment of him and of the



congregational system that gave so much power to the congregation, placing the minister subject “to the dictation of old women of both sexes”. He was due to leave within the week. Morris did not mention that during the turmoil with his congregation and while he was still receiving a full-time salary, he had obtained an extra job from the government as a chaplain to the soldiers, and simply kept this extra money. He had been privately entrepreneurial in a delicate situation that required frankness, and this contrasted with Legge’s behaviour when he was offered chaplaincy work later in the year. Legge turned that salary over to Union Church after deducting the travel expenses that this work had generated, reasoning that the church members paid him a good salary to be their pastor.

As Turner waited for some resolution to the problems at Union Church in 1869, he mused on Morris’ failure as the minister, explaining to the LMS Directors that there was a general prejudice in the colony against missionaries. Missionary work was “regarded with very little faith and favour in the commercial and official circles of this colony”. Even good church members often shared this prejudice, “sometimes carried away by the force of the current”. Some of the initial problems had been caused by a few Union Church members who had decided they did not want a missionary as pastor. Ironically, when a non-missionary appointment was made in the case of Morris, it too “has been tried, and has proved a miserable failure”. Turner knew that the problems had no origin in the mission connection or congregational prejudices, but rather arose from the particular man. Turner blamed the failure of Morris’ appointment on those in the UK who had selected the hapless man, rather than on the congregation. Even though Morris had not been a missionary he was viewed as an LMS man and was living in an LMS house, and his poor performance fostered anti-missionary prejudice at Union Church.

Turner considered how the LMS might separate itself from Union Church and its trustees. A partial remedy would have the Union Church trustees deal directly with the London Directors rather than indirectly through the local LMS committee members, but he thought a complete separation might be necessary. Morris had attended the local LMS committee meetings as a visitor rather than as an LMS missionary, but Turner thought the Directors should make a clear definition of the relation of the Union Church pastor to the local LMS committee. He wondered for example, if the Union Church minister be accountable to the local LMS committee. This hints at the possibility that the local LMS men had tried to guide Morris toward doing a better job and had encountered resistance. Turner was perturbed by a rumour from September 1869 suggesting the LMS was going to turn the Union Church entirely over to the Union Church trustees, severing all connections with the LMS. Turner explained that this

would create a problem because the Chinese LMS congregation held its main services in Union Church because the Chinese chapel in the bazaar was no longer usable.

At the outset of 1870 Union Church had no minister, Morris having preached his final angry sermon in January, and Turner wanted direction from London on what to do in the gap until Legge returned. Union Church had asked for LMS help in replacing Morris, but when they learned Legge needed to return to Hong Kong to finish his work on the Classics, they quickly offered him a three-year contract to serve as minister.

Hannah was not interested in returning to live in Hong Kong because she had suffered years of debilitating illnesses there caused in part by the tremendous summer heat and humidity, and was now settled comfortably with her children in Dollar. James was torn by Hannah's decision because he knew he needed to return to Hong Kong to publish the final volumes of the Classics, and the Union Church offer provided a congenial source of livelihood for him. He wrote of being split between "heart and reason". Legge had become a stout 196 lbs. during his stay in Scotland, his health recovered by the time the texts of his two remaining volumes of the Classics were ready for printing, so he decided to return to Hong Kong in 1870 to supervise the printing and binding of the final volumes, supported by Union Church while having only limited duties there.

#### The LMS missions in Hong Kong and Canton struggle with the Directors

Relations between the Canton mission and the London LMS were still fragile during Legge's absence. In late January 1868 Turner wrote from Hong Kong on behalf of the local South China mission committee to the LMS, thanking them for their decision to increase the salaries of the South China mission men and for confirming child allowances, but the local committee was still upset with London because of the Directors' refusal to cover medical and increased home rental costs. The salary increases meant only that this new money would simply be used up in covering those new costs. Turner reminded London that the Hong Kong mission still needed to be given an extra expense account for its hospitality costs in providing food and housing to mission families passing through. The local committee also strongly objected to the Directors' implicit criticism of Eitel, asserting that the committee did not need to interfere in any way with Eitel's management of the Boluo work.

Three days later, on his own behalf, Turner wrote a much stronger letter to the LMS, an angry stinging letter castigating the Board for the three decisions they had sent the local committee about the size of the child allowance to Eitel, and for the Directors' refusal to pay for medical care for mission families or for the Boluo mission. Turner

pointed out that the “Boluo system” of LMS support had not been invented by Eitel or himself but had been set up by “Dr. Legge” because Boluo was a poverty-stricken region unable even to pay for the travelling costs from Canton, which was all that Eitel had asked. Turner scolded the Board, and praised Eitel as one of the LMS’ “most devoted workers”. Over the next year it gradually emerged that Mullens in London disapproved of the school set up by Eitel’s wife, and in July 1969 Eitel defended it explaining that no LMS funds were used for it, as all supplies and staff was paid for through local donations.

In June 1868 the fevers of the Hong Kong summer brought Turner and his wife down, and he was unable to work for six weeks. In reporting the annual budget, Turner estimated the next year’s costs at \$3,707. The costs for him and his family totalling \$1,800, were comprised of his annual salary of \$1,440 plus child allowances for his five children, at \$72 per child. The five “native helpers” would cost \$984, and the Canton station would cost \$4,993. By September Turner wrote that Eitel needed an additional child allowance not budgeted for in July, for a child born April 8 after the estimates had been sent in. This suggests that the mission was quite uncertain if either the very sick mother or her child would survive the childbirth, because in April Mrs. Eitel’s lung disease had brought her close to death. Eitel had also been very sick, and with the high medical expenses the family now had to pay, it was desperately poor. Mrs. Eitel’s health eventually stabilized and in November Eitel printed circulars seeking donations for a Chinese school with 13 girls that his wife would supervise.

In the autumn of 1868 Chinese Christians in Hong Kong and Canton were supporting another out-station established by Pastor Ho with two native pastors in the city of Foshan, near Canton. In April 1969 Turner thanked the Directors for approving child allowances for him and for the Eitel’s new child. Morris’ status in the Union Church and in the Hong Kong community was uncertain, and Turner wanted the directors to tell him if Morris would still have any connection with the LMS. Turner’s wife was still sufficiently ill he wrote his sister inviting her to come and live with his family to help take care of the children. He asked London to help arrange a cheaper passage for her as part of the party with Chalmers’ wife, as independent travellers were charged more.

In Hong Kong the Chinese bazaar chapel had been closed for a year after its roof and floor problems, then was completely rebuilt and services in Chinese and English were reinstated in July. The new building needed fire insurance and Turner asked the LMS to provide funds for this crucial expense. Six weeks later a terrible fire raged through the colony destroying more than 100 houses. It was stopped only by the

military blowing up all houses on three sides of the fire, and by the time it was over, only 6 houses separated the new chapel from the disastrous destruction. Frightened by this dreadful event Turner decided to go ahead with the purchase of fire insurance of \$38 p.a. without London's approval. The slow communication with London often meant that the local committee had to take decisions about urgent expenditures without the approval from the London Directors that their rules required, and typically these unapproved emergency expenditures were criticized by London.

In Canton Anderson passed his Chinese examination in April 1868, an exam that included text material from the Chinese Classics. The two external examiners agreed that Anderson spoke colloquial Cantonese well and had a good knowledge of the written text. Energized by this success he ripped down walls in Hobson's old hospital and turned it into a thriving day school for 30. The Canton mission was still in fragile condition though because of Mrs. Eitel's tubercular state and the loss of financial support from London for Eitel's work in Boluo. Eitel was a gifted scholar, long interested in Chinese Buddhism, the Indian Vedas and the Vedanta, and sought Secretary Mullen's help about an Indian quotation Mullens had used in an essay years earlier during his work in India.

Chalmers returned to Canton on 1 January 1870 from his British furlough of 1867-68. While there, in 1868 he had published the first English translation of the *Daodejing* (as the *Tao Te King*, the Daoist Classic Path of Virtue, attributed to Laozi), with Trübner. The *China Mail* reviewed it, complaining of its small size and of Chalmers' failure to write the extensive notes that made Legge's work so valuable, concluding that the work offered little practical advice. Chalmers' return to Canton meant an increase in the travelling costs of that mission's work, and there was the additional problem that the mission's lease on Hobson's old hospital was going to run out in April 1870.

The printing press in Hong Kong was causing Turner more problems. In April 1869 the BFBS claimed that they were paying him grants, which Turner entirely disputed. He was clearly short of funds for the press, and asked the LMS directors to provide an annual grant for the press to print tracts for its own mission work. The press was no longer able to sell Chinese fonts now that other new presses were doing this.

Andrew Wylie's 1867 book on Chinese literature is reviewed in the *China Mail*

In Shanghai Legge's former colleague and former LMS man Andrew Wylie published a book in 1867, *Notes on Chinese Literature*. It included much conventional material from classics in history and literature, but also fictional material. Chinese *literati* did not consider fiction to be part of the national literature but Wylie did,

arguing that it gave insight “into the national manners and customs”, and was the only material “through which a large portion of the people gain their knowledge of history”. This material was often of a more salacious nature than the classics, and Wylie’s book included a list of an official Index of prohibited works in Chinese, as well as long translations from some of these sexy and forbidden novels, including from the *Jin Ping Mei* (The Plum in the Golden Vase). This Ming-era book included many bawdy jokes and the clever use of sexy puns based on the sounds of the characters, double meanings that would not be obvious to a silent reader of the text characters unless they were sounded out. Wylie published only a part of this work. He explained that although the book was prohibited, yet the *literati* read it and a brother of the Manchu Emperor had even translated it into Manchu, an easier task because of the phonetic nature of Manchu writing. This book has now been republished in modern times in a massive English text with all the racy material fully translated, updating a version from the 1930s that printed the most sexy text in Latin.

The *China Mail* reviewed Wylie’s book in January 1868. Although it complained about the flimsy Chinese paper that the American Presbyterian Press in Shanghai had used in printing, and expressed the hope that in the next edition Wylie would use fewer Chinese characters for book titles, the reviewer admired Wylie’s work. Wylie was becoming a major scholar of Chinese since his 1860 resignation as LMS printer, his work ranging from ancient Chinese mathematics to popular fiction.

#### Britain loses influence in China

With Americans moving strongly into business with China it became apparent that the American, French, and Russian diplomats in China exerted much more pressure on the Chinese government in aid of their local expatriate trading communities than did the men of the British Foreign Office. The *China Mail* lamented this in a February 1868 editorial. It decried the huge gap in interests between the British living in China and the Foreign Office, arguing for a China Committee comprised of men with Chinese experience to advise the Minister more fully. Elegant and cool British diplomacy was letting the expatriates down in comparison with the more aggressive style of its commercial competitors. That year Britain sent out the last convict ships to Australia, creating additional pressures there for the need for labourers from China to do heavy work. A year later the famous tea clipper the *Cutty Sark* (named after Scottish women’s undergarments) was launched in Britain, eventually setting a sailing record in 1885 of 72 days from Australia to England even as the days of commercial sailing ships were beginning to wane. On display for many years in Greenwich, it was heavily damaged in a

2007 fire, and restored in 2012. Against this background of British disinterest in Hong Kong, Legge was preparing to return to China.

Legge is awarded an honorary doctorate in Scotland

Before he left Scotland Legge was awarded an honorary doctor of laws degree by the University of Aberdeen in 1870 for his “eminent services as a scholar and minister of Christ”. The diploma given to him addressed him in Latin as “Jacobum Legge”, and conferred upon him “Civilis Doctorem et Magistrum”. His name had been put forward by Dr. Gilielmo Marin LCD and signed by many. In the academic procession with those receiving this honorary degree he walked with de Lesseps, the builder of the Suez Canal.

The Canal had just been completed in November 1869, opened with great fanfare, with an international fleet sailing through it including 12 British vessels, 7 from Austria, six each from Egypt and France and smaller numbers from other European nations. This soon became the standard route connecting travellers between Europe and China, significantly improving travel time. The new route was used by steamers as the winds in the Red Sea were miserably unsuitable for sailing ships. Passengers could stay on the steamer continuously throughout their voyage rather than using the cumbersome transfers from steamer to land to cross Egypt that were previously required in the Overland route (Bogaars, 1955).

Legge immediately made use of this new Suez Canal route as he returned to Hong Kong with his step-daughter Marian, now 18, in the spring of 1870, leaving Hannah and their other children in Scotland.

Part 11 Alone in Hong Kong finishing the Classics, new conflicts between Britain and  
China

*In which Legge is injured at sea, preaches at Union Church, completes publication of the Classics, he is honoured by the community, and nuns are massacred in Tianjin affecting all Chinese-European relations.*

While travelling to Hong Kong Legge had a nasty accident while he walked around the deck on March 11, a few days after leaving Galle on the SW tip of Ceylon. His letter was laconic: "I met with some scatter on the passage". He had done several rounds of reading while walking, passing over a closed hatch a number of times, then while he was not looking sailors opened it and on his next round he stepped into the open hole. "I found I was going down into the pit. Fortunately the hatchway was not very wide. Instinctively I threw my arms out, & the fall was stopped, and I brought up with a tremendous thud of my left side against the side. At the same time my right side came slap against the iron rung of a ladder, on which I managed to get my foot & maintain myself until the stewards were able to pull me up". He was "dreadfully shaken and thought my arms were wrenched out of my sockets & that all my left ribs were broken".

Fortunately he had no broken bones or dislocations, but had deep bruises that left him with intense pain for days. He considered that the stewards were "grossly careless" in leaving the hatch open. He learned that another passenger was paid £3,000 damages from P & O for a similar accident, and the day after the accident he was in such pain that he thought Hannah might have to begin a legal action against the company. As he recovered he changed his mind, remembering that the company had been so kind to him in offering his wife and children discounted fares that "I shall not seek solatium for the pain I have endured". He described the *Emen* as "an old tub" that could go no faster than 8 knots per hour. The incident caused him to reflect on the important things in his life and he wrote Hannah "You seem more precious to me than before this event."

Legge returns to the Classics in Hong Kong

The next three years, with Legge living a bachelor life with Marian, preaching at Union Church and working on his Classics, would be his last experience of life in Hong Kong. They arrived on 28 March 1870 and to Turner's relief Legge quickly returned to welcome and active volunteer work as a member of the local LMS committee. It seems

his lack of official LMS standing was a formality, but he was willing to help the mission only to a limited extent.

In July they studied all the books in the LMS library, planning to donate good ones to the Public Library, part of the new Hong Kong City Hall since its opening in 1869. Many needed to be discarded because of excessive worm-holes, while for others, they hoped to combat the worms and offer the repaired books to the library. The committee also had to do something about the old mission house, now in very poor condition and cramped into an unhealthy condition by houses built up all around it. It immediately authorized Legge and Chalmers to sell because they could not afford the expensive repairs that were needed.

The committee summarized the assets and costs of the south China missions. In Canton their buildings were worth \$675, and Chalmers received a salary of \$1,440 per year plus child allowances of \$335 for his six children. The Hong Kong and Boluo missions paid salaries of \$1,440 each to Turner and Eitel, plus child allowances for Turner's five and Eitel's three. The expected travel costs for the Turners and four children in 1872 were £205 or \$914.

Eitel gradually became the strongman of the Hong Kong mission. Turner was preparing to leave within a year, and the committee decided that Eitel would take over the printing operation and the care of the Chinese congregations. Eitel discovered that accounting had not been careful in the years since Legge's departure despite all poor Turner's efforts; a Prof. Summers of King's College London had owed the Printing office \$60.40 for five years.

New expenses soon became necessary. While Eitel was fluent in Hakka and there were many Hakka in Hong Kong, there were even more Chinese who spoke Punti, the original Cantonese language spoken in Canton province, and Eitel wanted to hire a teacher to learn this, expecting he would need the teacher for one year. In July Turner wrote London discussing his plan to return to the UK in 1872, noting that the new route through the Suez Canal had not only shortened the travel time for the LMS men, but it had opened China to a flood of new missionaries who all used Hong Kong as their first stop. The LMS mission was again being stretched beyond its limits to provide hospitality to missionary families in transit.

More property decisions became necessary in the early months of 1871 after the committee received permission from the LMS to sell the old Hong Kong mission house and Printing Office. The problem was that the Hong Kong housing market had collapsed again following a horrific event with murders of French nuns and Chinese Christians in Tianjin in 1870, and local authorities now required the mission to repair the miserable



old house, a cost of \$250. All the British missions were deeply worried at the failure of their government to pressure the Chinese to enforce the Edict of Toleration that was the law in China, an edict that would provide protection to the missions and their congregations if it were enforced.

Family life in the Hong Kong mission was disrupted by the severe debility of Eitel's second-youngest child Theodora, who suffered "spasms" and was unable to walk or speak at nearly two years of age, suggesting serious neurological damage, perhaps cerebral palsy. Edinburgh-trained Dr. Pottinger concluded the usual, that the climate was a danger to her, and in late January 1871 the mission decided it was necessary to send Mrs. Eitel, her children, and a nurse back to Britain. Eitel apologized to the LMS, recognizing that its regulations did not provide for the passage costs for a child that young, but stressing the "dire necessity" of the situation as Theodora was even more helpless than his new baby. He begged the LMS to approve the rather expensive trip costs of £577 to allow his family to take a steamer through the new Suez Canal because there were no sailing ships available now that the tea season was over. "Please send this money". He promised that if the charges dropped as steamer competition was increasing, he would refund any balance. In June 1871 more illness in the mission families led to the need for Mrs. Turner to return to Britain, then by November Mr. Turner's health had also badly deteriorated and he also needed a return to a cool climate. Legge, Eitel, and Chalmers all signed a certificate asserting the necessity of Turner's early return.

### Chapter 58 Chalmers returns to the Canton mission

Chalmers had returned to work in Canton, arriving in Hong Kong on January 1, 1870 but unable to move to Canton until housing could be found. Within weeks he learned that Eitel was eager to move to Hong Kong, so the Chalmers family moved into Eitel's Canton house, which included a chapel and was available at a very cheap rental. In fact it was Chalmers' former house of four years earlier, and by late January he was back in the Canton mission. Foreigners had been leaving Shamian and inexpensive lots were readily available there, so Chalmers recommended that the LMS buy a lot within the British Concession. It would be much cheaper than in the Chinese city, and safer in case hostilities broke out again. He knew that nothing would be done with the Hong Kong printing press until Legge arrived.

In February 1870 Eitel moved to Hong Kong, explaining to London that the Canton LMS mission and congregation had never been interested in supporting his work in Boluo, while Turner and the Hong Kong mission and congregations had founded and always supported it. He added that Boluo work required Hakka, in which he was fluent, while neither the Canton mission men or the congregations spoke that language which instead was widely used in Hong Kong. Eitel reminded London that the only reason he had originally moved to Canton was because there was no housing available in Hong Kong for him, and he assured London that he could easily supervise the work in Boluo from Hong Kong.

Under Ho's leadership Chinese congregations in the Canton mission had contributed \$1,400 to build a new chapel for his growing congregation in Foshan and it was nearly completed by early July 1870. Chalmers had been very careful not to visit the chapel under construction because the presence of foreigners there still created much excitement, and abusive placards had already been posted there even though the venture was entirely done by local Chinese congregations with help from Ho.

The LMS created new regulations for its mission men, and Chalmers commented that the centralization of power and decisions away from the local committees was making the mission men "in some respects Presbyterians" (i.e., subject to a hierarchy), although overall he did not object to them. It appears that the struggles of the south China local committee with London over principles of fairness in salaries and allowances had put some pressure on the Directors to standardize some of their operations.

In Canton Anderson had been very sick with liver disease across the latter months of 1869, with a temporary recovery after Chalmers arrived, then another severe relapse. Liver disease was common in south China, associated with hepatitis, malaria and other

infections. The pain spread to Anderson's lungs and doctors told him he would not survive another Canton summer. He was devastated at this news, sleepless and depressed that his five years of studying Chinese and all his hopes and plans for mission work had been for naught. Anderson was now a fluent preacher and had a cordial relationship with Chalmers, so the loss of his mission career to health problems was extremely demoralizing. He hoped that a cold climate might improve his health, but by March 1870 his illness was so serious that the local committee recommended he return to England, with his illness documented with two medical certificates to satisfy the LMS.

Anderson wanted to return by the mid-priced but slow sea route sailing via the scorching Red Sea that the mission men usually used, but the local committee was adamant that his health required a cooler journey that would not increase his fevers and dysentery, using an American steamer across the Pacific. Mrs. Anderson wrote Turner of her husband's great disappointment with his health problems, his problems with seasickness, and of his reluctance to taking the fast steamer across the Pacific, fearing the expense. Anderson refused to listen to her advice and she hoped the committee would give guidance. The committee ruled he should take the cooler Pacific-American route. As travel options increased, at \$1,000 it was even cheaper by £40 than the traditional P. & O. route through the Red Sea to Liverpool (£492).

Legge and Marian arrived in Hong Kong in time to see the Andersons before their departure. He commented to Hannah of Mrs. Anderson "...all smiles and fair words, with the same cold wasp's eye as ever". The Andersons set off, landing at San Francisco on 14 June. By then Anderson's cough was gone and he had less pain in his lungs, but still suffered serious liver problems. They went by train to NYC and across the Atlantic to the UK. Chalmers, within a month of his return to Canton, was now the sole man in the mission there.

#### Turner and Eitel work in Hong Kong

From Hong Kong Turner sent the annual report and accounts from the local committee for 1869 to Mullens, noting that Chalmers was still not receiving the full child allowance for his older children as set out by the new LMS regulations. He reported Eitel's move to Hong Kong, and Chalmers move into Eitel's Canton house. Turner recommended that the Directors approve Chalmers' request to buy land in the now-inexpensive British Concession in Canton. In February 1870 the local committee in Canton had located good land in Shamian and obtained plans for two handsome structures for the mission, to cost \$8,000. In March Chalmers bought the land for £300.

Eitel reported in April 1870 that a family had moved into the old Hong Kong LMS mission house into the rooms vacated by Morris, but “It’s better that I should live at a distance from Mission House and the Chinese connected with it”, not explaining any further this enigmatic comment. In fact the mission house was in an aging district that had become increasingly rough. Eitel was living with his daughter and her husband in “a much more airy place”, and he expected to stay there while they went away on a trip to San Francisco. The local committee was going to pay his modest monthly rental costs and he was pleased to tell London that these arrangements would cost London nothing.

Turner had been buoyed to know that Legge would be returning to the colony to resume work as minister to the Union Church, sure that he could restore the church to its former prosperity. Turner was also very interested in reading the next volumes of Legge’s Classics. For a while he thought Legge would take on some work for the mission, but did not want to embarrass Legge by expecting mission work from him. Turner had thought only that perhaps Legge would like to return to work with the Chinese congregations “because of his long connection with the native church here”, but his comments were “only an offer of private goodwill, to one to whom I shall be happy to concede pre-eminence”. He assured the Directors that they would never be called upon to mediate between Legge and himself. The one thing Turner did want was some ruling on the formal relationship between Union Church and the LMS missions in Hong Kong and Canton.

#### Huang Shing becomes a public figure

New responsibilities were soon thrust upon Eitel when LMS printer Huang Shing became an increasingly important person in public affairs in Hong Kong. In 1870 he became a founding director of the new Chinese hospital, the Tung Wah, supported by Governor MacDonnell, and within two years Huang was hired to be an Interpreter to accompany a group of Chinese youths going to America to study science. Eitel expected to have to take over all the supervision of the press.

### Chapter 59 The Tianjin Massacre of 1870 and its effects in Canton

The foreign communities were worried by a rise of anti-foreign sentiment in China early in 1870, then were swept by horror and fear when they learned of a major massacre of French nuns, diplomats, and others in June in Tianjin. For centuries French nuns had been running an orphanage for abandoned children there. It had been founded by the sister of a convert who had been a prime minister in the Court of Beijing 300 years earlier, originally to save destitute orphans and new-borns from infanticide. Over the centuries Imperial officials were impressed by the care the nuns provided and asked them to set up similar orphanages in other provinces, recognizing they provided the children with food, clothing, and education.

Rumours started in early June in Tianjin alleging that the orphanage was abusing the children, tearing out their eyes and hearts to use their body parts in witchcraft. The nuns often baptized seriously ill children expected to die, and this was interpreted to mean that baptism caused the deaths. An angry crowd gathered at the orphanage in Tianjin on June 21 and open conflict soon broke out between the crowd and the guards of the French Consul who were trying to defend the nuns and children. Despite minor help from the local magistrate, the mob soon stormed and sacked the orphanage, and killed the Consul and his assistant, dumping their bodies in the river. Mob members then raped, mutilated, and killed 10 nuns, also killing six other foreigners in the orphanage. The mob went on to kill two priests, 40 Chinese Christians, and three Russian traders, storming through the city and burning down various Catholic and foreign institutions including the Cathedral and four British and American churches.

An aggressive and moralistic report in the North China *Daily News* wrote analysis further inflaming the situation, arguing that the orphanage brought all its problems upon itself and claiming that the nuns offered small payments for children brought in, although this seems to have been untrue. Rumours became elaborated, that unscrupulous native brokers were kidnapping children to earn these alleged payments, even going on trips into the interior to get children. The *Daily News* increased its rhetoric, claiming that the priests and nuns were paying some of China's greatest "scoundrels" and were interfering with Chinese families, and these reports were soon translated into Chinese for re-publication in Chinese newspapers. Later investigations suggested that some Chinese men who had nothing to do with the orphanage did go into the interior for children, but to procure them to work in brothels. In Hong Kong, Shortrede of the *China Mail* was outraged at the inflammatory distortions of the *Daily News*, recognizing them as pandering to the Qing officials in the north who had allowed the outrages as a kind of anti-foreign political strike glossed as moral indignation.

The massacre roused a storm of protest across the West. At first the French government had not responded with actions but the mission men knew that some martial response was inevitable, and western nations eventually sent gunboats to provide protection to the foreign legations in Tianjin. The mandarins initially insisted the massacre was entirely the actions of a spontaneous street mob, although later it became clear an official had written about it 10 days before it took place (Boomerang, 1872). Faced with major outrage by the foreigners, eventually the Chinese government investigated, determined that no kidnapped children were in the orphanage, distributed a circular ordering orphanages to be more open about their activities, executed 16 men possibly including some scapegoats, and eventually apologized a year later to the government of France.

Eitel had discontinued visits to Boluo after the Tianjin massacres but the LMS men had conflicting ideas about what the British should do in response to the murders. On the one hand they feared that any aggressive response would revive general persecution of Christians in China, but on the other, they realized that if the Chinese government did not enforce its own laws and punish the rioters, missions everywhere would become vulnerable to acts of violence by mobs convinced they could act with impunity.

The *Nonconformist* soon published an aggressive question to missionaries: “Do you wish the British Government to insist upon upholding Protestant Missions in foreign lands by forcible intervention?” It was a nasty trick question. Chalmers responded with a letter in August 1871 to the *China Mail* pointing out that if the mission men answered Yes, this would be treated as a horrifying answer by the editor, while if the mission men answered No, the editor would advise the mission men to be quiet forever more and be ready to be persecuted. Chalmers put forward a more nuanced analysis of the situation. He accepted that differences of religion were but one part of a large family of differences between Chinese culture and behaviour and that of the West, and that the Chinese had been taught to fear new ideas of every kind including science and politics, ideas that would bring them into the “comity of nations”. He accepted that Christianity was in direct conflict with Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism, which were “a stupendous and complex mass of heathen philosophy and superstition”. He explained their excellence as ideals “almost entirely disappears” when contrasted with the actual condition of the Chinese people. He inveighed against the superstition, cunning and vainglorious beliefs that lay under the refinements of speech and behaviour of the mandarin élites. He called upon the readers to be honest and acknowledge that they would not agree anywhere in the world, to stand by with only rhetoric while watching someone being beaten to death, out of respect for the beater’s religion. The

missions wanted nothing more or less than a simple agreement that the Chinese government had to act consistently with its own laws and treaties to protect people from mob violence. Unrest against the missions came from a combination of the gentry or *literati* threatened by western cultural ideas, and “roughs” the gentry used to do the rough work of mob action. The missions knew that the Chinese authorities were capable of a completely bloodless response to bring these gentry under control, and no gunboats would be needed anywhere. He concluded by reminding readers that most Chinese were not part of these violent events, and that the British government had been very courteous and helpful in trying to redress his “small complaints”, consistent with Lord Elgin’s treaty.

The Tianjin massacres set back relations between China and the west. Tentative signs of cooperation had been developing in the hope that the Chinese government would provide protection to Christian missions in the way that it did to Buddhist and Daoist religious institutions, but with this horrible event the French and others no longer trusted Chinese government protection to missions, property, or investments. The Manchu rulers were seen as incompetent. On the Chinese side, resentment increased at the idea that foreigners could take up arms without any consequences and would interfere with Chinese governmental control over its own citizens.

#### Tianjin agitation comes to Ho’s church in Foshan

Chalmers’ pleasure in his return to the Canton mission was disrupted in September 1870 when echoes of this anti-foreign agitation reached Canton and a mob destroyed Pastor Ho’s new Foshan chapel, the first constructed entirely by Chinese Christians. Although Turner and Legge had been very interested in attending the chapel’s opening ceremonies led by Ho, they decided in favour of prudence, realizing it would not be wise for the congregation to bring in too many foreigners “in these times of excitement”.

Chalmers, the local man, did attend Pastor Ho’s opening ceremony on 21 September, which took place without disruptions, and by four o’clock he had returned to Canton with some Chinese Christians. The Foshan congregation was having a “love feast” (a Christian meal) in the afternoon when a crowd of “lewd fellows of the baser sort burst in upon them. The place was completely sacked and then burned to the ground.”

In reporting this event Chalmers included an interesting document written by Ho, a copy of Ho’s petition to the British Consul seeking help in obtaining compensation from the Chinese authorities for this attack. Now aged 52, Ho had been leading the service at Foshan and was directly attacked by the mob. He described having to run over rooftops and through back windows to try and escape being beaten. While this was

going on the gentry “folded their hands and watched”, and when the fire engines arrived they didn’t help save the chapel, but only the buildings nearby. Some of the firemen even went after the Christian converts trying to kill them. Ho was beaten with clubs until he reached the shelter of the magistrate’s office, and three converts were badly beaten. He estimated the losses of property in the value of £572 and urged the Consul to submit his petition for compensation to the Viceroy of the province.

Chinese friends told Chalmers that the chapel would have been destroyed even if he had not attended the opening ceremonies, but he was terribly shaken by the event, comforted mainly to report that Canton itself still seemed safe apart from a typhoon that was coming. He wanted the Viceroy to take actions to ensure that local officials would “sternly administer justice, and warn against anarchy and violence”.

The British Consul in Canton, D. B. Robertson wrote Chalmers a highly unsympathetic letter in response to a request from Ho, the congregation, and Chalmers for redress. Robertson scolded them for undertaking “so ill-judged a proceeding as that of opening a Chapel at a time when a strong anti-missionary feeling is agitating the minds of the Chinese”. He described Foshan as a place “always turbulent” and explained he was unable to offer any “pecuniary redress” because the buildings were not owned by British subjects and were outside the British Concession in Canton. He left some faint hope by concluding that he would think about the problem, and two days later invited the mission men and some British officials to a meeting.

The meeting with Consul Robertson was a big surprise to Chalmers and the other missionaries, for the Consul told them he had asked the Chinese authorities to provide funds to rebuild the chapel and replace all the books and furniture. Consul Robertson had done for them what he said he could not, and asked only that the mission people keep very quiet about his initial refusal to help. He agreed it was important on principle to set a precedent that mob acts would have to be recompensed because he realized “others” were watching to see what they could do with impunity. The Chinese authorities sent soldiers to Foshan to begin the remedies but they encountered a mob so threatening that the soldiers were afraid to get off their boat. The mob spokesman told the soldiers that if they came on shore the mob would kill all the local Chinese Christians. Robertson thought that steady pressure from the consuls would “help the mandarins sharpen their wits” and figure out a solution.

This apparent cooperation was illusory however, because by December no one had been punished and the British Consul changed his mind and was now even recommending to the Canton Viceroy that he not punish the rioters. Robertson made it clear his duty was only to protect his countrymen and not Chinese. The Chinese officials



were pressuring the congregation in Foshan to promise not to rebuild but they refused to leave their church site, and the local government refused to seek justice against the mob leaders. It was a standoff.

Legge wrote Hannah in Dollar, outraged at the British Consul. "It is very disgraceful in him, & contrary to the express undertaking he took upon himself in the hearing of all the missionaries that he would get the place rebuilt. The thing is a trial and a snare to the Chinese (Christians)". The officials eventually promised the Chinese congregation that they would get back their donations and the value of the destroyed property if they would agree to give up their rights to the site. Legge thought they would stand firm as owners of the property because justice was on their side.

Legge also examined the attack on the Foshan chapel within a larger political context, explaining that if the French had "properly dealt with" the massacre of Roman Catholic nuns at Tianjin, the attack in Foshan would not have happened. He further blamed the British government for its vacillating policy and the American Burlingame embassy for the extensive concessions it gave to the Chinese. Everyone knew that the southern Chinese had always been more anti-foreign than the northerners, and volatile changes in mood in Canton quickly followed political events in the north.

In a private letter to a family member James castigated the LMS Secretary Mullens and his old colleague Dr. Lockhart for their unworthy course: they "may congratulate themselves on the natural results of their approval of the Government policy and kow-towing to Lord Clarendon. The mission in the South of China is under special obligation to them", was his sarcastic summation of the submissive and passive way that the LMS Directors kow-towed to the British government in its lame response to the massacre.

In Foshan, nothing significant to identify members of the mob or reimburse the church members had happened by October, and Legge was indignant. He wrote that when men discover they can break the law with impunity, this emboldens them for more mischief. In Foshan the rioters originally hid from the authorities, but after they realized that nothing would be done to them they became bold again. The gentry offered to pay for the chapel and other destroyed property on condition that the chapel not be rebuilt, and Legge considered the Consul's agreement to this as an echo of the submissive response by western governments to the Tianjin massacre. Gradually however, the anti-foreign sentiment in Foshan lost its strength.

In London the *Times* in February 1871 thundered against Chalmers for going to the Foshan chapel opening and thus "causing" the riot, but Chalmers knew that the Foshan congregation had been having public services in the street for months with no problems, and the congregation had been working steadily on the building even after news of the

Tianjin massacres reached the district. Chalmers complained that British officials were more in sympathy with Chinese officials than with any mission, and it was clear that the British concern was only for trade, not for any other activities or even principles.

In the summer of 1871 a new wave of agitation was developing in the Canton region and some of that focused again on the Foshan chapel. Legge viewed the chapel as a symbolic focus of popular anger that was actually agitation against the Canton officials, and he expected more rebellion in the south against the mandarins. He knew that many in Hong Kong relished this uproar because then many Cantonese fled to Hong Kong as refugees, and the price of rents rose for “a quick – but temporary prosperity”. He stressed to Hannah that he was in no danger and there was no reason for her to be alarmed.

The Foshan chapel remained a contentious issue over the next few years, and in May 1872 Eitel found himself forced to write a justification of his actions seeking justice, to Consul Robertson, who had been steadily critical of the mission men coming to seek his help. Eitel explained that he had never acted to get the British government involved in Chinese legal actions, but had only written the Consul after the Chinese authorities refused “even with triple bribes – to handle any complaints by Chinese Christians”.

Eitel pointed out to the Consul that the problem did not arise from any individual acts by any Chinese Christians but instead arose out of popular restlessness relating to the Tianjin massacres, and out of a new popular frenzy around “genii powders” which were alleged to be witchcraft powders spread by Christians. Eitel spelled out actions aimed against Chinese Christians by mandarins in the *Guishan (Kwei-shan)* district on East River, including placards proclaiming that Christianity was a forbidden religion and naming Christians as traitors to the state. Both these contravened the Emperor’s Edict of Toleration but no official had ever posted corrections. Further, arising from the genii powders rumours, mobs destroyed the homes of Chinese Christians, who could not even get a hearing with their own officials. Eitel had never asked the Consul for compensation, he only wanted the Consul’s help to ensure the mandarins knew they had to handle the affairs of Chinese Christians the same way they handled the affairs of other Chinese.

Che’s mission in Boluo was also affected by the turbulence of the Cantonese in the wake of the Tianjin massacres. In late October 1870 Turner and Eitel risked a visit to the congregation in Boluo after they learned that fresh persecution had broken out there, many miles to the northeast of Foshan. While the people in the Boluo district were friendly toward them, Turner and Eitel feared their presence might generate more trouble for the congregation and left after a brief visit. They returned safely from their

Boluo trip but reported that three of the congregation had been kidnapped, one feared murdered, and the mandarins were actively stirring up more trouble. Eitel was still helping the congregation in Boluo and in January 1871 they were still being persecuted; when Canton authorities issued rulings to redress these attacks the local officials simply ignored them. Legge was convinced these new persecutions were still a direct reaction to the bland western response to the murders in Tianjin and to the local authorities' lackadaisical response to the Foshan mob actions.

Chalmers was also faced with a more intimate problem within the Canton mission. In the summer he had to fire Leung Manshing, one of the native preachers, after the man married an additional wife. Worse, she was a woman widely understood to be "immoral", and who was claimed by another man who had entered Leung's house and wounded him with a knife after threatening to kill him. Chalmers was somewhat mellow about Leung's behaviour, "he was foolish if not sinful", but knew Leung had lost value as a leader in the mission. Leung solved the problem of his lost reputation by leaving the troublesome wife and moving to Hong Kong.

#### The death of Ho Tsunshin, and a new era in the Chinese congregation

In April 1871 the Hong Kong mission suffered a tremendous loss with the death of Pastor Ho Tsunshin. Legge's friend and colleague from his earliest days in Malacca, Ho was a few years younger than Legge's 55. Ho was the first man to greet Legge when he returned from Britain in 1870, and James had been struck by how Ho had aged in their three years apart. Although Ho had been very active in the creation of the chapel in Foshan, he suffered when attacked by the mob there in July 1870 then suffered a small "stroke" later in the year. By early 1871 his health was in a serious decline and he was now so weak he couldn't move about easily. Despite this he persevered in making arrangements with the help of Legge to separate the Chinese congregation in Hong Kong from the LMS mission, to lead it as an independent church, and he continued doing his share of preaching and church meetings. Legge viewed Ho with tenderness. "He had always been wise and discreet". He knew that Ho responded to behavioural problems within the congregation with much delicacy and hesitance.

Ho moved to Canton in February 1871 as his condition worsened, and Legge and Turner went to his bedside in March to comfort him and to reminisce about their lives together over the past 30 years. James found Ho "utterly altered in appearance, but he recognized me with a smile. The next day I'm not sure he recognized me". Ho's wife and children were understandably distressed because he was not yet an old man. Ho lingered for another month and died on 3 April 1871.

The very day that Legge and Turner visited Ho in Canton, Ho's efforts to seek redress for the destruction of his Foshan chapel met with success. The military mandarin of Foshan wrote to Chalmers that the Governor-General of the province had ordered that the Christians of Foshan were to be paid for the damages they had suffered, and the chapel was to be rebuilt on its original site. Although various ructions continued across 1871, all these promises were fulfilled by the end of the year and the Chinese Christians in Foshan were using their new chapel, Legge wrote, "no thanks to the inanity of Mr. Robertson". In the final aftermath of its burning and reconstruction the officials eventually posted a permanent guard at the chapel to protect it and its congregation. Justice had finally been served, at the expense of much time, money, and worried effort led by Ho.

In January 1872 Legge visited the rebuilt Foshan chapel with 'intense delight". It could hold a congregation of 300, had a meeting room for 100, a large courtyard, and included a pleasant mix of European and Chinese design. Best of all, the people of Foshan were no longer contentious. A lone European missionary Rev. Selby lived there safely, although in "most miserable circumstances, contrary to those who rail against missionaries for surrounding themselves with comforts".

On his return to Hong Kong from Ho's bedside, Legge wrote an essay describing Ho's life, eventually published in the July 1872 *Missionary Chronicle*. James described meeting Ho as a young man "of remarkable intelligence", son of an LMS wood-block cutter and printer at Malacca. Four years younger than James, Ho and James soon developed a friendship "of great intimacy". Malacca mission man Evans had recognized Ho's intellectual gifts and had sent him to India for higher education where he worked part-time to support himself, returning to Malacca when he graduated. Originally agreeing to be baptized just to please his father and Mr. Evans, he eventually became a Christian after reading texts in English.

In 1840 Legge had been impressed by Ho's language abilities and began teaching him Greek and Hebrew. By the end of 1842 he could read both the Old and New Testaments in their original languages and could even compose texts in Hebrew. He was excited by all the things he read, "knowledge of the world, travel, science", and soon developed a powerful preaching style in Chinese. His work in the mission stopped suddenly in 1842 when family pressure forced him to return to his native village near Canton and marry a woman to whom he had been betrothed as a child. When he discovered the "idolatrous" nature of the wedding ceremony that had been planned he ran away to Hong Kong, returning to be married after requiring the ceremony to be changed to reflect his Christian beliefs. Ho moved with his wife to Hong Kong in 1844

after Legge created the mission there, and resisted many lucrative job offers because he really wanted to be a pastor even though Legge could only pay him 1/5 of the salary others offered. Ho taught his wife to read, she eventually became a Christian, and they had more than a dozen children including several who became eminent.

While Legge was in Britain 1845-48 Ho became an ordained minister and was placed in charge of the Chinese LMS church in Hong Kong, where he became known for his vigorous preaching. To help improve the impact of sermons to those unfamiliar with Christian stories and ideas, Legge had the idea to set up a system of writing and printing one-page Chinese sermon summaries to hand out to church members each Sunday. Ho adopted this and used it for decades, publishing thousands of these over the years. Legge knew it helped improve his own Chinese composition, and Ho realized it helped him focus his sermons. The result was that Ho “excelled all the great preachers” Legge had ever heard, the sermons combining rational explanations with flashes of oratory. For example, in his sermon about the patience of Job, Ho described all the trials, “dramatized them with an overmastering spell”, and when he came to the descriptions of Job’s boils, ‘hundreds were hotching about as if themselves smitten”. His style was entirely extemporaneous, working only off the skeleton outline he had printed. Despite this energetic work, Legge accepted that Ho’s effort and talents still did not yield a large number of converts, and he did not really have an “evangelizing spirit” sufficient to go into China, the original hope of all Legge’s mission dreams.

In the years after 1867 when Legge had returned to Britain then returned alone to Hong Kong to work intensely on the Classics, the two men had drifted apart. Legge regretted that there was no other LMS man in Hong Kong to keep Ho’s interest in completing a Chinese commentary on the New Testament, and absent this encouragement Ho settled into routine congregational work.

Ho’s last twelve years included one remarkable change in that he became a wealthy property owner. In the earliest years the mission had started him at a salary of \$10 per month, giving rises to \$30 plus \$20 for mission staff, Legge always initiating these salary increases. Ho was very thrifty and always lived well below this income even though he was unusually liberal in helping others in need. But he saved money and invested his savings in buildings and land in Hong Kong and Canton, even while continuing to minister to his congregation. When property values increased so did his wealth, and he died a wealthy man.

Legge countered critics who did not approve of Ho’s wealth. “I do not think anyone is wrong in bettering his worldly condition where he can do it not only honestly but honourably. I venture to believe that it is lawful either for a missionary abroad or a

minister at home to do so; whether it be expedient or not is for himself to decide. “ In the end “it is the Lord who judgeth us all”. Ho faced this problem very pragmatically after Legge asked him if it would have been better for him to remain a poor man. ”I don’t know, but what would the LMS have done and said if I had left my large family to its care”. The intense family responsibilities of Confucian China meant that it was Ho’s duty to care for his large family, and he had done that.

Eventually Legge found himself helping Ho’s widow draft her will, flabbergasted to discover that Ho left her an estate of \$150,000. They had ten surviving children, half girls. These posed a problem to Legge because Chinese culture devalued women and Ho’s widow shared this view. “I had difficulty in persuading her to leave anything to her daughters. She argued it was not “Chinese custom to do so. They go to their husbands, and the parents have done with them. I proposed she should divide the whole into five portions, & let the sons have  $\frac{3}{5}$  in equal shares, and the daughters  $\frac{2}{5}$ . No; but at last she agreed to give  $\frac{7}{10}$  to the sons and  $\frac{3}{10}$  to the daughters”. This was a nice task challenging two conflicting values: tradition vs. egalitarianism, and Legge helped move the widow a bit in the direction of valuing women.

Legge mused about his past 30 years with Ho and the church in Hong Kong, starting out in Hong Kong with three young Chinese Christians and creating the churches of Hong Kong, Canton, Boluo, and Foshan, now with active congregations of 700 baptized members. He was amazed at the intensity of some Chinese Christians he met, such as a man on his return voyage of 1870 who grilled Legge about every detail of Christian belief. “... a question on the Trinity, on predestination, on election, on the atonement, on free will, on Scripture chronology, history, conflicting texts, and I know not what. Christianity is a wonderful quickener of the intellect. I hope my friend got some of his perplexities resolved, but I was glad to escape at last out of his hand”. Legge did not have a strong need to proselytize all he encountered, or to shape all his encounters as mission work.

### Chapter 60 Legge returns to Union Church

Legge preached his first sermon in the Union Church the day after his arrival in March 1870. The trustees were keen to support Legge and they wanted to meet with him on the evening of the very day he arrived. He learned that under Morris, church attendance had dwindled to between 9-25, improving somewhat after Morris suspended his preaching during 1869 and Turner and Eitel took turns doing this for the church. Legge realized it was going to be “a long uphill struggle” to restore a thriving congregation out of the mess Morris had left. There was a big difference between the numbers of formal (sustaining) members of the church, often as few as 58, and the numbers who attended the services, who could fill the 450-seat sanctuary. Beyond that there was a larger community of merchants and government officials who had developed great respect for Legge and had given donations to support his return ministry (Bondfield, Hickling, & Ball, 1903). His normal schedule there was to preach two services on Sundays.

A formal agreement had been drawn up by the LMS in London and sent to Union Church trustee Mr. Cox outlining the terms of Legge’s work for the three-year contract in which his salary was still being paid and administered as an LMS appointment, with the church repaying the LMS. The congregation was so enthused at the idea of Legge’s return as their minister that they were able to raise enough money to guarantee all the expenses of the ministry for the three-year contract, collecting donations to provide him with an annual salary of \$1,600 (about £400 at that time). Because the Union Church “earned a net surplus of \$600 p.a.”, Legge believed they would have no problem in paying his salary and the expenses of his travel to the colony, and expected no problem in renting a house with his housing allowance of \$60 a month.

Regaining an active congregation turned out to be as difficult as Legge had predicted, and by October he wrote his family that membership in the Union Church was still “very thin... the people here are certainly not church-goers as they are in Scotland”. There was still ill will between the Union Church congregation and the LMS Directors because the LMS had not answered questions posed in an earlier letter from trustee Cox on the question of who would pay the costs of Morris’ return to the UK. Eitel in April explained to the LMS that relations would become even worse if the LMS refused to pay for that. This conflict between the two organizations did not seem to affect the congregation’s relationship with Legge, but fallout from Morris’ tenure drifted on and occasionally Legge would encounter congregational members who tried to find out his views of Morris’ character. Legge immediately realized these were Morris

supporters who were trying to generate trouble, but “I was on my guard”. With discretion he avoided providing more grounds for conflict within the church.

By the end of 1870 the financial situation at Union Church had improved considerably, the church ended with its books back in black and the congregation expected 1871 to yield a sturdy surplus of \$2,000 if the trend of increasing congregational support continued. Across 1870-71 Legge’s work also gradually restored the congregation to its 1867 levels, the year in which he had relinquished it to Morris. Nevertheless, he realized the congregation did not have as many members from among families of position and wealth.

The LMS created on-going ill will in the Union Church when it refused to pay for costs arising from Morris’ aborted tenure as minister. In June 1871 church secretary Crawford wrote angrily to the LMS protesting this refusal, arguing that all these expenses were a direct result of the poor selection by the LMS Directors in choosing Morris in the first place. Legge reminded the LMS that the Deed of Trust for the church specified that the LMS was committed to finding and funding the minister, and Legge feared that without this background responsibility, the Union Church would be vulnerable to severe harms and losses from incompetent ministers. Despite his success in achieving a great turnaround in the affairs of the church, by the end of 1871 Legge was complaining to the LMS directors of their neglect, distressed by an apparent plan of the LMS to cut connections with the Union Church.

In addition to the Union Church work Legge was invited to fill Morris’ former job as Presbyterian Chaplain to a regiment of soldiers and he took on this new job with typical zest. On Wednesdays he held a five o’clock service in the school-room at the barracks, on Thursdays he held individual pastoral counselling meetings for two hours in the vestry, on Sunday afternoons he preached to the English prisoners (switching to 6:30 AM on hot summer Sundays at the request of the prisoners), and once a week he visited soldiers in the military hospital. He was preaching five services every Sunday. Within a year soldiers asked him to run a weekly Bible study class, so he added that to his activities. The Bible study soldiers also formed a choir, and eventually gave Legge a large photograph of themselves as a going-away gift when he left Hong Kong. They wrote elaborate expressions of gratitude to him. “If we dared, we would endeavour to tell you the very warm feelings of regard towards you experienced by ourselves and our comrades – not only for your masterly lectures, but also for your affectionate ministration to our sick”.

Legge’s work with the soldiers led him to make jokes, one at the expense of denominational jealousies, reporting an amusing comment from a patient in the



military hospital. Legge asked “ if there were any Presbyterians. One man “No; we are all Protestants!” In the military prison “there were two of my people; - an artillery man who deserted seven months ago, and remained like a fool, on the island, where he was sure to be apprehended”.

#### Legge's sermons

We have some of the sermons that Legge gave in his first year back with the church, and these show his style to be formal but warm, his references scholarly. He often expressed concerns about the temptations of wealth at the expense of goodness, and his pastorly guidance was in a style encouraging rather than threatening. In early May 1870 he discussed a text from the New Testament urging men to seek righteousness and placing it in a Chinese context. He outlined the character of the Chinese people, describing them as having “thousands of honest and honourable men...who practise many of the virtues that belong to individual and social life, who are industrious, thrifty, self-denying and kind”. He thought the only flaw in Chinese thinking was the limitation of its perspective to the seen and temporal life, lacking an idea of the afterlife. He reminded the congregation that even in nominally Christian lands the masses also lived only for the present; “in spite of the Bible...there is more of seeking after earthly goods and earthly enjoyment than there is of seeking after the Kingdom of God and his righteousness”. He urged the congregation to do that through service to others as a way of following Christ, because the Kingdom of God was within each person, it was a spiritual kingdom. Legge's style was that of a wise teacher, his language formal but his sentiments warm. Notably it has no whiff of evangelistic brimstone even as it sets a high standard for behaviour.

Another sermon that month examined the ancient roots of the idea of God and of transcendent powers, arguing there was a tendency to worship in all cultures although in highly varied forms. He reviewed the history of different religious forms, made references to ancient and modern scholars, and made the argument from intelligent design to support the truth of the existence of God. His language was positive rather than fiery: “All possible perfection is attached to His nature, and all possible happiness belongs to His essence’. The *China Mail* published his July sermon in which he preached the rule of duty and the law of love. While a life of fame and wealth could be independent of goodness, even those who were habitual sinners had the possibility of repenting and Christ's rule of love would bless them. He reminded the congregation that vivid depictions of Judgement Day were only figurative.

In November his sermon was dedicated to those suffering in the Franco-Prussian war, emphasizing the evils of war. Crafty Bismarck had provoked the French into an

opening salvo in July as a means of consolidating smaller German states with Prussia in a successful invasion and siege of Paris. Across the next six months France collapsed into political chaos and famine. Legge explained that while some good results at times happened as a result of wars, these results were attributed to "the overruling providence of God" but were gained only at the expense of terrible sacrifices. War was an affliction to religion because even if it was righteous it brought death and desolation and aroused harmful passions of rage, recklessness, and revenge. Legge said that European warfare was as uncivilized as any "Red Indian" war, and that the US Civil War had been in direct collision with Christ's call for peace on earth. He ended with the hope that this might be the last war in history, that Christian nations would abolish war. An adventurous visiting Liverpudlian Fanny Davis wrote a travel diary now in the Brynmor Jones Library in Hull, describing her attendance at a service in Union Church in 1871 and commenting on Legge's sermon "we liked him very much".

In a sermon on 12 February 1871 Legge examined whether the Gospel narrators were telling the truth, explaining that he had been thinking about this for thirty years, struggling with "doubt and perplexity". It is obvious that his struggles to evaluate the accuracy of ancient documentary claims in the Bible were a mirror of his work on the Chinese Classics. His sceptical scientific bent forced him to more than just translate old texts and let their provenance and authenticity go unchallenged. In this sermon he made use of Buddhist ideas and legends and referred to ideas of value within Confucianism and "Tauism", but argued that the gospel narratives, compact and profound, were special because they were written by men who knew Jesus, suggesting the immediacy and honesty of their reports. In contrast later Christian writers were far less compelling "Oh what a falling off is there! There is feebleness; there are many foolish conceits and fancies.... And much that is despicable...", with the important insights of the New Testament "often hidden by the wood, hay, stubble of a pretentious philosophy and a groveling meanness of mind". He argued that what made the early texts so valuable was that they seemed to come from inspiration, from the power of direct revelation. In the end, although he was inclined to raise questions of authenticity and value, he used the power of his own beliefs as the basis for his conclusions, rather than a more hard-core empiricism.

#### Legge's intellectual leadership in Hong Kong

With the increasing settled middle class in Hong Kong there was a growing thirst for broader intellectual engagement in the community, and in December 1871 Legge organized a series of public lectures at the Union Church on topics related to Chinese culture. These turned out to be a great success. For the inaugural lecture on "Confucius,

the sage of China”, he filled the entire church with “English, Americans, Germans, Parsis & Jews – nearly all in full dress”. He felt “extremely easy” in the topic, “and I do not think it was ever more appreciated”.

Legge was more worried about the second lecture, to be given by a journalist from the *Daily Press* (the paper for the Hong Kong business community), on “Chronology, the Baseline of History”. This was facing a delay because the lecturer “begged me to give him more time”. That talk was given on 11 January 1872 but unfortunately “It was a most complete and ludicrous failure”. But Legge had great faith in the other lecturers he had bagged, including Eitel for three lectures on Buddhism, Turner on St. Paul and Seneca, Mr. Francis on the wars in China, and Chalmers on “Taouism or the rationalism of the Chinese”. Legge would conclude the series with a talk on Mencius. Eitel’s talk on 18 January was “splendid lecture... he is a man of rare ability, with comprehensive view, lucid argument, and sound theology”. The LMS mission in Hong Kong enjoyed a further rise in status when the University in Tübingen in Strasburg, Germany awarded Eitel a scholar’s Ph.D. in 1871 for his *Dictionary of Sanskrit Terms*.

Eitel published his Buddhism lectures in the *Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal*, where he concluded that Buddhism was “glorious and beautiful in many ways”, “magnificent but heretical”, for which a British consular official in Taiwan, Thomas Watters, attacked him. Eitel’s booklet sold out even in the grossly materialistic community of Hong Kong, and was soon given a highly favourable review in *The Nation* in New York.

The *Chinese Recorder* missionary journal was full of vigorous debates on intellectual and political issues in the Chinese treaty ports. Rev. Edkins, who had come out on a ship with James Legge in 1848 and admired Legge’s skills in Chinese, became fascinated with the Biblical idea that all the world’s languages had spread out from Babel, and people and their languages including the Chinese, had migrated over the globe. This theory considered Chinese a “primitive” language, which meant a foundational language connected with Babylon, in this spread over the world. Edkins wrote complicated articles trying to show linguistic similarities between Chinese, ancient Hebrew, Latin, Mongol, Sanskrit, Akkad, and Arabic. He was studying the Buryat language of Siberia, planning to adapt it to translating scriptures into Mongolian text. His arguments elicited critics and a lively debate on the evidence. Another author, “Ossian” argued that Gaelic had an even deeper connection with ancient Hebrew and might have helped the development of Hebrew. (Ossian was the name of an alleged ancient Scots bard whose work had been “discovered” by Macpherson then challenged as to its authenticity in quarrels that lasted well into the 20<sup>th</sup> c.) Other mission men

examined Darwin's ideas, and Legge wrote discussing the great flood and Noah in comparison with Chinese flood stories, also arguing that the Chinese must have migrated from much farther west.

Pastor Ho's son Ho Kai began writing articles in the *Recorder* on various scholarly topics relating to Chinese literature and Christianity under the pen name "Sinensis". He shared a common interest in linking Chinese words to possible ancient meanings that joined words and concepts to those in the Bible, and shared Legge's interest in determining if ancient Chinese reports of a great flood were the same flood experienced by Noah. Emil Bretschneider, a Russian physician in the Russian legation in Beijing, contributed articles on Chinese botany, referring to James Legge as "this erudite Sinolog" after correspondence with him concerning identifying plants names in the Classics.

The mission men discussed Chinese culture in the journal, noting that their efforts to improve the status of women in Chinese culture were often a target of mandarin anger. They wrote "the elevation of women is the glory of western countries" and referred with despair to a Chinese proverb used to explain women's limitations; "You can teach monkeys and parrots to imitate certain actions; so it is possible to teach girls something too". In a service led by Chinese Christians in Fuzhou, visiting missionaries were very impressed by the study sessions the Chinese pastor led after the sermons, covering 15 essays on topics relating to behaviour. These included comparisons of polygamy in China and among the ancient Hebrews, the origins of the practise of buying slave girls, the features of their deeds of sale, and the rights of the buyers, sellers, and of girls sold in this way.

#### Mission doctors study Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM)

Legge's friend and occasional physician Dr. Kerr in Canton published a book in Chinese on the European *Materia Medica*, describing the botanical, animal, and mineral materials used in prescriptions, and providing the names of the medicines in Chinese and English so that he could train Chinese students in modern medicine. This was not a one-way education however, and scholarship in the Chinese *Recorder and Missionary Journal* included studies of Chinese medicine, methods, and explanations. From 1840 onward mission doctors began studying the texts of traditional Chinese medicine, publishing accounts of TCM medicines and the anatomical theories that were the core of the system.

Dr. Kerr identified some problems, starting with identifying names and characters that could be used. He discovered that settling on any specific Chinese term for many ingredients used in international medicine was quite difficult because many Chinese

botanical terms and disease names were general, and not specific enough to provide accurate guidance to a doctor. Decades before, Dr. Hobson had faced this problem, having to create new Chinese words in his Chinese textbooks of anatomy and physiology to differentiate gases such as oxygen and nitrogen that had only one generic term for gas in Chinese.

Kerr noted that some Chinese medicines were of rough empirical value but a larger problem persisted because of the lack of any tradition of careful experimentation. Even excellent biological agents used in compounds were not used for the diseases that they could most effectively treat. Kerr's analysis of the human anatomy chart sent from the Qing Imperial Library for use by TCM practitioners showed eight major anatomical errors (Kerr, 1872). There was no understanding that some blood vessels distributed blood from the heart while others returned it, and the scheme made no distinction between venous and arterial blood. Nor was there awareness of valves in veins, a feature known in the west since Galen. The official anatomical drawing and text incorrectly showed that the windpipe went through the lungs into the heart, three tubes went from the heart to the spleen, liver and kidneys, and the kidneys were connected to the spinal cord. This meant that kidney fluids circulated up to the brain and to the male sex organs, thus connecting the heart, brain and sex organs. Blood and air were both said to permeate the body in tubes that had no anatomical existence, but this model of tubes was the basis for diagnosis using a multitude of pulses, three points on each wrist each providing 24 indicators relating to every organ of the body, from which the practitioner would even predict the sex of a foetus.

Another physician described more details about the model of circulation of the blood used in TCM. The Imperial manual taught that the blood had a weekly circuit through the body, and that the body was only full of blood on one day in the week. No distinction was made among all the diseases of the eye (cataract, glaucoma, retinitis etc.) all being in one category. The lack of the concept of inflammation also made translations into Chinese for medical training a challenging task (Henderson, 1864). The superior efficacy of European medicine and surgery as provided by mission men was soon appreciated by Chinese including officials who flocked to mission doctors for help even when political and anti-foreign conflicts flared. When a new journal, the *China Review* began in 1872, Kerr summarized his examination of the classic texts of Traditional Chinese Medicine, explaining the errors of anatomy and physiology that they propounded.

Chapter 61 Upheavals with genii powders, Qing Circulars, and feng shui

*In which genii powders and feng shui become tools against missions using an ancient compilation of mission perfidy that is circulated to which Prince Gong adds regulations, the missions feel victimized by the traders, and Chalmers tries to rebuild Foshan.*

As part of the fallout of the 1870 Tianjin massacres, new anti-foreign rumours about poisonous Christian “genii powders” began to spread around the treaty ports, documented in the *Chinese Recorder*. In some places the rumour was that these powders were made up from the ground-up body eyes and hearts of orphans in the RC orphanages and were used to poison wells, rivers, trees, rice and tea. In Xiamen the officials tortured and decapitated a man after he confessed to getting poisons from the missions., When the mandarins published his confession it was soon recognized as an obvious forgery because it was written using formal mandarin words and a style completely foreign to the region.

Anti-foreign posters in Fuzhou and Canton warned about these poisons and explained that the antidote was pigeon dung with honey which had to be bought from missions. In Fuzhou Chinese Christians were attacked by mobs and beaten, their homes destroyed, and they were tortured to confess poisoning wells. At times Chinese officials restrained the mobs, but at other times ignored their actions. From Canton Lechler reported that mob actions had harmed two mission stations. His three missions and a school were all in Hakka territory at Lilong about 60 miles inland NE of Hong Kong. The mandarins sometimes paid reparations for the damages, and Lechler thought they were happy to pay a bit of money “for the fun of seeing the missionaries being burnt out once a year”. He attributed the animus to a continuing distrust of all foreigners.

The origin of the idea of “genii powders” rose from an anti-foreign Circular titled *Death Blow to Corrupt Doctrines*, published by mandarins in north China and distributed widely to the educated people in all villages in 1870. It is probably no coincidence that this circular was published just as China and Britain were preparing new treaty revisions, and Britain’s negotiator Sir Alcock Rutherford made some unjust comments against a missionary in Taiwan.

*Death Blow* was a compilation of anti-foreign articles dating back to the 17<sup>th</sup> c., when the articles were against the Jesuits who had been accepted into the court because their knowledge updated Chinese mathematics and foundry methods. In particular, in 1673 the Jesuits had rebuilt Chinese astronomical instruments from 1279 that had been allowed to deteriorate so badly they were useless. Religion was the attack point, but the

articles were against everything foreign. The *Death Blow* circular started by copying an Introduction from the *Sacred Edict* of 1670 from the Emperor Kangxi, the greatest Qing emperor, augmented by essays by his son in 1724. The religion under attack was always the *Tien-shu*, the “heavenly-lord” religion, the specific term used for Roman Catholicism and described in the *Sacred Edict* as a foreign and unorthodox religion whose works should be burnt.

The *Death Blow* circular of 1870 added that Protestantism was the same. It outlined many horrible practices, including the claim that new converts were awarded four ounces of silver and a pill (probably the communion wafer) made of special powders that made them confused and darkened their consciousness. Converts were required to take off all their clothes and be washed by the teacher (probably adult immersion baptism in some groups), who “indulged in his licentious propensities”, and many strange sexual practices were alleged to be part of the religion. It is easy to see the origin of the idea of the dangerous “genii powders” in this document, which was quickly translated into English in Shanghai so that the missions could understand the origins of the rumours that led to the Tianjin massacres, and could publish a response defending their own work. It decreed the officials had to use *feng shui* in deciding whether missions could establish buildings.

### Feng shui

The *Death Blow* circular’s proclamation of the use of *feng shui* as a mechanism of power over the missions was especially interesting because the mission men knew that it was a “modern superstition” that had been recently revived after having been condemned by an Imperial Edict in 1681. They understood that it was cynically being used as a political device to control church-building by mandarins who themselves gave *feng shui* little credence. In fact the literati and court officials regarded *feng shui* as a peasant superstition that was not consistent with Confucian thinking.

The missions felt extremely vulnerable. They knew that the British government cared only about trade, the French government felt weak in the face of the massacre, and the American government didn’t understand how the *Death Blow* circular would inflame public opinion against all foreigners. In contrast, the mandarins knew that Western governments were highly responsive to Chinese public opinion, and figured this circular would arouse such opposition to foreigners that the western nations would back off from their pressures for treaty revisions. In fact allegations against the missionaries in China were also flourishing in the western press as if they were true, and the Chinese government was cheered by the fact that westerners were attacking the missionaries even more than the Chinese gentry were.

The Protestant mission men realized that while many claimed that it was mission activities that had caused the two wars between Britain and China and thus missions that had disrupted trade, in fact it was trade conflicts that led to the wars and disrupted missions. They were especially incensed that the abuses outlined in the *Death Blow* circular, when not complete inventions, were specific to Roman Catholicism especially in its inland missions, yet these were harming Protestant activities in the treaty ports where mission work was very different. There was general recognition that the RC priests often behaved arrogantly, and had for example seized land that they had lost more than a century earlier.

British officials were no help; consular official Thomas Wade published an article arguing that the missions should change their educational approach from basing it on Christian topics enhanced with basic education, to a model in which basic education was the focus, topped up with Christian topics. Rev. Burden responded with fury at this attack based on a complete lack of information about what the mission schools taught, explaining that all of the education of Chinese students in mission schools on the topics of geography, astronomy, and history was done using textbooks written in Chinese by missionaries, while not one person in the British Foreign Office had ever written any text in Chinese. He explained that the creation of these school texts in Chinese was work done entirely in addition to the mission work they were required to do, and if the translations were a bit rough at least the ideas were being taught, which was more important than niceties of style. He charged Wade to show any evidence that he had ever converted even one Chinese official to the notion that foreign countries are equal to China, rather than all being subservient to the universal sovereignty of China, the Central Kingdom.

Traders criticized the nonconformist missions under attack for seeking help from their legations, claiming that these missions all preached separation of church and state and should live with that. Chalmers countered that it was entirely appropriate for missionaries not to want to be martyrs and to want the ordinary protections written into existing treaties. British officials were increasingly annoyed at having to help missions under attack and wrote each other in February 1872 that it would be quite unauthorized to use consular and naval authorities to rescue missionaries, apparently regarding them as individuals outside the purview of the treaties rather than as Britons included in the treaties. The Protestant missions made themselves unpopular for continuing pressure to stop the opium trade (Lodwick, 1996), and British officials continued to resist this, arguing that if Britain stopped it, the French would simply take over, with no net benefit to the Chinese people.



### The Tsungli Yamen *Missionary Circular* 1871: Roman Catholics vs. Protestants

In 1871 Prince Gong's Foreign Office added to the tension about the missions when he sent out a "Missionary" Circular outlining new rules concerning all western mission activities, arising from the massacre in Tianjin and the new rise of anti-foreign feeling in the region around Beijing. These rules proposed severe restrictions on all mission work even though the trigger events had involved the Roman Catholic church. They required all orphanages to be closed, forbade Chinese women to enter churches, all female missionaries (actually, the RC nuns) to be deported to open orphanages in their home countries, and ordered the French Sisters of Charity to stop teaching religion in China because they allowed men to be in rooms with them thus violating Chinese ideas of modesty. The Circular reminded the French that Chinese Christians were subject to the laws of China and not protected by foreign laws from requirements for local taxes and forced labour.

The new rules required missions to be under the authority of local officials to whom they must *ketou* (kow-tow) rather than to be responsible to their government legations as stipulated under the treaties, refused to allow reparations to be paid for any damages done to mission property and schools (explicitly protecting the *literati* and gentry from being held responsible after they stirred up conflicts), allowed a mandarin to prevent any person from becoming a Christian by declaring that he had once been a criminal, and restricted travel in the interior. The Circular announced that Chinese Christians could not be represented in the courts by Christian priests, and notified Chinese Christians that they could not "plume themselves upon their position of Christians" in divorce and property actions before the courts. The new rules forbade any construction of houses or chapels unless *feng shui* approved the locations. The Circular again went into details of past cases over hundreds of years involving missions in the interior with interference by priests in criminal and civil law cases involving Christian converts, and laid out the rules that had to apply.

The Protestant missions quickly realized that most of the troublesome behaviours these new mission rules were trying to stop were still specifically behaviours arising in French Roman Catholic inland missions. The Chinese considered the RC "Heavenly Lord sect" as an agency of the French Government because the priests intervened in government and legal problems. It was widely understood that Chinese in the interior sometimes converted to the Heavenly Lord sect so they could do illegal acts and then get the support of the unknowing priests, claiming religious persecution. One British visitor in Sichuan noted that the main source of ill will against the RC priests arose from their

interference in the lawsuits of their Chinese converts. Any Westerner reading the details of the cases described in this new court circular would immediately understand this, but the Chinese people and officials were not well versed on the differences in the work of different kinds Christian missions. This confusion only added to the long history of rivalry between the Roman Catholic and Protestant missions, with the Protestants continually being vastly surpassed in numbers of baptized converts.

The Protestant missions were frequently criticized for their low numbers of converts in comparison to the RC numbers, but converts represented very different characteristics for the two branches of Christendom, with the Protestants believing they were using baptism for its true purpose. In general (with Gutzlaff the main exception) they operated under traditional ideas in which baptism was a ritual for adults with knowledge and belief in Christianity, all of which took a great deal of time and education. For example, in 1872 the Presbyterian Church mission in China reported only 93 people baptized over 20 years of effort in churches with a membership total of 750. In contrast the Roman church would baptise any person who agreed to the procedure regardless of their knowledge or belief, including dying people, infants, and condemned criminals in jails, then would count these as “converts”. The Protestants argued that most RC adult baptisms were agreed to by Chinese who calculated they would get some specific benefits from their status, such as priestly protection from criminal prosecutions as documented in the recent circulars. This long history of competing Christian visions meant the Protestant mission men were particularly outraged by the 1872 Circular because they recognized that the problems it was trying to solve were not problems created by Protestants.

#### Mission men and Qing officials

The *Chinese Recorder* provided an outlet for mission complaints about the Chinese government, and for self-justifications of the value of Western ideas for China. The local mandarins were castigated as corrupt “selfish despots’ who failed to maintain crucial canals, supervised murders on a vast scale during the civil war, participated in the purchase of official jobs, and knowingly authorized the hanging of innocent helpless men as proxies for real criminals. Western benefits that the mission men considered helpful to China included the crushing of the Taiping rebellion which had brought such massive death to Chinese people, the creation of an orderly system for collecting honest taxes and customs duties, shipbuilding, and the use of fast steamships to bring rice to relieve a huge famine in the interior. “Boomerang” in his essay declared that the Qing empire “is rotten from the centre to the circumference. Bribery and corruption and extortion fill the land”, and there is “ferocious cruelty”. He reminded readers that

Commissioner Ye in Canton had boasted that he had “decapitated no less than a hundred thousand” during his battles with the Taiping, actually mostly civilians in towns recaptured from the Taiping.

“Boomerang” described the shift to anti-mission feeling across the years 1868-1872. In the autumn of 1867 the Chinese viceroy had written a memorial to the Emperor reporting that the Protestant missions were no problem, and the beginning of that period found the Protestant missions still working quietly, “plodding along” in their usual way. Although a few had adopted the French mission plan of moving into the interior (allowed under the treaties), this had not generated any problems. Trouble started once Britain and China began work on revising their treaty in early 1868, then heated up when British negotiators argued in favour of increased trade into the interior by using the presence of Protestant missions in the interior as proof that such inland activities gave the Chinese government no problem. In effect, the traders were using missions as a lever to obtain what they wanted, but unfortunately drew the attention of the Chinese central government to the inland mission activities. The British negotiators argued back that traders in the interior would be more stable and bound to keep peace with locals, than missions were. The mission men found out that privately, British negotiators considered some of the mission men to be “rogues” who were responsible for bloodshed in Taiwan, which was probably true in one case.

Prince Gong feared the effects of British merchants on Chinese merchants in the interior, feared increases in smuggling and corruption, and pointed out to the British that their commercial access to the interior would affect Chinese revenues, while mission activities were less harmful because they only spread ideas about the practise of virtue. Another Chinese fear was that the spread of railroads and telegraph lines would cause unemployment among muleteers, cart-men, innkeepers and porters. The Chinese officials were in a conundrum: they knew they needed modernization but feared the consequences, and in the opinion of Boomerang, they finessed the whole problem by inciting problems against the missions that would then justify the exclusion of all foreigners from the interior. By August 1868 riots had been created in Taiwan to protect the camphor trade that included the same incitements against the missions that were also used in Yangzhou (a small city at the crucial junction of the Grand Canal and the Yangzi river) that year for riots directed against the missions. What was striking was that the language used in the public placards was virtually identical in far-distant Chinese cities, revealing its origins from the central government. The Chinese government then used the riots as proof that missions caused problems. It backed off

this program of incitement only after the murder of a French priest in the interior under circumstances that suggested the involvement of a Viceroy.

Despite these stark views of Chinese government, the mission men were still acutely aware that westerners were the source of one terrible problem in China, the opium trade. Their anti-opium pamphlets, letters, and articles frequently got them into trouble with western traders and officials, and this core conflict affected not only their daily relations, but also the treaty negotiations.

Eventually the Chinese government appointed an ambassador to France who went there and described the Qing responses to the Tianjin massacre. The French examined his list of punished men finding some of the punishments too weak, but more strongly protested the tough new rules outlined in the *Missionary Circular* sent out by Prince Gong's office, and refuted its many allegations against the French RC missions.

In response the Qing government decided to withdraw the *Circular* and plans went forward for the French officially to receive the new ambassador, with the expectation that their ambassador to the Qing court would similarly be received as an equal.

#### Canton and the Foshan mission

Chalmers in Canton was closest to the Foshan mission, and was now responsible for ensuring the rebuilding of the Foshan chapel. Although this was newly approved and funded by the Chinese government, it was still complicated by hostile acts continuing across 1871. Congregation members were abused and beginning to starve from boycotts against their businesses. The Viceroy stalled attempts by the British Consul to force local officials to provide police protection, claiming untruly that the congregation had agreed to sell its property to the gentry. Correspondence passed back and forth between the British Consul, Chalmers and the congregation, and the Viceroy across 1870 and 1871. The congregation insisted all it wanted was government support for rights explicitly protected in the treaties. Before his premature death Ho tried to hold civilized meetings with the gentry, with little success. The American Consul agreed to help only if the congregation sold its land to the American mission.

Legge wrote a sad letter to the LMS in January 1871 blaming the destruction and frenzies on the British government for its failure to require the Chinese government to enforce the protective provisions in the treaties it had long signed. With no enforcement, Legge understood that many of the fractious south-China gentry would now believe they could attack Chinese Christians with complete impunity. He had avoided making public comments about the Tianjin massacres because he had some private doubts about the orphanage and thought it had provided just cause for some offence. In a letter in July 1871 he summarized some of the provocative things the "scheming gentry" of the Canton

area had done to elicit mob action. They had posted “ribald placards” around Canton asserting that missionaries made converts only to satisfy their “beastly lust”, predicting a coming pestilence, and warning against a terrible pill distributed by women in the pay of Protestant missionaries. Legge wondered if this claim might have reflected some misunderstanding of Roman Catholic ritual use of bread wafers. The placards claimed that the mandarins had capitulated to “foreign dogs and devils”, denounced them as disloyal to the Emperor and cringing to foreigners, and urged defiance against them.

Chapter 62 Legge completes volumes IV and V, Wang becomes important, Legge is injured, and Union Church thrives

*In which Legge completes volume IV, Poetry, Wang becomes important and Legge is exhilarated by Seward.*

Legge completes volume IV of the Classics

Against this background of political turbulence affecting the missions, Legge made steady progress on his work on the two parts of the Book of Poetry, volume IV, despite two sailing disasters that destroyed important papers and delayed some printing. In returning to Hong Kong he had sent much of his crucial texts and heavy luggage on a separate boat, the *Choo Keang*, and when it arrived a week after he did in Hong Kong, he went to pick up his eight cases. Five of them were intact, containing blankets and sheets, but three had all been underwater for a long time and many of his books were destroyed. In particular his working manuscript of the *Yijing* (his Yi King, the Book of Changes, a work known now as the *I Ching*) was drenched with salt water, and it took a very long time before the pages were dried out well enough to be deciphered (Shchutskii, 1980). Although he hoped to recover £80 of the £250 value of the destroyed books, “in the meantime the loss of many books and the spoiling of others is a great vexation”.

Legge had ordered all the paper and printing ink needed for an entire volume from the United Kingdom and he had to wait for these supplies to arrive on the *Dunmail* before he could begin printing. His plans were suddenly derailed by another disaster at sea in May 1870 when the *Dunmail* struck rocks and sank just as it was coming through the Lei Yue Mun channel separating Hong Kong from Kowloon, close to its intended anchorage in the harbour. “It gave me quite a turn” to see her masts from his verandah, and to think of the hull and all his precious materials now in the “bosom” of the sea. His first thought was that the Fates were fighting his publication of his volumes, and his second thought was of how Hannah “would be dispirited when the intelligence reached” her. “I have since then been told to look the event in the face, and am trying to believe we shall yet find it ... for the good”. By now he had much experience facing bad news squarely. To try and prevent such a massive loss for the renewed order, he decided to divide the risk by having half sent via the newly-opened Suez Canal, and half of the order sent around the Cape in the traditional sailing route. He ordered this by telegraph, and had to delay the printing from its intended start in June, to late in the year.

Legge’s work on the current volume was not lost however, and he was not deflected from printing the books. He responded to these challenges in typical fashion by getting

the text in final good order so that printing would be much faster once the paper and ink arrived, and spending the unexpected free time working on revisions of translations for future volumes. He had already hired three men to work in the printing office to start June 1, and had to lay them off until November or December. He was disappointed in the variability of the Hong Kong bindings for the books, arising from a lack of good materials there, but even more disappointed at losing so many months of printing time, showing a sense of urgency that was unusual for him.

On Wang Tao's arrival in Hong Kong with Legge early in 1870 he returned to their work; the bulk of the two parts of text of volume IV, history and poetry, had been completed in Scotland. The Jardine money had run out and Legge was hard-pressed to find the salary for Wang. He was paying Wang \$20 per month out of total printing costs of \$150 per month, and these expenses were such a strain that Legge had to sell shares in the expected publication by the time he had only printed 380 pages. Even though "Sometimes I grudge keeping him on, as a whole week may pass without my needing to refer to him. But then again, an occasion occurs when he is worth a great deal more to me.... None but a first-rate native scholar would be of any value to me, and here I could not get any one comparable to him. But for this expenditure, I should have had money in hand at the year's end, instead of having to sell shares". He wrote Hannah in December, now referring to his scholarly assistant as "Dr. Wong" although in the hierarchical structure of the Chinese civil service exams as operated by the Taiping government, he had only passed the equivalent of the baccalaureate.

Chalmers, a talented mathematician who appreciated order and precision, was also intimately involved in the work on Legge's Classics because he had volunteered to help create the Indexes. These became magnificent under his meticulous work. Each volume ended with three giant Indexes, one for Subjects, one for Proper Names, and one for Chinese characters and phrases, in essence, a Chinese-English dictionary, locating every single use of each of these within the volume. Chalmers was convinced of the extreme value of Legge's Classics to mission work, and wrote him from Canton in September "I am getting more & more convinced of the immense importance to us all, of the work you are engaged in. We must... use the Classics as a fulcrum to the Christian line and to most of us they are not sufficiently attainable in their native state." Chalmers was so impressed by their value he even wanted to have a Regulation put into all missionary societies for China "that a missionary is not to stand up to preach on any subject without first endeavouring to find out what certain Chinese poets or philosophers may have said about it or bearing on it". Chalmers obviously now shared Legge's strong respect for the cultural and philosophical traditions of China revealed in the works.

In late February 1871 the pages of the Book of Poetry, were being printed, with 640 pages done by early March. Legge had now also finished all the translations and notes for the two parts of the final volume V, the *Spring and Autumn Annals with the Tso Chuen commentary* (*Chunqiu with Zuo Zuan*, Legge's Ch'ean Ts'ew), but he was still writing parts of the Prolegomena and Indexes for this. These were very difficult and had already "cost me 15 months of hard work at Dollar". In March he went back to revising the core translation, hoping soon to be free of "fagging at translating & annotating". He expected it would take him a couple of months of "immense labour" to complete the Prolegomena. With Chalmers' help he completed the Index for volume V in July 1871 but was still struggling with the Prolegomena. "Very few people...have an idea of the immense amount of labour which it takes to bring out one of these classics".

The Book of Poetry was ready for binding at the end of 1871 and in December its 785 pages were split into Parts I and II and bound in two separate tomes, as with volume III. At one point Legge had considered putting some of the odes into poetry in the introductory essays, but gave that up after realizing he didn't have the time to do the work justice.

#### Wang Tao's European travel experience and new importance in Hong Kong

Before returning to Hong Kong Wang Tao had toured European capitals including Paris, London, and Oxford, and his world-view had changed significantly as a result of all he saw. Travel had mellowed him and allowed him to appreciate the special advantages of his life in the western colony of Hong Kong as compared with his former life in the Qing Empire. On his return, in addition to helping Legge with the Classics he began writing and speaking about his ideas and soon began a new career in Hong Kong as a public intellectual.

Wang's travels in Europe had allowed him to discover European culture and technology, as well as enlightenment ideas, and his essays exhorted China to learn from all these. The Chinese community in Hong Kong now viewed Wang as a well-educated man of the world, and his ideas became influential. He wrote *a Brief introduction to France*, and a *Report on the Franco-Prussian War* for this community, and in 1872 he bought the LMS Press and became the founder of a publishing house, the *Zhong Hua* General Publishing House. Two years later he founded and became the editor of the first daily Chinese newspaper in history, the *Xunhuan Ribao* or Universal Circulating Herald. The newspaper was a 4-page daily that was commercially successful and distributed as far as the overseas Chinese communities in San Francisco and Australia.



To publish it he used both Chinese and English fonts in moveable metal type with the LMS press.

Wang became a prolific author, publishing accounts of his travels, essays, novels, classical poems, and an autobiography. His essays described the world beyond China and urged reforms to match the accomplishments of the West. He had shifted from being an intellectual bohemian snob from Shanghai, to being a successful businessman, politician, and man of the world. Wang no longer had the traditional Qing arrogance that assumed the west had nothing to offer, and by 1874 he wrote an essay praising Hong Kong for its good administration, material well-being, good roads, and law-courts. His free-spirit tastes were still evident and not secret, and he also praised the high quality of the brothels, with their beautiful women and splendid music. In addition he praised the fact that Chinese in Hong Kong were allowed to continue all their cultural customs, including calendar, festivals, and religion. He recognized and noted with gratitude how much more peaceful Hong Kong was than China.

Wang was interested in everything and argued for modern technology in mining, shipyards and weapons, but he also understood that the deep strength of the west lay in democratic political organization, which allowed more developments in all areas of accomplishment. In essays in the 1870s he argued that a search for wealth and power (*fu qiang*) should be a focus of Chinese thinking, rather than the traditional and sterile Confucian debates on human nature. He argued that the wealth of merchants contributed to the wealth of the nation, rather than sticking with the traditional Confucian idea that merchants were not a virtuous class of men (de Bary, 1961). He explained that China was not in fact “The Central Kingdom”, and that the West had much to teach China. Wang argued that corruption made the Chinese army hopeless, with its tradition of officers enrolling fake names on pay-lists in order to bring in wages without actually engaging any live persons to do the fighting. In “On reform” (*Bian-fa*), he criticized the traditional custom of paying school-masters who then were not required to teach, in an “empty show”, and explained that simply buying or building foreign machinery was no use without a trained and educated populace to understand it.

Wang’s social position steadily improved. He became an acquaintance of the Governor, and was appointed as an assistant director of the Chinese Hospital in 1872. The Directors of this hospital eventually became the seed group of an emerging Chinese merchant élite that served as an intermediary between the British government and the Chinese community for many purposes beyond the immediate needs of the hospital. It even initiated programs to help rescue Chinese women from being sold abroad for prostitution. In 1880 Wang was invited to Government House to meet visiting General

Charles “Chinese” Gordon, and in 1881 was invited to sit on the board supervising examinations in the school system (Sinn, 1998). He returned to Shanghai in 1884, long after the Taiping rebellion had been settled and the Qing had annulled their criminal charges and become interested in his reforming ideas. In Shanghai Wang became the editor and writer for a newspaper (*Shen Bao*), established another publishing house, and became Director of the Chinese Polytechnic Institute and Reading Room. Lin Yutang called him the father of the Chinese newspaper.

Wang seems to have retained his drinking habits and his pleasure in companionship with freethinking Chinese across his lifetime, for late in his life he wrote a brief biographical sketch about a notorious Shanghai drinking companion, Gong Xiaogong (1817-18\*\*). “Crazy-man Gong” was a famous eccentric Qing intellectual who rebelled against convention, rival poets, and the corrupt Manchu dynasty. His name entered Chinese history where he was seen as a decadent southern traitor who helped the Anglo-French assault on the Old Summer Palace out of personal revenge for the dynasty’s failure to give his father the position he deserved (Barmé, 1997). Wang’s choice of Gong as a drinking companion in Shanghai suggests that Wang’s own drinking habits had not changed much across his many years with Legge in Scotland and Hong Kong. It also suggests that Legge was not an intrusive moralist in other ways, for Wang’s habits extended to prostitutes as well, yet Legge left no record of either condoning or preaching to Wang for his bohemian ways.

In his awareness of the need for reform Wang was part of emerging reformist ideas within the Qing scholar-officials, in a movement called *jingshi/jingxi* (practical learning/shocking ideas). Wang did not consider Western technology as alien to Chinese thinking, but instead argued that it was consistent with the Confucian classics, which surely allowed for change but were misinterpreted by the literati. Wang’s education in the ideas and products of Western culture, and his essays about these, had a major influence on other reformers, including the revolutionary still regarded as the father of modern China, Sun Yatsen. (Sun had received his medical training in the first Hong Kong medical school in the Alice Memorial Hospital founded by Pastor Ho’s son Ho Kai, and the Scots doctors Cantlie and Manson who founded that school later created the London School of Tropical Medicine.)

### Legge lives alone in Hong Kong

Across his final three years in Hong Kong Legge lived a bachelor life, writing warm letters to Hannah, and following the school progress of his children in Scotland. In December 1870 he was pleased to learn that his Jamie “vaulted” to the top of his class on

the first day he went to school in Dollar. James realized that by the time his return letter was received in Dollar, “the novelty of the excitement will have worn off; but I hope he is continuing to like the school, & is working steadily at his lessons”. Hannah had entered Jamie into a lower level where he would find the work easy and make rapid progress to the next level, rather than starting him out at a higher level that might be so difficult he might get discouraged, and James approved of her tactic. He was a little less enthusiastic about young Jamie’s character; “I am not surprised at what you say about his being masterful & overbearing”. He asked Hannah to send him the heights and weights of the children so he could watch their growth. Jamie had scarlet fever in early 1871 but recovered, and when Edie wrote of Hannah's miseries with severe headaches he was very sympathetic, suggesting that perhaps these developed from the strain of her “long hours watching over her sick children”.

James passed along news of the Chalmers family to Hannah. Chalmers’ daughter Maggie was engaged to Robert, the son of Benjamin Hobson, and young Hobson was indignant when Mrs. Chalmers proposed a two-year engagement. James saw that the event had braced Chalmers, for in his next sermon “ he lectured in full dress!”.

In February James wrote Hannah his ideas about women. He first praised necessary virtues such as “geniality of character & generosity of soul, with a comprehensive sympathy and enlargement of mind.”, recommending that “The home of her heart should be in her family and relative circle”. But if she is “not able also to go beyond that with discourse of reason, and an interest in humanity in general, she is small, slight-natured, & miserable, and her propriety degenerates into sheer selfishness”. Legge’s feelings for the women in his family were very tender. In November he was buoyed with the news that his daughter Mary, her husband R. Freaan Hawke and her young daughter, would be soon returning to Hong Kong. He was happy to know that Mary was now “about again” after safely delivering her second child, after having been ill for months following the delivery of her first in England in September 1865. Legge concluded with great tenderness. “I do hope this letter will find you rejoicing with health, amid fine summer weather, with all the dear children about you, Edie Jamie, Tom, and Anna. Ever, my own darling wife, Your loving husband”. Later that year he signed off, “ever, my dearest, sweetest wifie”. In December he wrote ‘...my darling wife, the chief among women, whose image walks and sleeps with me, ever in my mind’s eye’. Their bond across the distance was still deeply tender.

Legge now lived in the Bellevue, a rented house high up the slope in Victoria. His interest in his children’s weight reflected a more personal concern as he was becoming stout and found it difficult to walk down the steep streets to the daily evening services at

the chapel in the Chinese bazaar. He furnished his house with \$400 worth of furniture that he believed he would be able to sell at a profit when he left in three years, and by December he was able to host a dinner for 15 friends in his new home.

Legge was still a genial host to visiting mission families, and wrote about a visitor he had found especially memorable. Dr. Nehemiah Adams was a revered congregational minister from Boston who had suffered a brain disorder and been taken by his sea-captain son on a long voyage to allow him to recover. James noted that the old man was a typical descendent of the Puritans, but with a more modern culture. His theology was “Calvinistic, though not hyper”. Legge was a nonconformist but never a Calvinist.

Family life in Hong Kong was always under risk for sudden fatal illness as James wrote of his friends the Donaldsons. Mr. Donaldson had enjoyed nine years of “uninterrupted health”, then in November he became suddenly ill with dysentery, dying after 12 days of fierce illness. Legge was under no illusion that adversity was good for people, and wrote Hannah of a discussion he had with Mrs. Granville Sharp while they brought gifts to the wives and children of soldiers in the barracks. They agreed that adversity “always had an injurious influence on people”, Legge adding the insight that “indeed, ... great prosperity and adversity were both calculated to do so, though they operated in different ways.”

James’s letters to Hannah described other tragic cases of illness, death and grotesque medical problems in families he was comforting. In one case he gave details of a major operation to correct a major leg deformity in a girl of 10. “What a deal of suffering there is in the world!”. He mentioned that he never used the mosquito curtains, “as I do not find that I need them”, although in fact he had the recurrent “Hong Kong “ fevers that were undoubtedly malaria although he had wonderfully adapted to the intense heat and humidity of Hong Kong summers. He followed a steady routine involving baths, vigorous soapings, and laxative powders, all methods that he believed kept him healthy. He wrote home an amusing account of a visit to the Colonel of a newly-arrived regiment, “whose wife went into ecstasies at the sight of the one man in Hong Kong who was the picture of health” (Legge himself), as much as if I “had never been out of sight of the heather hills”.

Legge’s usual robust response to adversity showed up when he was robbed in December 1871 by a man he had helped. James spent no time recounting his losses or the details of the event, but only focused on his plans to prevent future problems. The man broke into his house so James replaced the fragile Chinese locks with “better Chubb’s locks”. He hoped this would prevent problems including temptations to the servants. Legge was still very sympathetic to the hard lives of people in the colony,

including those of the British soldiers who faced severe punishments in addition to their heavy toil and difficult living conditions.

#### An exhilarating meeting with William Seward

Legge always relished bracing intellectual encounters and had an exhilarating dinner with a visiting American official in January 1871. William Seward (1801-1872) and Legge were guests at a dinner party on New Year's Day in Government House. Seward had been Secretary of State for President Abraham Lincoln, and had been repeatedly slashed on the face, neck and throat by a conspirator at the time of the assassination of the President on 14 April 1865. At the time of this attack Seward was at home in bed recovering from terrible injuries suffered in a carriage accident in which he had tried to stop a runaway carriage with his children in it. In that carriage accident Seward's jaw had been broken on both sides and he suffered terrible spinal injuries. The slashing attack by Lincoln's opponents failed to kill him because the assailant's bowie knife hit an iron appliance that had been inserted into Seward's broken jaw to try and stabilize it after his carriage accident. During the mayhem of the attack in his home Seward's son Fred had his head smashed in with the muzzle of a gun as he tried to prevent the entry of the assassin. Three years later Seward's injuries had left him with such spinal damage that both arms had become useless; he permanently lost much of the use of his arms and legs, and his broken jaws had healed crookedly.

Despite his wretched physical condition Seward was a mesmerizing man of ideas. He was a committed Christian and a persistently progressive thinker for his day. After a career as a lawyer he went into politics as Governor of New York and later into government service for Lincoln. In 1842 early in his career as a lawyer he had won the acquittal of two accused men on the grounds of insanity. He had generated educational reforms, and argued for fair treatment of immigrants during periodic anti-immigrant frenzies in American life. Despite being born into a slave-owning family he had argued against slavery, having been horrified by seeing a chain-gang of child slaves being whipped along a road in Virginia. Seward was famous for stating "No man will ever be President of the United States who spells Negro with two g's". At a time when Lincoln and Seward were political rivals, a popular singer who supported Seward sang "Soda in the bottle/Whiskey in the glass/Seward is a gentleman/Lincoln is an ass". Opponents considered him scheming and blustering, a man who made "stamping-butterfly threats" (Foreman, 2010), but he had become Lincoln's most trusted advisor by the time of the assassination. Seward's talents had also been used in international matters. He successfully headed off war with Great Britain after a US warship forcibly and illegally

seized the crew of a British mail packet boat in the Bahama channel in 1858 because the boat was carrying Confederate leaders to London and Paris. Seward had negotiated the purchase of Alaska from the Russians in 1867, and ensured that California's acceptance into the Union was as a non-slavery state.

Seward was visiting Hong Kong as part of a world tour in 1870-71, including a visit to Mormon leader Brigham Young and nine of his 16 wives in Salt Lake City on the way to the Pacific coast. Legge was invited to the formal government dinner in honour of Seward's visit. Seward's daughter-in-law and her sister helped him in his travels to Japan and China. His relationship with his daughter-in-law was rumoured to be more intimate than conventional, and he later formally adopted her to try to quell rumours. The women missed the dinner owing to "illness" or perhaps prudence. But to Legge "the lion himself was enough", and he wished Hannah could have met him.

The dinner party was small, only a dozen, and Legge sat beside Seward. The next day he wrote "Everyone must feel this morning that it was a high treat". "At first sight one is surprised that so old and shattered a man should venture so far away from home." Seward's "arms and legs are of comparatively little use to him, and it is with an awkward difficulty that he is able to feed himself. He is a little man, ... but with a wonderful vivacity of word & action". "How he does talk! And how well! Roundly, rapidly, eloquently ... The topics avoided political issues on which there might have been "violent collision", but covered masonry, gambling, Mormonism, women's rights, and the Divine Decrees and Responsibility; and on all these subjects he expressed himself admirably. He discoursed. I held forth a little now and then; the others queried, suggested doubts; seemed astonished at the play of intellect, and got thoughts on which they might chew the cud of ordinary, lumbering English intellect". Legge knew that some of the men at the dinner "used to express great fear & detestation of Mr. Seward" owing to their own conservative tendencies, but

"The impression on my mind was that I was for once brought into contact with a man of large discourse of mind – a clear intellect and resolute will, such as God gives to fit men to be kings and rulers among their fellows; Powers for good or for evil, according to the channels into which their energies flow."

The following day Seward gave a speech at another dinner party, forecasting that American republican ideas "will take over the world through commerce, not military force"; ideas complementary to those held by the British, of the superiority of their

trade-based foreign policies as the route to improving the world. Seward lauded the forces for change unleashed by the end of the American Civil War, prophesied that isolation was ending across the world arising from the forces of commerce, and that “human progress is compelled by the laws of Providence”. He praised the movement of Chinese migrants to SE Asia and America, arguing that when they returned to their homeland they would be bringing “not only wealth but arts, knowledge, and morals, to remake their native country”. Legge was completely exhilarated with meeting this exciting intellectual and political powerhouse.

Legge was still reading Darwin’s *On the Origin of Species* and Wallace in May 1871, quite impressed with the science. “They bring much to light that is very startling; but I do not quarrel with their collections of facts & deductions from them, excepting in so far as they would banish God from his continued present, I may say immanent, operation, in the superintendence and care of his creatures”. In a letter in the summer that year he commented on news from Hannah that his nephew James Legge had written to Hannah about Darwin, showing that Legge was not alone in recognizing Hannah’s intellectual interests and gifts. In time Legge became less convinced by Darwin’s notion of a continuity of organisms only separated by degrees rather than separated by kind. He was still very interested in the theory but believed that over time Darwin’s view “will be upset both physically and metaphysically.”

Legge was especially interested in the finding that while human brains of “the most civilized European” and “savage” people equally had an average capacity of 90-100 cubic inches, the greatest ape brains had a capacity of only 30 cubic inches. Legge was struck by this sharp discontinuity; “This Darwin must account for. Where are the links”. At this point in his letter, his daughter Edith physically cut out the remaining discussion from the letters she had inherited. She was a fierce defender of Legge as a paragon of Christian virtues, and perhaps he had continued thinking in a way in this letter that was more open to Darwin and science than she found acceptable.

#### The telegraph reaches Hong Kong and speeds up Legge’s printing

In 1872 international telegraph reached Hong Kong by way of Singapore and Java, as part of the spread of other lines to Australia. The telegraph from London to India had reached Singapore a year earlier via Madras and Penang. This new technology was a tremendous help to the operation of the LMS press in Hong Kong because Legge could now order paper, ink, and foundry metal quickly, cutting delivery time in half. This was a magnificent improvement compared to the time when all his previous communications had been limited by the stately pace of sailing ships.

### Legge's Reminiscences

In November 1872 Legge was invited to give the opening lecture of a new and prestigious winter lecture series supported by the Governor, to run from November to the next February in the City Hall. His talk drew a large crowd including all the leading officials; "an audience larger and more fashionable than any we have seen gathered together in Hong Kong at a purely intellectual entertainment" according to the *China Mail*.

Legge talked about his life in the colony, "Reminiscences of a long experience in the East, chiefly in Hong Kong". He told colourful stories including his tangles with burglars, battles between rival gangs in front of his house, his experiences with pirates, his cordial relationship with the man who had tried to poison him, and his discovery of a plot involving 89 men who were tunnelling to a major bank. He also described his tangles with the authorities in trying to convince them to integrate Chinese into the government of the colony, to use more humane penalties, and to stop the opium trade. He expressed great respect for Chinese people, describing them as being in the mass law-abiding and fond of order, and urged the government to ensure that Chinese were the backbone of the police force.

Sir Arthur Kennedy, the new Governor, thanked Legge, observing "Dr. Legge's world-wide fame would yet be a great honor reflecting on Hong Kong", noting that even though not every one would agree with his opinions now, in time they would. Apparently Legge was still creating controversy with his strong advocacy in favour of the Chinese and with his strong criticisms of the opium trade, but the invitation alone meant that he had truly earned respect as a senior member of the community. This speech has been reprinted a number of times, first in the new *China Review* (J. Legge, 1872a), and most recently in 1971 by the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.

Legge's talk was followed later in the series by one on the folklore of China, one by Dr. Eitel on *Feng Shui* in December, a talk about the Jesuits, a report on travel in north China, a talk on a Chinese novel, and one on popular legends. The final lecture in February 1873 was to be given again by Legge.

### Illness and deaths in the mission

The Hong Kong mission in 1872 was again facing significant challenges, with sudden illness and death still serious threats to mission survival. Turner, already planning to leave, became severely ill and needed to leave sooner than planned. This was a problem because there was a major shortage of steamers, which were all being hired to carry rice into China to help alleviate a major famine in the interior. Turner was worried



because although the LMS had received all the documents about his serious illness, they had not sent their approval by March 4<sup>th</sup> even though four mails had left London since the LMS had received his request. The local committee (now Legge, Chalmers, and Eitel, with Turner excluding himself) approved the relatively costly £90 (\$407) route for Turner's travel expenses on 27 March because of his special circumstances although London had not approved the expensive route. The initial plan had him leaving on the steamer *Ajax* for a trip via the Suez Canal in early June, but Turner's illness became so serious that he left on April 3 and the Directors approval only arrived weeks later.

Eitel was now alone in the Hong Kong mission. Shortly after Turner's departure Eitel learned that Dr. Thomson, a conscientious and hard-working man with the English Presbyterian mission in Swatow had recently died drowning, trapped below decks when the steamer in which he was travelling from Shanghai collided with another. The perils of the sea were still very real even as travel routes and ships improved, but other deadly perils were also affecting mission work.

Eitel had accepted Leung Manshing into the fold in the Hong Kong LMS after his having fled his dangerous wife and shattered reputation in Canton where he had been a mission assistant for 20 years. In Hong Kong Eitel hired Leung to teach him Punti, the Cantonese dialect Eitel wanted to master. His studies with Leung had gone very well and he enjoyed it, explaining that it is "more full and rich in phrases" than Hakka. In addition Leung had taken on the care of the congregation in Boluo. Suddenly during an August visit there, Leung caught a fever and died in three days. Eitel was horrified. Leung had been a "wonderful assistant" who had a "wonderful knowledge of the various forms of superstition, and used to expose such and refute them with eloquence".

Another dedicated man had similarly died suddenly. Rev. MacChesney, a recent addition to the American Presbyterian mission who had just preached his first sermon in Chinese, was killed when a bullet hit him in the head while pirates attacked the ship he was in during a night-time gunfight between pirates and river police. Four days later his pregnant wife gave birth and the baby son died within four days. A German mission man who had worked in Hong Kong for 10 years suffered a similarly drastic end. His behaviour became very restless and confused over a period of 10 days then he died, "of congestion of the brain", leaving a widow with three young children. In October Eitel lost another Chinese Christian assistant when his best preacher Lam Wingfat died of tuberculosis at 36, which Eitel described in the language of his day, as "Galloping Consumption". Eitel said Lam was "of sterling worth, real piety, good scholar, excellent preacher". He had worked for the mission for eight years, starting to help out in Boluo just after the murder of Che. Eitel mused, "so much for our educational plans to train

preachers and teachers; maybe we should try a school that will take only Christians". These tragic sudden deaths left a gloom over all the missions, and even made the temperamentally optimistic Eitel sombre.

The mission no longer used the decrepit old Hong Kong mission house as a home, and Eitel rented out half of it for a very low rent. The shambling old house was now in such terrible condition that the Surgeon-General's office sent a letter to Eitel ordering the LMS to repair the verandas. Property values in Hong Kong were down so badly that selling the building would not be helpful, so Eitel and Legge initially decided to repair one verandah and tear down the other, in an effort to save money. Unfortunately the loss of one long verandah would alter the access to some rooms causing them to become hot and airless. Because they had just installed costly new drains to improve the sanitation, on reflection they decided on a more expensive plan to repair one verandah and rebuild the other in order to comply with the government order. In contrast, in Canton the two new mission houses on Shamian Island were almost complete and Chalmers had done a good job of supervising their construction. He moved into one in August, rented the other one to an official, and rented out the old one inside the city walls to a Baptist missionary.

With the departure of Turner and the death of Ho and Leung, Eitel was immediately required to had to take over Turner's preaching to Ho's Chinese congregation of Union Church, now known as the *Hop Yat* church (*He Yi Tang*). Eitel preached in Chinese four times a week: once a week to the more marginal chapel in the Chinese bazaar, and three times weekly to the Hop Yat congregation. Arising from Ho's premature death at age 53, Ho's plan to separate the Chinese church from the LMS had been put on hold and Eitel was soon doing his full share of preaching in Punti and giving daily sermons in the bazaar. The loss of Ho and Leung left the remaining Chinese preaching in the evenings to a very dull fellow who was driving the congregation out when he did not put them to sleep. Eitel with his great energy and enthusiasm soon reorganized the preaching schedule and solved this problem, even though the cold winter weather and a new regulation requiring all Chinese to carry lanterns after 7 PM had diminished his audiences for the daily evening services.

Eitel's orderly mind was a general benefit to the Hong Kong mission. He used the basic methods of "fund accounting" to set up a separate fund to organize the income and payments for the construction of the new mission properties in Canton, and by May 1872 they were almost ready. Eitel relished the mission work and soon found himself recommending further changes in the recently changed LMS Regulations to the missions. Legge wrote no comments about these, but Eitel's recommendations were

generally in favour of decentralizing decisions and giving more trust and responsibilities to the men in the local committees, the opposite direction of the changes made by the LMS to create a more strongly centralized system. Eitel's views were consistent with the congregationalism used in LMS church governance and consistent with Legge's behaviour across the decades of LMS work.

#### Eitel and the LMS Press: accounting problems, successes, and fraud

The mission decided that with Turner's departure, Eitel would take over the Printing Office and he did this with his typically exceptional energy and care. Eitel was extremely pleased when the mission Press received a huge order from Robert Hart of the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs for two full sets of the wonderful LMS Chinese metal moveable type fonts. This set of fonts was to be used in the Chinese Foreign Ministry (the Tsungli Yamen) headed by Prince Gong in Beijing, and LMS printer Huang Shing was going there to set up the press. The order was worth \$4,000, with half in advance, and it represented a net profit to the mission of \$1,200. Eitel needed two tons of type metal to be handled for this order but making those fonts created a new problem because the furnace the mission used for its type foundry was failing. Eitel telegraphed an order to Austin Wood & Co., Letterfounders in Islington for the type metal, to be sent by four successive Suez canal steamers, increasing the order to one ton per steamer, apparently learning from Legge's shipwreck problems not to put all an order in one vessel, and to order in abundance in case some was lost.

Eitel's growing interest in the Press led him to extend his reform of the mission accounts to create a specific fund for all Press income and expenses, and he opened this fund with Hart's initial payment of \$2,000. He was convinced that the Press could make a profit as long as it was properly supervised, something he learned after discovering one of the printers defrauding the Press. Within a week of taking over supervision of the operation Eitel discovered a press-man running the press all night long doing private work printing a very large edition of Chinese theatre tickets using the mission's type, paper, ink, and machinery. He discovered that many similar jobs had been done in the past, and took the man to the magistrate on charges of defrauding the mission. Next he fired two compositors for laziness and raised the wages of the good ones. He set a rule that no printing job could be done without his signature on the proof sheet, so that any publication without that would be a forgery. He was thriving in this new job as chief of the Press, and confessed that while in the past he used to enjoy studying the Buddhist classics in his free time, now for five months he had not had any chance because of his interest in the demands of the Press.

Eitel's responsibilities in the LMS Press had generated such interest on his part that he wrote up a major document describing how to set up and run a Chinese printing office using moveable metal type, a document that was going to be used by the colonial government in Singapore as it set up a modern Chinese press there to use in printing a Gazette. He was very optimistic that the government in China was now beginning to take an active interest in modernizing and in mastering western technology that could help China. His hopes were buoyed further when new arrangements were made for Huang Shing to take Chinese students to the United States to study science in 1872, after he finished setting up the new moveable metal type press for Chinese text in Prince Gong's Foreign Office in Beijing.

The LMS Directors must have raised the question of shutting down the Hong Kong printing press because of its disorderly and expensive operations in the past recent years, because Andrew Wylie, the former LMS printer in Shanghai wrote Eitel with considerable alarm when he learned about this plan. Wylie explained that the LMS press in Hong Kong was the only printing press for Chinese text available to the British missions because the American mission presses refused to do jobs for the British missions because of their continuing anger over the decision made two decades earlier favouring Legge's argument for using the characters *shangdi* for God in the 1852 Delegate's Version of the Bible.

In his June report to the LMS Eitel explained the strong support of the local committee for maintaining the Press, as it was the only printing operation with principles "compatible with the LMS and British Bible Society for printing Bibles, tracts, and commentaries in Chinese" at low prices, which they did because the LMS regulations required this work to be done not for profit. With his new system of separate accounts for the mission and the press, Eitel now charged the Printing Office a rent of \$500 per month for using the mission premises and required it to pay for its own fire insurance, to bring its costs and accounting into a more orderly condition as an entity separate from the budget of the mission. He was convinced that it could be self-supporting as long as it had work to do; it only cost London money when it was not producing texts.

The London Directors were not convinced, and forwarded a query from Shanghai asking the selling price of the Hong Kong printing office. Legge and Eitel assessed its value at \$10,000 Mexican silver dollars. Legge was busy using the press for his final volumes of the Classics. The Book of Poetry, *Shijing*, volume IV, had been printed in 1871, and by late August 1872 the printing of the final two parts of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, volume V, would be done. Once Legge's Classics were printed, it

seemed that the wonderful old press was going to be required to close its operations in Hong Kong. Eitel wrote a laconic comment about Legge's publications, "He will then stop printing for the next few years". In the meantime Wylie was sending printing orders from Shanghai to keep the press supplied with work even as printer Huang was getting ready to leave early in 1873.

By December 1872 no purchase offer had come from Shanghai and the future of the press was completely unsettled when Eitel made another unsavoury discovery. The press had just been given a large contract from the Singapore Government, but Eitel discovered that they had first offered the job to the Hong Kong Government Print Office, which engaged in some skulduggery. That office had tried to subvert one of the LMS print men to surreptitiously take the LMS matrices and moulds to the government print office and use them there, or to use these moulds to make new type secretly using the LMS foundry and then deliver the type to the government office. The LMS foreman reported this industrial fraud scheme to Eitel. The Colonial Secretary heard the story, was outraged, and told Eitel to send his estimate to Singapore; Eitel won the contract for the LMS and was very pleased. It was a big enough job that he had to make more type, so he needed more type metal and a new foundry, but he expected to make a profit of \$800 on this government contract. But the press would thrive only if it could get a steady stream of commercial orders to subsidize the costs of mission printing, and London LMS was losing interest in the press.

### Legge and Union Church

At Union Church the trustees were preparing to lose Legge with the March 1873 end of his three-year contract in sight. In March 1872 the trustees wrote Mullens at the LMS seeking help in selecting a successor and outlining the salary they could provide. They hoped the new minister would be in place by December to allow a few months of overlap with Legge. Legge agreed, and was glad that two Union Church trustees were in England to help in the selection, consistent with the principles of congregationalism.

The church was again thriving, with regular attendance of 200 adults at services. Legge had been successful in returning the church to a self-sustaining operation able to pay him a fair salary (even though it was less than Morris received), house-rental costs of \$720 per annum, and sufficient funds to pay for his passage home to Britain. He reassured the LMS that they did not need to worry about the promises of the Union Church trustees to make good on their salary offer, and reminded them that there were certain additional "pickings" associated with the Union Church minister's appointment. Morris, for example, had himself hired as the Presbyterian Chaplain to the troops, which

paid £75 per annum. When Legge had inherited that job (at a lesser salary), he gave the Union Church all the income except his travel expenses, while Morris had kept all of it as additional income. Legge commented that the new minister would be under no obligation to turn over any of that income to the Union Church. Legge, aware of the stresses of Hong Kong life on unmarried ministers, and recommended the LMS find a married man “for the sake of comfort and efficiency, and for the avoiding of any scandals such as the experience of the past has shown may possibly arise”.

A problem was developing however, when Legge learned in May 1872 that the LMS was planning to break the connection between the LMS and Union Church. The congregation was also alarmed at this news, and Legge wrote reminding the Directors that the Deed of Settlement between the Union Church and the LMS required the LMS to play a role in the Union Church. The congregation wanted to participate in the selection of their new minister, but they wanted this done within the protective institution of the LMS. Legge wrote testily that if the LMS proposed such a major change it must send a document to the Union Church spelling out in detail what its intentions were in relation to the existing Deed. He was very worried by this unforeseen move in London. Church trustee Crawford wrote the LMS in June advising it of the £350 salary it was paying Legge, and seeking clarity about the apparent intentions of the LMS to sever the connection and thus to play no role in finding the replacement minister.

Despite these uncertainties, in November 1872 the Union Church created a “Sabbath School” which soon collected more than 20 children. They gathered with their teachers and parents for a Christmas party that included an opening prayer led by Legge, some short speeches, and the presentation of books and toys as gifts to the children.

#### Legge suffers a bad fall in the night

Legge was living alone in his rented house with servants, and the lack of close family put him at risk when he suffered a nasty accident. In June he fell down his staircase in the middle of the night, perhaps while sleepwalking. He remembered only waking in the night, going out onto the verandah to look out into the night, then waking at 6 AM facing Mary’s husband Mr. Hawke and Dr. Eitel. His pillow was covered with blood and his left arm was badly bruised.

The details of the event revealed a certain cultural gap in conventions about responding to a serious accident between the staff and British ideas. A passing Chinese policeman heard a loud noise at 3 AM and found the servants aroused. Legge lay unconscious at the foot of the stairs, bleeding from his head. His staff carried him up to

bed and left him there unconscious and bleeding for the next three hours. Eventually one went up the hill to Legge's daughter Mary who lived nearby with her husband and children, and told her of Legge's fall, reporting that the staff didn't know if he was dead or alive. She quickly rallied medical help. The upshot was that his head was cut and bruised and he had to keep his injured wrist in a sling for a while, but no serious damage had been done although he still had a stiff arm three months later. In his daughter Edith's account of this she considered the servants' rather laissez-faire behaviour to be typical based on her own years in Hong Kong, and used her account as a tribute to her father's recuperative powers: "...on the following Sunday, five days later, he preached once, with his arm in a sling, and after a few more days felt quite recovered." (H. E. Legge, 1905) Legge mulled over this event across the next month, marvelling that even though the servants reported to Mary that although they didn't know if he was dead or alive, they waited three hours before they went to seek help from anyone.

Legge's letters to his beloved stepdaughter Marian show his continuing strong feelings for his distant family and his increasing discomfort with his remote situation. Early in 1872 he worried about the children's health in their winters in Dollar, expressed great relief when he learned that they were all healthy, and even better, that Hannah's terrible migraine headaches had diminished. Legge had asked his nephew William Legge (son of James' brother William and now working in Hong Kong), off to visit Japan, to buy some crystals there for use in a necklace that Legge intended to have made for Marian. He wrote her, "When you have got that then you will be pretty well set up for that sort of thing for some time". Income was finally coming in from his books, and he planned to send Hannah £50 to use for a diamond ring for herself, recognizing her interest in fashion and decoration. James urged Marian to ensure that Hannah spent the money on herself, for across her years as a mission wife she had become accustomed to careful spending and denying herself pleasures. He was now getting tired of Hong Kong's summer weather of blazing heat, gales, and typhoons, thankful that the summer of 1872 would be his last.

James wrote Marian a funny story. He had been walking in town when he noticed a great crowd of Chinese all looking at something "with outstretched necks and open mouths". "When lo! Up came a Highlander in bonnet and feathers, kilt, bright hose, and brogues! He was a wonder to them, and looked a fine stalwart fellow". He was one of a contingent of 40 Edinburgh policemen who had recently arrived. James went to their barracks later and they were happy to see "the Scotch minister". His comment was realistic: "If they will only keep sober they will do well". Marian was now 19 but he still signed tenderly, "Ever, my darling Marian, Your loving papa".

In their letters they discussed theological and mission affairs, along with the latest poets. When Marian reported on some travels that included encounters with some of the Plymouth Brethren he warned her that although there were some he admired as individuals, as a group he was “altogether out of sympathy with them... in terms of intellectual, ecclesiastical and doctrinal matters.” The Plymouth Brethren were an evangelical nonconformist group who advocated a congregation of equal believers without salaried ministers but also believed in requiring silence from women. Legge found them “narrow, uncharitable, and unintelligible, ... heady and highminded, caricaturing the system of Christianity in their proceedings”. He agreed with Marian’s disapproval of the Inland Chinese Mission, “the conception and administration of it are to my mind equally absurd”. Briton Hudson Taylor had founded the China Inland Mission in 1865, unusual because he refused to work under the support of existing mission societies. He believed in sending mission men out with no guaranteed salary, but depending on random donations while they lived in Chinese communities wearing Chinese clothing. In commenting on another man Marian had described, James commented about this Dr. Paysley as “a strange character”. Legge explained that when he encountered “rogues and fools”, he had long since decided not to worry about them but to “leave them to the providence and judgement” of God. Legge was definitely mellow.

Marian urged James to do some travels around Hong Kong before retiring to Britain but he had little interest; he regarded travel as something you did when your health required it. He guessed that even if he had to stay in Hong Kong for another five years he would not likely visit even Macau or Canton. For his daughter Mary and her children, a holiday from Hong Kong consisted of two weeks on Stonecutter’s Island between Hong Kong and China. Marian and James exchanged views on Tennyson and Wordsworth (a more truly great poet because he wrote “from inspiration”). Daughter Edith was writing poetry and sending it to James, who found it “stunning for a girl her age”, 12. He teased Marian when she fussed over his bad fall, and told her “you would laugh heartily if you saw me looking as fresh and stout as when I left Dollar nearly three years ago”. He planned to give up his rented house and move in with Mary and her family when the final volume was printed in September.

#### Chinese Classics volume V is printed, pirated, and reviewed

In anticipation of Legge’s final publications of his last two books for volume V, the *Spring and Autumn Annals and Commentaries*, in February 1872 the *China Mail* commented that if volume V came up to the standard of the earlier books, ‘it will stand



against all the combined critical learning of both the East and the West.”, noting the completion of the Classics as a herculean task. Legge’s massive project was finally complete at the end of September 1872 when he sent the printer the Preface and Table of Contents to volume V and in October Legge packed up thirteen cases of the printed sheets to send to Trübner in London for binding. This final volume was soon selling in Europe, Trübner charging £2.2 for each volume.

Legge explained in his Preface that the contents of volume V had never been translated before, and that he had added the Commentary by Tso Chuen (Zuo Zuan) because it was necessary to help readers to understand the accounts of all the Dukes in the history of the Spring and Autumn period (721-460 BC). Legge considered Tso’s Commentary provided a history of the period that fully matched the quality of histories of medieval Europe. He acknowledged John Chalmers’ help with the indexes of subjects and of proper names, for his work on the maps of China during that historical period, and for the chronological table showing the lunar months during that period.

In the end, the huge project consisted of five “volumes” bound into eight large books of translations that included his essays, notes, and indexes. Legge had translated all the Confucian Classics used in the education of Chinese scholars, into English for the first time ever. His work had gone far beyond good translation. Of equal importance he had used his vast talent for scholarship to create immensely informative and thoughtful essays to help give readers important context for the works. In the essays in each volume he evaluated the authenticity of the texts and of the commentaries written about them across 2000 years of Chinese history. His detailed Notes on every page of the translations were helpful scholarly discussions of particular problems in the text that might concern dating the events, the location of the speakers in the text, or the probable meaning of ambiguous or puzzling lines. In the Notes he often made reference to other documents that dealt with the issue, and to the writings of ancient authors from the Western classical and theological traditions who had written relevant material.

Although he had now completed the core books of the Confucian canon, Legge still wanted to complete translations of two more major works that were also part of the education of every Chinese scholar. These were the Book of Rites, (the *Liji*, Legge’s *Le Ke*), and the Book of Changes, (the *Yijing*, Legge’s *Yi King*, now known as the *I Ching*). He knew the Book of Rites was going to be a huge task, while the Book of Changes was going to be very tricky because it was such an unusual metaphysical book. He thought he might have to return to Hong Kong to get the works printed at the LMS press because there was no press in Britain capable of handling the Chinese text.

Legge was quite angry with his publisher Trübner in London over its casual treatment of his orders. On December 2, 1872 he had asked the publisher by telegram to send out 400 cases to hold the printed pages of volume IV, Pt. I, each book representing 420 pages, and by February 1873 he still had not received either a response or the cases. He considered Trübner to be quite lacking in professionalism for its lackadaisical response. 'It is a great annoyance to me, and a serious loss to be thus kept out of the market. When the vessel with 200 reams of paper were shipwrecked in the harbour here in 1870, I telegraphed to the maker and the paper was made, shipped & delivered here within three months.'

#### Chinese pirating of Legge's first two volume of Chinese Classics 1872

Even as Legge was in the final stages of his work on the Classics in 1872, he learned that a Chinese publisher in Canton had pirated his work on the classical "Four Books" of the Confucian canon, (the content of the first two volumes of Legge's Classics), and was selling them in June 1872, before Legge's final volumes were even published. The thieving publisher even had the gall to include Legge's Prolegomena but deleting specific comments that he must have considered to be critical of Confucius. The pirate printed the works using the clumsy traditional method of wood blocks cutting even the roman letters, and printing on flimsy Chinese paper. The *China Mail* was outraged, noting that it would have been "a gratifying evidence of progress had common honesty been observed by the native editor".

#### Reviews of Legge's Classics

Legge's Classics were now reviewed in the main literary journals of the west. In late 1872 in New York *The Nation* reviewed the Book of Poetry volume IV, noting the "immense scholarship and research" that had "placed him in the foremost rank of Sinologues. No living foreigner, in all probability, possesses an acquaintance with the classic lore of China in any way comparable to that of Dr. Legge, and as regards accuracy of rendering, his version may challenge the most exacting scrutiny". The reviewer did not approve of Legge's use of prose in translating the poetry, but commiserated with him about the difficulties of translating words that have changed in their meaning since being written in an ancient era. The reviewer reported that the Chinese literati themselves had given Legge's work their highest compliment in pirating it. In contrast, *The Nation* criticized a book recently published by Rev. Justus Doolittle, the American editor of the *Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal* published from the American Presbyterian mission in Shanghai. In the *Nation's* view, while Doolittle called his work a vocabulary of the Chinese language, it failed to do even an adequate job on the

compound words. The reviewer ended by reminding readers that Doolittle was well-known in the US as author of *The Social Life of the Chinese*, which was “a work containing more, and more ill-arranged information concerning that people than any other yet published.”

Legge’s scholarship led to his being invited to provide an article in a new scholarly journal the *China Review*, being published by the *China Mail* print office with its first issue in July 1872. This was the first literary journal devoted to scholarly publication on Chinese topics. Editors Nicholas Dennys and Eitel, both with scholarly doctorates, promised that the new journal would publish original papers in Chinese, Latin, French, German, Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese, would do book reviews, reprint some articles from the *Chinese Repository*, and provide summaries of interesting articles from other publications. It also published articles on current topics such as the evils of the Spanish “coolie trade” to Cuba and Peru in which desperate Chinese left China in effect purchased by a “coolie trader” who then sold them at a profit to a purchaser in the new land. This system was very different from government-run migrant worker contracts managed by British officials who did not receive any payment or profit.

This new *China Review* led with Eitel’s review of Legge’s *Book of Poetry*. Although Eitel and Legge were LMS colleagues, Eitel provided a briskly impartial review of the book that included both praise and criticism. He disagreed with Legge’s method of trying to date the poems, and explained the problems in that method even though Legge’s work was “painstaking and scrupulous” in trying to determine these dates and scientific details about the specific plants, minerals, and astronomical features mentioned in the poems. Eitel regretted that Legge had not gone one step farther in his translation, turning the ideas into poetry, even though he praised Legge’s achievement in translating the prose faithfully to the Chinese ideas. Eitel admired Legge’s courageous independence from the main traditional schools of Chinese commentaries and from opposite and competing current European approaches. These ranged from the almost magical ideas of Edkins in trying to prove that Hebrew provided the roots of the Chinese language, to the very modern and stringently scientific approaches such as the mathematical and astronomical work of John Chalmers. Eitel admired Legge for the “dry sly humour with which he deals his blows good-naturedly right and left... or exclaims when he meets with “unmitigated nonsense in the text or commentaries with notes teasing “surely this is sad stuff””.

Eitel explained that Legge’s knowledge of classical Chinese literature was not matched by anyone in “extent of range, thoroughness, and solidity” and he was a true pioneer to be the first to translate the whole body of the book from Chinese into English,

preserving “the freshness and intellectual vigour of youth” over the past 30 years of work. He assessed Legge’s translation method as “eminently faithful to the original”, based on sound etymological principles, a knowledge of Chinese synonyms, and a clear concept of the spirit of the text. Legge had explained he wanted to provide the meaning of the texts without adding or paraphrasing, and had decided against trying to put the words into verse as being “more trouble than it was worth” although as a bit of sporting scholarship Legge had once tried to create them as poems in Scottish. Eitel reviewed past attempts by Europeans to translate the book, starting with a boring and indigestible Latin version in 1733 used as the basis for translations into German and other poetry. Even a previous Hong Kong Governor Sir John Davis had given up after two poems, trying to make poetry in English directly from the Chinese.

Eitel did not explain one of the most daunting aspects of trying to translate Chinese poetry into any other language. The unusual challenge arises from the fact that each Chinese character can represent several ideas, and normally in prose the context of the sentence allows the reader or listener to select the appropriate meaning. In contrast, in Chinese poetry the poet wants the several meanings to cluster around the character to provide a rich aura of multiple meanings. In translation this cannot be maintained because the translator has to settle on one most central meaning, which means losing all the allusions and significantly limiting the way a reader experiences the text (Newnham, 1980).

### Chapter 63 Political conflicts, Legge thrives

Political turbulence continued in the region around Canton, with the Chinese government busy buying European arms and mounting Krupp's "monster guns" on the forts along the rivers around Canton, "quietly building steam frigates and torpedoes" as it modernized. The turmoil continued to disrupt LMS congregations there and Eitel's worry about the Chinese Christians in Foshan in early 1872 was a harbinger of more trouble in the region. By June he reported that mobs were driving out Chinese staff from a number of missions. The Consul in Canton replied to Eitel's May letter of complaint about the treatment of Chinese Christians within a month, reporting that the Chinese authorities assured him there was no persecution of Chinese Christians, that these were merely "family feuds". Despite this brush-off, the Consul had actually written the Qing Viceroy asking him to order the local authorities to settle the conflicts. The main complaint of the mission men against their own British government was that it always resisted doing anything to protect mission families from Chinese attacks and complained about the missions, while at the same time actively protecting the traders of the opium trade regardless of all the problems they created. There was a clear double standard in favour of the traders.

Other political news in the region was very interesting. China completed an amazing treaty with Japan in 1872, the first ever treaty with another Asian country that was done on the basis of equal status. Officials of equal rank were to deal with each other, suggesting that China had learned from its interactions with Europeans that there should be orderly rules to manage relations between states of equal status, rather than treating every other nation as if it were a tributary state. The *China Mail* hoped that this was a sign of increased recognition by China of the need for adherence to international standards of law in dealings between nations, rather than maintaining its traditional assumption of superiority.

### Legge influences public policy

By the mid-1860s Legge had become recognized as a person with helpful ideas on public policy for Hong Kong. He had long advocated the cadetship system that the governor partially adopted to train young British civil servants in Chinese, and Legge's push to have an improved public education system for Chinese children had also been acted upon to the benefit of the colony in the creation of the Central School. Legge was interested in transportation arrangements as well, and had ideas about how China could build railroads to help its people.

He also was deeply interested in the shipping regulations in Hong Kong and had been critical of regulations proposed by one Governor. His views seem to have been rational and well-argued, for rules affecting Chinese shipping that he considered extremely ill-advised soon led to exactly the problems he had predicted when hundreds of junks and passenger boats abandoned Hong Kong harbour in protest. The Governor then consulted with Legge and the regulations were eventually altered in the ways he had recommended. Legge also realized the importance of a good water system, remembering the time when most residents had to scramble all over the hills “with pitchers and buckets, searching for the precious element”, and praised the water works constructed under the leadership of Governor Sir Hercules Robinson. He was pleased when gas for illumination arrived in the mid 1860’s, which must have been a particular help to him after his lifetime of nightly work by oil lamp.

The new Public Library in the new City Hall, beneficiary of Legge’s advocacy in 1863 and Editor Shortrede’s eventual support, received more help when the Victoria Library and Reading Room voted in the summer of 1870 to donate all its holdings to the Public Library. The Victoria Library was a small private library similar to that of the old MES. It had drifted into miserable condition after five years of inadequate income, and after donating its books its members voted to sell all its furniture and to use the proceeds to pay off its debts.

Early in 1871 Legge and Turner entered more discussions of public policy when they began an attack on the gambling houses that were creating hardship for Chinese families. By mid-February Legge had accumulated 308 names on a petition against them and had taken this to the Acting Governor Lord Kimberley. Turner had collected nearly 1,000 Chinese signatures, and together they had also succeeded in getting the Chamber of Commerce to do a petition.

Even at this late stage of Legge’s life in the colony, his daily experiences included great contrasts from low to high, as when in March he was called to the Hong Kong hotel where the barkeeper was trying to commit suicide using an opium overdose and asked to see Dr. Legge. The man was given an emetic, vomited, was sent to hospital, recovered, and finally was put on trial for the then-crime of attempting to commit suicide. At the other end of the scale, in April 1871 Hong Kong officials invited Legge to a dinner in his honour at City Hall. He wrote Hannah describing the event, the many toasts to him and the hour-long speech by Governor Sir Arthur Kennedy. By midnight the Honourable Mr. Keswick toasted Union Church and “Dr. Legge, whose name will never be forgotten in Hong Kong”. Legge was taken by surprise by the scale of this event and knew he had to make a speech in response, which his years of public speaking had surely made easy.

Later that night at home however, he was still so excited, his thoughts in such a ferment, that he kept thinking of other things he could have said. "If you had heard the thunders of cheering with which I was received, you would have thought your husband was some great one", But, "If I had only said this, and said that" this is what sets my brain in a ferment". In May his presence at a public lecture series started by the Police Department and held in their library was reported in the newspaper. Mr. Falconer gave a talk on controversies in the study of Astronomy, and Legge proposed the formal thanks, including additional comments from his knowledge of Chinese astronomy.

#### The Classics' international reach

Early in 1873 Legge sent a complete eight-book set of the Classics to John Stronach in Xiamen, but the ship was wrecked and only some ruined copies were salvaged. Stronach helped recover the books but they were soaked, and even after drying in the sun were damaged by mould in the humid climate. Stronach commiserated with Legge, "It is a sad loss as I suppose you have not insured the parcel". After some of the books had dried enough, Stronach began reading the works and wrote "Your books show an immense amount of research & erudition and the style of your notes is as full of life & vigour as you are yourself. " He predicted that the works would have a lasting impact far beyond any income Legge would receive, and "your substantial eight volumes will long proclaim you the first Chinese scholar of this or any age".

Legge knew that some French scholars were very interested in his Classics, particularly Stanislas Julien and the Marquis d'Hervey St. Denys, Julien's successor to the Chair of Chinese Literature in the Collège de France in Paris. Legge sent a copy of each of his two new volumes to Julien, with the final volume on its way by mail steamer on January 16, 1873. In 1869 and 1870 Julien had published a new grammar of Chinese (*Syntaxe Nouvelle de la Langue Chinoise*, in two volumes), and had dedicated the work to Dr. James Legge, "one of the most eminent sinologues of our age". In this work Julien argued that word order was the core feature of Chinese grammar, while Thomas Wade (1818-1895) argued that most grammatical definitions were impossible in relation to Chinese. Wade was the British Chinese secretary and scholar of Chinese who had recently created a system of transcription and Romanization that helped Europeans learn the northern pronunciation of the mandarins. Julien included a section with very literal word-for-word translations of considerable Chinese texts, and the crudeness of this work surely would not have impressed Legge even though it might have helped raw beginners as a rough teaching aid.

Legge worked to market his books himself, annoyed with Trübner's lethargic operation. Early in 1873 he wrote to an official in the Japanese government describing his set of works on the Chinese classics, noting that they were part of a Confucian tradition shared by China and Japan. He mentioned that he had been in Japan six years earlier and discussed with the British Ambassador Sir Harry Parkes, the shared Confucian culture that might make his books of interest to Japanese scholars and officials. At that time Sir Harry had taken this idea to the Japanese court and they had purchased ten sets of his early books. Legge now delicately explained that further works had been completed that might also be of interest. He would "be glad if your honourable government will, through your kind recommendation order a supply of them".

Legge's massive scholarly project of 30 years was now complete and out in the world, and his energies were now turned to final work at Union Church and with Eitel at the mission and its press, family affairs, and a series of farewell events. Such a rich mix of orderly events belied the future, for his life in Britain was entirely undecided.

#### Legge's family, Hannah's health, and Hong Kong social life

By 1871 James had become so acclimated to the tropical heat that he could write of an early morning temperature of 87° F. as "delicious", and praised "the gentle breeze coming in through the windows, & at intervals fluttering the light leaves of the Chinese volumes that lie open all about over the room...". When he preached in English in the Sunday morning service and in Chinese in the afternoon service each week in Union Church he fanned himself with a large fan. But early in 1873 Legge's contentment was very disrupted when he learned from Marian that Hannah was again suffering serious health problems, additionally troubled because he realized that Marian took on all the nursing care that Hannah needed when he should have been there to do it. Although Marian later reported some improvement, James was aware of Hannah's fragility and urged Marian to telegraph him if Hannah suffered another decline.

On a more frivolous family topic, he was glad that Marian loved the crystal necklace he had sent. He was gradually sending boxes of his possessions and gifts for his family home on steamers, fussing that the silk lengths for dresses for the girls might not be enough because "ladies use so much cloth for their dresses nowadays".

With his work now completed and the rest of all the last volumes now being bound in Britain, Legge's life in Hong Kong was coming to a close in the early months of 1873. To his surprise he was quickly caught up a rush of grand social events, and he teased Marian about his exalted social life. Early in 1873 he was invited to a dinner party at the Governor's with Prince Alexis, Grand-Duke of Russia as the special guest. While the



Duke spoke English and was tall, he was rather unassuming and the greater excitement of the evening for Legge was a fabulous piano concert put on by a man in the Prince's party. "I never heard such execution, and it was endlessly varied", and all done without any music. Legge was also impressed with Admiral Possert, a huge Russian who made a personal visit later to discuss Chinese and Russian topics with Legge. Over the next weeks he enjoyed many other events surrounding this visit, attending a lecture, balls on three different nights in different venues, and a breakfast with the Governor and other visitors on board a Russian frigate *Svetlana*.

#### Legge's final public work in Hong Kong

Legge gave a final scholarly performance to the Hong Kong community, his last lecture in the Winter Series at City Hall that he and others had founded. Legge attracted a large admission-paying audience and the series overall made a nice profit of \$291 for City Hall. In his talk Legge discussed two Chinese heroes, Dukes Wan and Hwan from 2,500 years earlier, some of the heroes recently included in his volume on the Spring and Autumn Annals, later publishing this as an article in the *China Review* (J. Legge, 1883). He praised the richness of Chinese records and explained that there was more documentation about these ancient figures than there was for much of more recent British and Scottish history. In thanking Legge, Nicholas Dennys reminded the audience that Legge had "done more to give Western nations an idea of Chinese thought and literature than twenty travellers, and he was almost going to say than twenty missionaries. (Laughter and applause)". Legge mentioned that he expected to return to Hong Kong before too long, without specifying the circumstances. He apparently expected that the final two books of his larger project would be completed quickly and brought back to the LMS press for printing, a prospect that soon proved impossible.

Another project required his attention before he left. In 1869 the major Hong Kong trading firm of Dent & Co. had gone into bankruptcy and the Morrison Education Society funds it was caretaking were all lost in this mess. As a result the MES had basically stopped operating over the past four years, but the bankruptcy proceedings were now completed and the MES was given a settlement of \$3,276. In mid-March Legge convened a meeting of the MES to plan how to use the money. He proposed creating a Morrison Scholarship of \$3,000 for Central School, a further \$250 be used to for the assistance of "gentlewomen" who had been helping in mission schools in Hong Kong, with the balance being donated to the Morrison Library at City hall. The meeting agreed and the books were closed on another domain of his work.

### Complications in selling the LMS Press

In early January 1873 the LMS press had sold a set of Chinese fonts made for the Beijing Foreign Office and had sent the fonts north with Huang, who was going there to set up the press. The trip was expected to take three months because the rivers and Grand Canal were all frozen. In another project, metal was expected soon for the manufactory of the fonts ordered by the colonial government in Singapore. This activity was deceptive because in fact the press was winding down its last big contracts and there were no more on the horizon. In mid- January the press received interest in purchasing it from local businessman Chun Ayin, who intended forming the Chinese Printing Company Ltd. By the end of the month he offered \$10,000 Mexican silver dollars, still the most common currency. Although this offer and the closure of the LMS press had a disappointing aspect in that it was the only press in the world capable of printing Legge's books and he still anticipated future works, the nature of the purchase represented a wonderful new initiative for a Chinese newspaper in Hong Kong. The negotiations took some time to complete and involved complications.

Chun wanted to buy the entire printing office and to rent the LMS print premises on Aberdeen Street. Legge wanted a promise that no work would be done on Sundays, and that no anti-Christian articles would be printed using the LMS press, to preserve its reputation. Chun refused this request to restrict publication, and counter-offered to buy the press building, intending to add a second story. The mission refused to accept this second offer because any increased height to the press building would block light to the mission building and reduce its value. It also explained that committee did not have the authority to sell LMS property. Chun responded with another counter-offer in which Chun would buy another building and just buy the press machinery from the LMS. This compromise was offset by a new problem in that Chun did not want to continue printing material at cost for the BFBS and the Tract Society. Further haggling ensued and finally Chun agreed to continue that non-profit printing, and in February 1873 the local LMS committee consisting of Legge, Chalmers, and Eitel agreed with the conditions, and Legge and Eitel signed the sale agreement for the plant, stock, business, and goodwill.

Chun planned to work with Wang Tao to publish a daily Chinese newspaper. Legge agreed to include his English type and presses in the general plant, and Chun agreed to print the remaining volumes of the Chinese Classics "whenever called upon to do so by Rev. James Legge", at a price to be fixed by Legge. The contract set up a schedule of payments with all due by April 1. In addition the new company would buy the three sets of Chinese matrices created by Huang and "known as Wong Shing's matrices" from Huang for \$1,700 Mexican. The new company had to remove everything from the LMS

printing office at the time of the final payment. If Chun failed to meet the deadlines he would have to pay rent on the premises and all the municipal costs for police, lights, water, fire brigade, and taxes, the sale would be void, and none of the earlier payments would be refundable. The mission men struck a tight bargain. In July 1873, several months after Legge's departure, the LMS approved of this plan and the London Directors thanked the men for their caution and care in managing the press.

Within a month of Legge's departure however, Eitel had to mediate in a significant problem relating to the LMS press, in which Rev. Turner and Huang disagreed about the handling of some money and matrices involved in the sale. Eitel was so concerned about some allegations against Huang that he brought in John Smale, the Chief Justice of Hong Kong, to adjudicate.

The trouble had started in January when Chun Ayin offered to purchase the press from Eitel but argued against the offering price on the grounds that Huang planned to set up a rival press using matrices belonging to the LMS for two sizes of the Chinese fonts. If true, this would significantly reduce the value of the LMS press to any purchaser because he would have an instant competitor in Huang. Eitel was shocked that Huang would intend to take these LMS matrices and asked him to confirm the story, writing at the same time to Turner in London describing the problem and seeking information. Eitel commented that Huang's "old enemy" Wong Amuk was telling an even more dramatic story, that Huang possessed complete (duplicate) sets of all the sets of LMS matrices, not just for two fonts. The problem was confounded because Chun was also an "old enemy" of Huang's.

Matrices (or moulds) were a crucial component in printing because they had been punched out of soft copper by steel punches that each had a Chinese character carved out in reverse. Once the soft matrix had been punched with this, the matrix could be used for a long time as a mould into which hot type metal would be poured to cast more copies of the font for that character to be used in the letterpress. In combination, the steel punches and the copper matrices represented the solid gold of the LMS press, which had complete sets of both for three different sizes of Chinese fonts, in addition to punches and matrices for several sizes of English and italic fonts. The LMS was happy to sell a set of Chinese matrices to remote publishers in Beijing and Singapore for use there in creating fonts, but the work of carving the original steel punches was vast and represented a huge initial investment of highly-skilled worker time and costly materials, and it was these punches that made possible the commerce in matrices.

Eitel consulted Legge, who believed it was impossible that Huang had made duplicates of all the LMS matrices. Huang reported that Turner had given him permission to make extra sets of matrices for himself, and that he had paid all the expenses for them plus \$200 to the LMS Press for use of the punches in making the matrices for the fonts. Eitel checked back into the account books and in the English ledgers for 1867 found an entry in Huang's handwriting reporting payments totalling \$200 in August and in March 1868 for the use of punches, but found the Chinese ledger entries had mysterious erasures over entries relating to coal supplies that had been changed to read "punches".

Years earlier, in 1867 Huang had been interested in setting up a press foundry in Hong Kong if the LMS moved its press to Canton, and had taken LMS matrices and fonts to use there. This move however, had not happened and LMS printing remained in Hong Kong, with Huang apparently retaining possession in Hong Kong of the fonts and matrices he planned to use in Canton. Eitel believed Huang should have returned these to the LMS, and had been unaware that he was making more matrices. Months earlier Eitel had specifically asked Huang if anyone "anywhere possessed matrices of ours and "he told a fib then telling me that nobody had our matrices except the Russians and "Tingfutoi".

Eitel understood that if Huang set up an independent printing operation using LMS matrices and fonts, he would harm the prospects of the sale of the LMS press as he would be a direct competitor for printing jobs. He wrote London of the urgent need to reclaim the materials from Huang, horrified when he asked Huang for them to hear the reply that he intended "to give them as a present to the Emperor!" Eitel understood that Huang's "gift" to the Emperor would be an attempt to buy an official rank, signified by a specific "button" on his cap. Eitel warned Huang that such a gift would prevent the LMS from getting contracts for more matrices from the Beijing government, and appealed to Huang that "a good conscience would be preferable to the button he might get or not get", emphasizing the matrices were needed as part of the sale to Chun. Huang "was friendly" in response, but then countered that Eitel would have to buy the matrices from him for \$1,700 or at least \$1,500, for his own expenses in making them.

Eitel was very agitated about this and appealed to Legge for help in adjudicating the conflict. Legge took a somewhat distanced role, unsure of the facts. By 9 January Eitel asked to see Huang's matrices and found they comprised matrices for not two, but three sizes (pica, diamond, and ruby) of Chinese fonts, totalling about 14,000. Huang volunteered to sell them to Chun and Chun agreed to pay Huang \$1,700 for them, but Huang left Hong Kong for his work in Beijing before the matter was settled, and Eitel

was still convinced they were the property of the LMS press, not Huang's. Before he left Huang had given these matrices to Eitel, expecting to be paid for them as if they were his private property to sell to the LMS. All parties understood that Chun would only buy the LMS press if he could also own the matrices that Huang had.

Turner in London was terribly disheartened by Eitel's letter and inquiry, writing in February that Huang had been the "one Chinese I knew whose honesty and honour were above suspicion", thus the news was "a most painful shock to my feelings to have this settled faith in him disturbed." Turner had always considered Huang to be a strong example of a Chinese man who had become Christian for no personal or professional advantage, but truly out of religious conviction. Turner underlined in his mid-February letter to Eitel. "I never gave Wongshing permission to take complete sets of matrices from the Society's punches for his own pecuniary advantage". Eitel and Turner both knew that the matrices did not belong to them personally and they could not sell them to Huang because the LMS owned them. Huang now changed course and complained to Eitel that the problem was all Eitel's fault because he had trusted Huang too much, far beyond "what I should have deemed reasonable in the case of any other Chinese in Hong Kong but himself".

Turner was distraught. When Turner had taken over the Hong Kong mission in 1867, on Legge's advice he had put Huang in charge of every aspect of the press and had never interfered because he knew nothing about printing. He now realized that Huang "could have used any of that for his own advantage- I trusted him completely". Turner explained to Eitel that Huang had known how indignant Turner became whenever he had discovered printing staff using the press for private gain. It had been his practice only to hold the account books for 5-10 minutes in a month, just long enough to scan the items, add the figures, and write Huang a cheque, and that was probably why he had not detected the problem in the accounts. Turner did remember an item about using the punches for something and asking Huang about it, with Huang replying that Dr. Legge had given Huang permission "to use the punches for something or other", Turner could not remember the purpose. Huang's reference to Legge had been enough to satisfy Turner's concern. Turner was so new to printing that he had to be taught what a punch was, and what a matrix was, in creating fonts.

Turner knew that Huang had been experimenting with different methods of printing Chinese text because Huang often reported these to Turner, experiments with emerging methods such as electrotyping and stereotyping, and Turner had been pleased to see Huang trying to improve Chinese printing for the press. But Turner was sure that during all the daytime operations at the press, he had never seen Huang creating

additional full sets of matrices so he guessed it must have been done at night, suggesting secrecy.

Turner asked Eitel to read his letter to Huang, and “in my name appeal to his sense of honour and to his faith as a Christian – implore him to repair the wrong... by making complete restitution. The fact that he kept this secret from all of us, including the Chinese staff, for 5 years – show he has a guilty conscience about it. If he does not do the honourable thing, Hong Kong District committee LMS will have to take legal action, and I will come out to give evidence if the LMS Board wants”. He threatened that Huang would never be able to use those matrices for printing work anywhere where British law could reach”. After Turner’s letter was received, Huang offered to pay \$700 to the LMS, and the whole problem was finessed when the purchaser included the cost of these materials in his offer.

In early February Eitel gave Huang’s matrices directly to Chun, soon horrified to receive Turner’s letter three days later challenging Huang’s account of their ownership. Eitel was determined to get a share of the money that he was convinced was really owed to the LMS. Knowing that Chun had not yet paid Huang for the matrices, in early April Eitel wrote Chun and explained that the matrices he bought from Huang had not been Huang’s property. Eitel declared them the property of the LMS, advised Chun that the LMS claimed the stipulated price for them, and asked Chun’s intentions. Chun agreed to defer any payment until Huang’s return to Hong Kong.

Once the confusion about ownership of the matrices arose, Eitel stopped Chun’s payment until he and Huang could ask an impartial judge to adjudicate the conflict. When Huang returned, in May he and Eitel went to Chief Justice John Smale seeking his private adjudication of the problem, sensitive to the fact that the competing claims affected “character and reputation”. First they had to explain the different components of the printing process and their relative values, the punches, the matrices, and their product, the cast fonts. Then Huang explained to the Chief Justice that he had paid \$200 to the LMS for the use of the 14,000 punches, to pay for the use of the office coal, for type metal, and for damage to the punches as he worked with them. He also reported that he had paid for the copper for the matrices, and for the workmen’s’ time.

By early May John Smale wrote the parties that they should not go to court, that Turner’s emotional letter “was written in haste”, and that Smale had long known Huang and believed him to be an honest man. Smale concluded that Huang had believed he had Turner’s permission to make the materials for his own use, and recommended that Huang should pay \$700 to the LMS out of the \$1,700 he was due to receive from Chun. The local committee of Eitel and Chalmers accepted this recommendation. All were

relieved that this “friendly arbitration” had worked to ease the strife and finally allowed them to settle the affairs of the LMS press.

It was a sorry way to end what had been a marvellous operation for so many years and from so many different points of view. Sam Dyer had started it on a amazing run of creativity 30 years earlier when he first patiently devised the use of moveable metal type for Chinese character printing using European letterpress machinery, and made it not only feasible, but a model eventually widely copied. The LMS Press had trained and employed 13 natives, was running five presses, and had printed vast numbers of publications across its thirty years of operations in Hong Kong. It had printed several hundred thousand copies of Chinese works in addition to printing missionary materials and Legge’s Classics. Its gorgeous Chinese characters, carved so painstakingly into steel punches in three different sizes, had spawned matrices and fonts used in moveable metal type printing from Singapore to the heart of the Chinese empire in Beijing at the time of the dissolution of the Press.

#### Problems with the mission buildings

With the complex financial and interpersonal problems at the Press sorted out, Eitel now had to make additional plans for the two old adjoining mission buildings lying beside the Press, just below Staunton Street between Aberdeen and Elgin. He hoped to sell them but the real estate market in Hong Kong was quite depressed and he was shocked at the low valuation put on the property, not enough to buy land and build new mission buildings. He sought advice from a property assessor, who told him that the building was at too low an elevation (160 ft. above sea level) to be attractive as housing, which was mostly now around 484 feet, where it was cooler and quieter. The lower elevation had made it much easier for mission work with the Chinese who customarily lived close to the waterfront. The property did have some assets, as it was on a wide steep street that had good drains, and the eastern face received the cooling effects of the northeast monsoon so it was kept cooler than many surrounding houses. The roof did not leak, and the walls and floors were mostly in good condition, but changing configurations in the buildings as they changed uses from schools to dwellings meant the rooms were now awkwardly-arranged.

The eastern house was in a less-crowded situation with good light and air, while the western building was oppressed by the Printing operation and was too far from the commercial area to be a warehouse, and the assessor concluded the rent from it would not even cover its taxes. He recommended some renovations. The eastern house could be repaired for about \$400, including putting in gas lines for lighting. If the printing buildings were torn down and minor changes made in partitions, if steps from Aberdeen

St. to the eastern house were closed and a new entrance made from opposite the Union Church, the two buildings could be made more useful to the LMS. Importantly, if it wished to remain a destination for Chinese congregation members it was in a better location than any new property. The local committee reviewed this report and agreed with Eitel that renovations rather than selling would be the best decision. In the end, Legge's original buildings were still viable property for the mission.

In their February 1873 meeting Legge presented the local committee with the Trust Deeds for the LMS Chinese chapels in Taipingshan and Wanchai, and they thanked him in warm and affectionate language for "advice so genially accorded, ... and the cordial interest he has constantly taken in the welfare and labours of the members of the committee individually..." Unfortunately, within weeks of his departure the committee discovered that there were problems with these deeds. Legge had bought properties for the Chinese chapels on behalf of the LMS and had expressly written on the documents that he had no personal interest in the properties, but a judge later ruled that they were actually Legge's personal property. This meant that Eitel had to ask the LMS to prepare proper deeds in London for Legge to sign to transfer the property.

Another problem confronted Eitel when a revival of an old issue about government support of the LMS schools arose within weeks of Legge's departure. The colonial government proposed to provide grants to partly support the LMS primary schools. The problem was that the Scots congregationalists who were such a mainstay of LMS missions believed very strongly in the independence of churches and church schools from the state, and in particular in the freedom of the churches to run schools free of state interference. An offer of money appeared to threaten the autonomy they had always believed in, because they feared they would not be allowed to teach anything about Christianity if they received government support.

#### Final events at Union Church

As his departure time came near Legge was still very annoyed with the LMS for its actions concerning Union Church and the Hong Kong mission. Mullens' LMS letter in late December 1872 had left Legge "perplexed and unhappy" because the LMS had not appointed any successor to him at Union Church, and had not provided any prospects of a successor at the mission. This anxiety was partly relieved by a January 1873 letter announcing the LMS appointment of Mr. Lamont to Union Church, "though I'd have been happier if the LMS had also had Union Church members Taylor, Cox and Crichton in on the selection process".

Despite those problems of principle, Legge's work in the congregation was warmly appreciated. Early in February 1873 Union Church held a large social gathering which



the newspaper described as being under the “genial influence” of Legge. There were short talks, musical performances including solos, duets, and choir with harmonium played by Eitel, and the church was decorated with flowers and evergreens. The paper noted that Union Church “had become celebrated” for its social gatherings, and listed the large numbers of soldiers, sailors, and Scottish police who attended. Legge’s imminent departure was not the main focus of this gathering, but it was noted by many in speeches of regret “both warm and sincere”. The editor hoped that the congregation would continue such lively and interesting events after Legge’s departure.

In February the church held its annual general meeting, chaired by Legge. He was pleased with the state of finances of the church, which would be able to support the new minister Lamont, soon to arrive. The business meeting was conducted with smoothness and dispatch and ended after expressions of thanks to Legge for all his work for the church since he had founded it 30 years earlier. Mr. Petrie concluded that “Dr. Legge’s name would be remembered in the East long after all ours were forgotten”.

In his last letter to London Legge described all the Union Church - LMS financial arrangements. The Union Church was sending the LMS Legge’s 1872 LMS salary of £300 because he had received a salary from the Union Church, and £125 for the portion of 1873 he was on a Union Church salary. In addition the church returned £15 for income taxes the LMS paid on his salary across his three years at Union Church. Legge asked the LMS to continue paying his wife £25 per month until the end of May; Union Church intended to pay him two month’s salary after his departure for costs of his trip home and the care of his family. He mentioned that the Union Church had paid him a child allowance for his children in Scotland, and expected all financial connections between him and the LMS and the Union Church to be concluded by 1 June 1873. He explained to Secretary Mullens that he planned to leave for Beijing at the end of March, then head south overland to Shanghai stopping at the graves “of the Sages” en route to his departure port.

Legge was still struggling with the LMS in March however, over its plans for Union Church because he realized that the problem lay deeper than selecting ministers. It increasingly seemed that neither the LMS nor the Union Church were able to benefit from their connection, instead it was a source of confusion and conflict. He was now beginning to think it was time to sever their connection. Mr. Lamont arrived in mid-March and preached his first sermon to Union Church while Legge was still there, an arrival far later than Legge and the church had hoped for. Trustee Crawford wrote a sarcastic letter to the LMS, reporting that Mr. Lamont had arrived, “who we are glad to learn comes with your approval although you have not yet advised us of such fact”.

Legge's final sermons at Union Church took place at the end of March 1873, and in the evening service he turned his ministry over to Lamont. Legge mentioned that this severance from his congregation was as painful as his own personal earlier losses. "I have experienced myself during my long residence in this colony the rupture of the nearest and dearest earthly ties; and how often have I been called to the house of mourning, and to weep with those of you who were weeping for the loss of a friend, a child, a partner!" He did not spell out the details; he had lost his wife Mary and five children in his years there. He concluded by quoting from a tender poem of parting by James Montgomery (1771-1854). The Union Church Trustees presented Legge with "a purse of sovereigns" as thanks for his years of work for the church. Legge, taken by surprise, "seemed much affected", thanked all, and wished the church would prosper under Mr. Lamont. Thus was his final act as an LMS man for the Union Church, which had always thrived under his care.

#### Final work with the LMS, Hobson's premature death

In Legge's last meeting with the local LMS committee the other men spoke of their "deep regret at the impending prospect of losing his assistance and advice so genially accorded", and Legge put his last signature on the Hong Kong committee Minutes. Even though he had not been in the pay of the LMS for the past three years he had remained active in the work of the local committee and played the more senior role of advisor to Eitel as he mastered the tasks left to him with Turner's departure. Their committee for the LMS South China missions of Hong Kong and Canton wrote urging London to send out two new missionaries, one for each setting, noting that Boluo and Foshan in China were taking a great deal of effort.

Eitel learned double-entry bookkeeping and used this and fund accounting to keep separate accounts for different aspects of the Hong Kong mission work, including Press accounts for the printing work for the BFBS and the Tract society. The men at other LMS missions all around the Pacific soon learned of his skill at this and started sending him all their accounts to do, from Japan, Siam, Australia and even San Francisco. He described the method as one that "at first seemed an intricate puzzle and now appears so exceedingly simple and indispensable, I could never have got on" without it. Legge had used double-entry bookkeeping in 1840 to help sort out the financial problems in Malacca after the financial mess revealed after Evans' sudden death.

Other elements in Legge's Hong Kong life with the LMS were also closing behind him. In early March Legge received a telegraph message that Dr. Benjamin Hobson, Legge's long-time friend and colleague in the LMS Canton mission, had died in Britain

at age 57, the same age as James. They had gone out to China on the same ship in 1839, but Hobson's mission hospital work during the perpetual conflicts in Canton had taken a severe toll on his health and he retired to Britain in 1859 after 20 years of work, while Legge carried on for another fourteen years. Another LMS death occurred around the same time; Turner's sister Mrs. Bains had just died in childbirth in Hong Kong in early March, with her child also dying in the event.

As to his own connection with the LMS, Legge wrote Mullens that he would meet in London to discuss 'my future re labours with the society, if they are to continue to exist at all...' His future was entirely unsettled after so many years of intense work.

### Hong Kong honours Legge

Legge planned to leave for England at the end of March 1873, after 30 years in the colony and 34 years' work as a missionary. The institutions that he had founded were well-established and went far beyond the immediate work of his mission. The LMS primary schools were thriving as educational institutions. The government school, representative of a whole system of public education that Legge's vision had helped create, and the schools Inspector highly commended the schools for the work they were doing. The congregations of Union Church and the Union Church Chinese congregation of Hop Yat were thriving.

Even the cynical editor Shortrede of the *China Mail*, former advocate for Union Church changing into a Free Church during Legge's absence, had come to be a supporter of Legge's congregational work, complaining in an editorial in July 1872 about the iron grip of the Church of England on all marriage services in the colony. Members of nonconformist congregations were required to marry in front of the Registrar, rather than in Union Church with their minister. Shortrede pointed out that the rules giving all authority for church marriages to the Established Church in England existed in a very different context from that in Hong Kong. In Hong Kong marrying persons were always well known in the community and did not need an artificial set of laws created to protect the hapless "youthful baker boys" and "juvenile nurse-maids" of England; the rules were not appropriate in Hong Kong. The irony that James Legge, now the most senior and respected churchman in the colony, still did not have the authority to solemnize a British marriage, was surely lost on no one.

Legge attended the Central School examinations for prizes in late January, and after the prizes were awarded was asked to speak to the audience, which included publisher Chun as a prize-donor. Legge briefly described his work with others in helping establish Central School, then became immensely practical. He urged the boys to speak

English when with each other to encourage fluency, and urged them to copy the habits of English schoolboys in studying their schoolwork at home. He told them he believed “that this school was destined to exercise a most important influence over the rising generation here, and might finally affect China herself”, all truly prescient sentiments. His talk was followed by one from Chief Justice Smale who explained the wonderful value of “truly non-sectarian education” and his belief that the British system for this in its colonies was helping students “in almost every latitude”.

Before Legge left, the Chinese community presented him with a huge engraved bronze tablet spelling out their respect and gratitude. This magnificent artefact now stands in the London home of Legge’s great-grandson Christopher Legge, mounted in a mahogany frame on a tall chest. The text in translation reads

To the highly esteemed Rev. Legge  
 Your genius and virtues are (as a sage’s) inborn  
 The stream of (your) teachings profoundly deep!  
 Humbly submitted in engraving (by)  
 The Hong Kong Chinese citizens  
 Respectfully presented on the first day of the Tongzhi reign<sup>41</sup>

Wang Tao also wrote of Legge in very complimentary terms as he was getting ready to leave, creating a hand-written scroll of tribute from the Union Church. In this he wrote that of all the European scholars of Chinese, the giants had been Morrison, Milne, Medhurst, and Legge, and of these, Legge was the youngest and the most outstanding in learning and personality. In particular Wang appreciated that while most missionaries tried to bring the West to China, James had brought Chinese culture and civilization to the West through his translation of the thirteen classics. Wang wrote “Dr. Legge...did not shrink from difficulties. Concentrating on the study of the *Thirteen Classics*, he threaded together, scrutinized, examined into sources, and analysed. He maintained his own views and did not simply follow tradition... he did not favour any one school or devote himself to any one theory, but he made wide and extensive his studies in order to reach a perfect comprehension”. The tribute went on to provide details of texts where Legge disagreed with long traditional commentaries, explaining how Legge’s modern scholarly approach was recognized as being very different from traditional translations.

---

<sup>41</sup> Lauren Pfister modern translation, used in a speech by Christopher Legge. The date would have been 26 April.

Wang concluded by praising Legge's character:

“With himself he is honest; to others he is gracious. In receiving friends or dealing with people, he is modest and sincere. At first sight he looks dignified and stern as if he were difficult to approach, but if you have associated with him for a long time, you will feel the breath of modesty and friendliness filling the world. For over twenty years, he yet has never ceased from loving talent and cherishing scholars, teaching them to hold to the great principles and not to esteem petty virtues.” (Ride, 1960), p. 17.

Even Shortrede wrote an unusually friendly tribute to Legge the day before he left, mentioning the warmth of feeling for him in the colony as well as the international acclaim Legge's scholarly work had earned. The tough editor then wished him a pleasant reunion with his family, “and health and long life to finally complete the *magnum opus* of his life”. Everyone understood that Legge was planning to publish more works on Chinese historical culture.

In a letter Legge wrote just before leaving Hong Kong he described the remarkable changes that he had seen over thirty years, starting with a simple comparison of the nighttime view of Hong Kong. By 1873 the bay was full of hundreds of boats with their lanterns, each oar-dip releasing a phosphorescent shower. On land the coast now sparkled with lighted streets and houses along a three-mile expanse and 500 feet up the mountainside. In contrast, “When I first looked on the space it was mostly empty, and covered with rocks much more difficult and unmanageable than Scotch hills. What will not the will and force of man aided by wealth and science, accomplish” (H. E. Legge, 1905) p. 177.

### Chapter 64 Legge travels north to honour the Sage

Legge left Hong Kong on 28 March 1873 for a return trip using a route novel to him, from Shanghai via Japan and the Pacific to San Francisco, then by train east across the United States to a final Atlantic voyage from New York to Britain. Before he left China, Legge wanted to first include one month's travel in north China to visit five sites honoured by all educated Chinese and revered in traditional culture. These included the home of Confucius, the man he honoured by calling him the Sage, as well as the Great Wall north of Beijing and the Ming Tombs, the Altar of Heaven in Beijing, the home place of Mencius, and Tai-Shan, one of the five holy mountains. He wrote a detailed diary-letter to Hannah about this trip, which he took with Joseph Edkins and another friend. The journey ended up taking nearly two months.

They went north by boat, stopping three days in Shanghai, then north to the Dagu forts that had been the site of fierce battles between Qing and European forces 13 years earlier. They stayed on the river to Tianjin then disembarked and turned west inland travelling to Beijing on a "Beijing cart", a fiendish kind of bare wooden two-wheeled cart without springs drawn by two mules. These carts could carry a passenger and his luggage, lightly protected from the sun by a canopy of blue cloth.

From Beijing they rode 50 km northwest by horseback to the Great Wall, following the great trade route between Mongolia and Beijing. Legge was thrilled with the majesty of the huge and ancient wall, its formidable towers and the wild mountains behind it. Riding on to the nearby Ming Tombs he was struck by the contrast between the grandeur of the conception of the original massive avenue with its giant statues of animals and heroes, contrasting with their decrepitude over time, showing both the glory and impermanence of human life and fame. Riding back to Beijing, they slept in small roadside inns when they could find one. These inns were poverty-stricken places where all travellers laid themselves like cordwood along the heated brick shelf, the *kang*, still in use today in northwest China.

### Legge scandalizes fundamentalists

In Beijing Legge enacted a tribute that led to his condemnation by more ethnocentric missionaries. Legge, Edkins and others went to the Altar of Heaven, the traditional place where the Emperor annually climbed and made rituals of respect to the heavenly lord. Legge and his party climbed up the vast three terraces to the top, where they took off their shoes as a sign of respect, joined hands, and stood in the centre praying to the "Divine Being", *shangdi*. This reflected Legge's conviction that the ancient Chinese had truly understood and worshiped one god, believing that the prayers

created for the Emperor during the Ming dynasty had clearly dismissed older polytheistic practice (Pfister, 2004). Legge's letters to his family in Scotland described the trip and his beliefs about this ritual, noting that the Altar of Heaven had "no image of the Divine Being" (H. E. Legge, 1905). This lack of a specific image of God was highly relevant to Legge because it indicated to him that the deity being honoured was eternal and transcendent rather than being some more material god. It thus was "the Supreme God" just as Christianity taught, confirming his belief that from ancient times the Chinese conception of God was compatible with Christianity.

When missionaries of a narrower and more ethnocentric tradition in Hong Kong learned of Legge's act they were outraged at the heresy of it. His sombre tribute confirmed the prejudices of his critics, who from then on used the charge of "Leggism" as a scornful descriptor of any missionary acts accommodating to the culture of China (Pfister, 1999) p. 240. Fundamentalist missionaries in China became obsessed with this heretical image and continued attacking his credibility as a Christian for decades after his departure.

From Beijing Legge and Edkins retraced their trip back to Tianjin using two Beijing carts and four mules, then headed south on a road paralleling the Grand Canal, that giant 1,200 mile north-south artery connecting Beijing to the Yangzi River. They passed by Dongguang and arrived in Dezhou after four days of bumping, having covered a total of about 40 miles a day in travel from five in the morning to seven or later at night. They stopped in mid-day to feed the mules, which were regarded more highly than horses, both for hauling and for riding. Legge piled his luggage toward the back of the 4' long x 2 1/3' wide two-wheeled cart, then leaned a mattress over it and sprawled on the mattress with a blanket at hand against the cold. They headed out each morning after milky tea, travelling until about 2 PM when they stopped to feed the mules, buying bits of food along the road when it was available, bread or roasted sweet potato. While the mules ate, the travellers opened their classically Victorian tins of meat, butter and biscuits, and brewed up fresh tea. Every aspect of this travel exhilarated Legge. "It is a rough and ready way of living certainly, but I was never in better health".

Having grown up in an agricultural region in Scotland, he was impressed with the intensive agriculture everywhere on the giant flat plains, the complete lack of weeds in the vast farmlands, the absence of fences for property lines, the absence of stones, hedges or dikes, trees, grass, and of farm houses. In traditional style farmers lived in small mud huts in tiny villages and walked out to their land each morning to work on it rather than living on it, a pattern still seen in China. He posed himself a challenging question when he observed that all the houses were miserable mud huts while the

temples were well-built of brick. "Is it a good sign or a bad that in China there is not one who can reproach himself like David that he is living in a ceiled house while the place of his god is merely a tent or a hut?" (H. E. Legge, 1905).

In Shandong province the travellers passed through Linqing and down to the swiftly flowing Yellow River (Huang He). When they crossed it in a ferry, to the east they could see the range of mountains in which the Taishan (Great Mountain) lay, revered as holy since ancient times. The land began to rise, stones were more frequent, and buildings more substantial. Legge was surprised by the extent to which wheel-barrows had become a standard means of transport for individuals within a short period of years, something he had just noticed during his recent stay in Shanghai. The drivers of these barrows often hoisted a sail made out of matting above them to catch a bit of wind to help with the work, and were sometimes helped by another man or by an ass yoked in the front to pull. The wooden wheels had a three-foot diameter mounted on an ungreased wooden axel that screeched very badly. Legge noted a huge increase in the numbers of these barrows both in the cities and throughout the countryside compared to a few years earlier, with whole convoys filling the roads. These popular contraptions were capable of covering about 20-25 miles a day.

After a hair-raising journey in the barrows on narrow rocky mountain roads where it seemed impossible to pass oncoming barrows but it was accomplished, they were close to the base of Taishan, traditionally connected with Confucius. At times they ended up travelling in a dry streambed, Legge marvelling when he got out to walk at the variety of wild flowers he could recognize. He reported on the beauty of flowers, listing species similar those in Scotland including violets, daisies, and forget-me-nots. He berated himself for "the lost opportunities of youth!" for not having had a better education in botany, and better ability to use French and German easily. Once arrived at the sacred mountain he was surprised to find that there was a fine paved roadway with stone steps all the way up the mountain, arising from its use as a place of pilgrimage since ancient times.

This road to the top of the mountain (5,069 feet) however was very long, and Legge marvelled at the bearer-chair system used to take pilgrims including himself up and down. Two teams of two men carried the pilgrims in strong light chairs, alternating their duties and always walking at an angle to the trail, first facing one way then the other in a crab-like movement. "I confess that when...borne up a flight of 40 or 50 steps, with 500 steps behind, and as many in front, the flights separated only by small landings, and deep precipices on the right and left, I wished the thing were at an end ... but no strap nor shaft gave way; the men moved on bravely and with assured step; coming back, they



literally ran down the steps. I felt my best plan was to leave them to themselves, and I paid them their wage thinking that never was money better earned”.

Legge was disappointed to find that although there were sites on the mountain where Confucius was claimed to have ascended, there were no tributes to him or other Chinese heroes at the summit, which instead was overwhelmed with messy votives to the gods and temples of superstitious Daoism. The entire route was lined with beggars, typically women with naked children, who lived in holes in the rocks and prostrated themselves to the pilgrims seeking contributions. Legge was upset at their “utterly lost and degraded” condition. Women seeking fertility used parts of the mountain, and even women with bound feet were climbing with the help of long sticks. He chatted with a lively 74-year old woman. At the bottom, he was thrilled to buy a rubbing of an ancient inscription taken from one of the rocks, so huge at 30 feet by 50 feet that he marvelled that there wouldn't be a room large enough to exhibit it even in Edinburgh.

Legge was intrigued at the variety of travel arrangements as they travelled into Shandong, one exotic arrangement consisting of a large wagon being pulled by a team of three oxen, two mules, an ass, and a horse. He marvelled that it was considered more appropriate for a gentleman to ride on a mule than on a horse. Legge also showed his usual interest in technology and governance as he travelled south. He described the condition of the Grand Canal, noting that at places the Canal was “a fine stream of water with boats going up and down upon it. It was one of the greatest conceptions which a government ever formed, and though now dilapidated in various parts, it might be repaired and deepened without much trouble”. At the same time, he complained about the poor maintenance:

“In China, stupendous works are accomplished, but no pains are taken to maintain the fight from year to year with the dilapidations that are unavoidable in all works of men. Roads, canals, palaces, all were once on a grand scale and in splendid order, but filth has been allowed to accumulate over them till all is decay and ruin. Lack of public spirit and want of municipal arrangement of affairs are responsible for this. The people look to the government to do everything for them and when that has become weak and without a generous ambition, it is like failure of the heart in the human system” (H. E. Legge, 1905) p. 178.

Jinan, the capital of Shandong province, was only 13 miles to the NE from the river, and the travellers made it there the same day. Legge found Jinan to be quite

attractive, with large gushing fountains that flushed water down passages all through the city that led to a large and beautiful lake filled with pleasure boats and islands with pleasure houses on them. There Legge visited with the Governor of Shandong and taxed him on the topic of the dilapidation arising from poor maintenance given to the Grand Canal, urging the Governor to do a better job at keeping the silt from the Yellow River dredged out. It was long called “China’s Sorrow” because of its periodic rampages when the riverbed could no longer hold the flow in the flat lands of eastern China. The Governor was not perturbed, explaining that there was no point in dredging because more silt would come down the next year. On another topic Legge concluded that the Governor’s favoured reclamation plan of returning the northern arm of the river to its earlier south-easterly route, seemed to be quite impractical. Legge hoped that China would seek help from western specialists to plan flood-works that would save Chinese people from the periodic ravages of the river. The river had itself switched to a northerly route in 1851-55 while generating floods that contributed to the misery of the people and the beginnings of the Taiping rebellion.

At times Legge reported on the sufferings of the people from the Taiping rebellion, as when they passed through a village in which a Manchu prince had enclosed 2,000 Taiping rebels in a siege that lasted nine months. By the end the starving survivors were eating each other until they were all slaughtered by the Imperial Manchu prince, San Kolinsin (1811-1865), (Senggelinqin, Senge Rinchen), who years earlier had played a major role in the murders of the diplomatic envoy group to Beijing in 1860 and the torture and starvation of Legge’s friend, envoy Harry Parkes.

Because Legge had such a strong interest and admiration for Confucian philosophy, after he and Edkins left Jinan they headed south by road to Qufu, the home of Confucius and still the site of a huge Kong family complex devoted to his memory and still supported by the Chinese government. He was surprised to find nearby villagers growing vast fields blooming with opium poppies, and mourned that “there will yet be a heavy retribution for our policy” of not only forcing “our drug upon China”, but also leading the people to cultivate it for themselves.

This visit to honour “Master Kong” was filled with meaning for Legge, but in the village he was disappointed to discover that the famed College was a complete ruin even though it was ringed about with stone tablets from the Yuan and Ming dynasties testifying to the need to hold Confucius in everlasting remembrance. When he finally reached the grave-mound of Confucius he found himself comparing Napoleon and Confucius. He had visited St. Helena not long after Napoleon’s remains had been taken to France, and he wondered, “Which was the greater man? I should be inclined to give

the palm to the Chinese worthy” (H. E. Legge, 1905), p. 197. He saw the tomb of Confucius’ grandson Zisi (Kong Ji), the author of the Doctrine of the Mean. Another day he visited the temple of the Duke of Chow, the brother of the Emperor in whose dynasty Confucius lived. Legge commented that the sage was always talking about the Duke’s virtues, but over time Confucius’ virtues had become more honoured.

When the travellers returned to their inn that night they discovered all their carters had abandoned them and found they were unable to hire carts in the region. Should they go on horseback, mule back, or ass-back? Even if they did ride, what could they do with the luggage? They decided they would have to hire the strange wheelbarrows, and after an “immense palaver” they contracted for two wheel-barrows for the next leg of their trip to Zhenjiang, about 270 miles, expected to take eight days.

Back on the road passing Linyi, they went 30 km south to Zaozhuang near the ancestral village of Mencius, where Legge found that the imperial government was spending huge sums of money painting and gilding the temple. He worried about that expenditure at a time when the people in the countryside were in great distress. He took a drink from Mencius’ well in the main town, and they headed south. Food was erratic and the tiny inns were impoverished, wretched, and filthy, with no beds; in one Legge put together a mess of an old door and some broken rafters on which to place his mattress, while Edkins slept in his wheelbarrow.

The wheelbarrows turned out to be miserable and Legge was made the more so by suffering digestive problems. These started with mild pain after days of eating very little. He feared this was a return of old liver disease, but he was so hungry that he compounded his misery by deciding to eat some ripe mulberries they encountered in two separate orchards. He just couldn’t resist the temptation, but retribution soon arrived and he was sent rushing off the barrow and “into the bushes” at frequent intervals. When they finally arrived at an inn where they were able to buy a substantial dinner, his first in nearly three days, the tumult was reduced and he had a good night’s sleep.

Legge was surprised to find that two of the barrow-men were descendants of Confucius. “It is something to think of, that we barbarians should be wheeled along through the country by descendants of the Sage. Multitudes of the clan are allowed to grow up as ignorant as any other Chinese. We were told that there is no free school in the city of Qufu. The Duke himself has a large annual income from government, an income say of ... 4000 acres of land, and other members of the clan are provided for, but the mass are left to the tender mercies of their superiors.” As they passed a large opium poppy farm they stopped so Legge could watch the farmers harvest the opium resin by

cutting the seed-pod at night and collecting the exuded juice the next morning. He realized the overwhelming temptation to grow the poppies because as the farmers told him in different places, they could earn up to five times as much growing poppies as any other crop.

In the final leg of their trip they re-joined the Grand Canal, at first a fine broad stream 70 feet wide flowing south, and crossed it into Jiangsu province, past Suqian. Soon it changed, with the water so low from irrigation diversions that there were nearly 500 grain junks stuck on sandbars, so they kept their barrows for another 15 miles along the waterway to a place where additional water made it navigational. Even once back on the canal they encountered more serious problems when water was again diverted out of the Canal, leaving many boats stuck and others crushed as they tried to get into the narrow remaining channel. Their boat had to stop for repairs after they had to physically drag it with ropes in the mud around a large heavy boat stuck on a sandbar in the only channel. This led their boatmen to need to hire more men. The locals lounging along the canal all agreed that foreigners should be required to pay a lot more money, which led to intense haggling with the skipper. Legge knew that he would be willing to pay more but doing that would upset the captain's authority and the standard trade, and could set a bad precedent, so he just sat back and waited for his boatman to make the negotiations. "They screamed and shouted and abused one another for more than an hour, till at last the skipper carried the day".

As they slipped eastward he noticed many rice-working women in the fields with normally-sized feet, and in the villages he discovered many bound their ankles with the bindings to make it appear they had the fashionable bound "small feet" even though they did not. The countryside was now rich farmland and the villages looked more prosperous than in Shandong or in Chihli (now Hebei) province in the north. After they found a good inn for dinner and the night, the whole village tramped in to watch them. Despite the excitement of having a swallow's nest full of young set directly over his bed, Legge was grateful for the progress being made in the journey.

The next day they hired a boat for the four-day leg along the Grand Canal to Zhenjiang, interested to see what had happened to the dried riverbed of the Yellow River in that region since the river had changed course upstream, from a southeast course to the northwest, leaving behind a massive fertile region. The dried bed was a mile wide and now all planted with flourishing fields of grain and poppies that lay at a higher elevation than the banks that had been built to try and hold the river, always full of thick silt. By May 26 they were making good progress on the Grand Canal although they were stopped by guards at a customs house and had to haul all their own bedding and luggage

while their passports were examined. Wending their way past three sides of Yangzhou on the north bank of the canal they finally reached Zhenjiang on the south bank of the Yangzi river, one month after leaving Beijing.

In Zhenjiang John Stronach's son was the Acting British Consul. While young Stronach was very hospitable, Legge's comments are a bit cryptic and tantalizing: "he is very much improved, and has, I think, come all right religiously". Legge asked after another Scotsman he knew of who had recently visited, William Spence, a relative by marriage. Stronach reported knowing him very well, regarding him as very clever and sure to get on, but also disagreeable and "very immoral". This perturbed Legge and he wanted to know the kind of immorality, to be told that William had pictures of courtesans on his mantelpiece and was spoken of by all the young men as being "very lustful". James knew that Edkins and Muirhead in Shanghai also considered Spence to be a bad character and knew that they might meet in Shanghai, so he warned Hannah that her sister might need to know about this.

As Legge and his friends wandered through the city followed by a swarm of ragamuffins, he was struck with the contrasts between their lives and those of his children. "I find it difficult to answer the question – what were these hundreds of millions made for? One thought was strong, ... the thought of gratitude that our children were born under better auspices than the multitudes of these". He was "so glad once more to find (himself) in civilized life". Legge had gained weight during his years in Hong Kong and now had lost 14 pounds on the trip but had never felt in better health and hoped that he would maintain his weight loss, now down again to 196 pounds.

By the time Legge and Edkins ended their Chinese travels in Shanghai on 31 May Legge realized that the vast scale of China's impoverished farmers had left a major impression on him. He also concluded that travel in China was the most expensive travelling in the world in terms of expense, destruction of clothes, the cost in time, and discomfort. Despite all that he was extremely pleased he had taken this trip. "I have a fuller idea of China than I had; I have got imperfect ideas corrected, and acquired new knowledge. To me what I have seen and learned is a compensation, perhaps, for the trouble but I would not advise another person to undertake what I have done." Many of the towns and cities that Legge passed through in this leisurely journey have since turned into massive cities in modern China. He ended his last letter from China to Hannah of 31 May, "Within three months, perhaps, I shall be holding you in my arms. My dearest love: all the children, Ever your loving husband, James Legge".

Legge soon set sail for Japan, from where his Pacific steamer would leave Yokohama on the 8 June, leaving him time for a good visit to the city before he left for

San Francisco. On this ship he discovered a contingent of 100 young Chinese men being sent to the United States by the Chinese government for fifteen years of education to learn English, then professions, before their returns. He was very impressed with the quality of these young men and hoped that China would send a similar group to be educated in Britain. From San Francisco he went overland via Yosemite Park and Chicago to New York, sailed his final Atlantic voyage to England, then travelled home to his wife and children in Dollar Scotland.

### Empress Cixi, and international developments

Just as Legge was leaving China, the young Tongzhi Emperor was finally permitted by the Dowager Empress Cixi and Regents to assume full imperial powers at the age of 18, four years later than normal. He seems to have been intellectually handicapped, still unable to read documents by age 16. After ineffectual attempts at reforms he was allowed to drift into a dissolute life in the prostitutes' quarters in Beijing while Cixi increasingly controlled the government. After he died of syphilis or smallpox in 1875 age 19, Cixi lost no time in ensuring that her sister's four-year-old son Aisin-Gioro Zaitian (1871-1908) became the next Emperor, the Guangxu Emperor. She gave herself full regency powers until 1898, killing, demoting or imprisoning any further contenders for power. When her nephew assumed full powers as Emperor in 1898 he began reforms that infuriated her so she imprisoned him and ruled until her death in 1908. China was still in a state of confused struggles between competing power cliques and their conflicting views about reform in the Empire. Nearby Japan responded very differently to the challenges of change from the western world, and took the momentous move of renouncing feudalism this year. In a different aspect of fast changes in the west, and too late to help Legge's massive project, the Remington typewriter was invented.

### Part 12 Unsettled in Britain, a new career emerges

*In which Legge has no clear plans for his life in Britain, but Hong Kong taipans arrange an Oxford Chair, encountering many problems.*

Legge wrote as he left China that he had now done his life's work, and that anything more he might do would be simply "on the impulse of my own will". He was 57 years old and had been steadily industrious and productive since his school days in northern Scotland. His new freedom also meant uncertainty, and the next few years in Britain were years of unsettling challenges for him and his family. Although he was still very interested in completing two more major translation works and had a growing international fame as a scholar, he was uncertain as to how he would support his family.

### Chapter 65 Unsettled in Scotland and London

James Legge did not have any employment, and it was not clear even where the family should live after he joined them in Dollar in August 1873. Within weeks James' eldest grandson George Tradescant Lay, the son of Eliza and Horatio Nelson Lay, died and was buried in the Dunbennan churchyard near Huntly.

It seemed Legge might be drifting into obscurity now that his massive Confucian works had been completed and he no longer had any institutional connections or support, but one member of his extended family realized the importance of Legge's publications. His nephew John Legge, a minister in Australia slowly dying of tuberculosis but a first-rate Latin scholar, wrote James admiring his contribution with the Chinese classics. "I had a regular harvest in your last four volumes... your toil and patience and thoroughness put you rather with Erasmus than with common classical scholars..."

### Legge and the LMS

Early in 1874 Legge received his last official letter from the LMS Eastern Committee responsible for the China missions. The committee recorded its "affectionate regard" for him in his retirement, and its "high estimate of his Christian principles, zeal and ability" which he had shown in his efforts to promote "the best interests of the people of China" across his 34 years with the society. It rather primly recorded its "deep sense of the value of the linguistic services which (Legge) had rendered in opening up to the examination of foreign Christian and other students the higher literature of the Chinese thus offering an important aid in the promotion of missionary work among the higher as well as the lower grades of the Chinese people". It concluded by hoping that he

had the “strength” to finish the work. It was a restrained, prissy and bureaucratic finale. Eventually Legge served as a Director of the LMS after settling at Oxford, and finally in 1879 George Cousins, the Acting Foreign Secretary of the LMS sent him a more enthusiastic testimonial in which the London Directors “rejoice in the permanent and wide-reaching nature of (his) life’s work”.

### The LMS in Hong Kong

With Legge now retired to Britain, the LMS mission in Hong Kong needed more staff and London sent Rev. C. J. Edge to help Eitel. In Britain poor Turner, so exercised with what he feared with Huang’s betrayal of trust that he was willing to make the long journey back to Hong Kong to give testimony in court, died in early October that year of the illnesses from his Hong Kong mission days. Under Eitel’s care the Hong Kong mission was doing well, and within two years he reported that it had expanded to include 9 chapels, 6 out-stations in the Boluo district, and had 9 native preachers, including one entirely supported by his own congregation. In addition, the society continued to operate two schools in Hong Kong and four schools in Boluo serving 50 students. Overall the mission cost \$4,300 per year to operate and was clearly thriving with Eitel’s vigor, talent, and focussed interest.

Wang Tao, now of the Chinese Printing and Publishing Company, published a Chinese history of the Franco-Prussian war using the LMS Chinese fonts. *The China Review*, volume II reported that the work consisted of 14 volumes bound into 8 books, selling for \$4.00 per copy in Hong Kong. In that same issue the Imperial Maritime Customs office of China (still operated on contract by Britons) announced that it had published a codebook translating Chinese characters for use in telegraph, in which each character was represented by a four-digit number. Chinese could now master the telegraph using their own language. Talented Chinese who had been exposed to British education and training in printing and telegraphy, key communication skills of the modern world, were now taking cultural initiatives that were exactly the kind of developments benefitting China for which Legge had hoped.

The beautiful Chinese fonts developed by the LMS press during Legge’s work at the Hong Kong mission had a long life. In 1961 the Oxford University Press used them to print an English-language critique of the classic Chinese novel *The Dream of the Red Chamber*, opening up Chinese insights into that novel to western literary scholars before they were published in Chinese (Minford, 1999).



Legge travels and enjoys British life

With his new life still very unsettled, Legge was able to take local trips, and these showed his continuing intellectual interests. Visiting London in September 1874 Legge was intrigued to learn about the Bessemer Steamer, a remarkable invention being shown in the port of Hull. Legge went north to examine this amazing vessel developed by Sir Henry Bessemer, already inventor of the Bessemer converter (a means of reducing impurities in molten pig iron to create steel on an industrial scale). Sir Henry suffered terribly from seasickness and was determined to build a ship that would reduce the amount of motion that passengers experienced. He designed a four-paddle steamship 350 feet long, essentially built so that the giant interior saloon was suspended by two gimbals at right angles so that the room would always stay horizontal as various hydraulic systems worked with the gimbals to counteract the motions of the hull. The interior saloon was essentially spherical with a centre on the 20-foot ceiling that was suspended from one of the gimbals, while the floor was held in position by a giant pendulum weight hanging below it. The ship featured elaborate Victorian decorations and furnishings. Within two years its serious instability led to a bad accident with the dock at Calais and eventually to its scrapping and bankruptcy of the company, but for its maiden appearance it was the talk of London. Legge was thrilled standing on the “floating deck” which kept steady regardless of the roll of the ship.

Hannah and James had some kind of connection with a house in Oxford at Keble Terrace, but after a year of their reunion in Dollar they moved north to Huntly for a while in 1875, where they lived at the farm Burnend Cottage, one mile south of the village. After spending some time in Huntly they moved down to London and set up a household at 122 King Henry’s Road NW, fitting it up with gaslight.

For a while their London activities were rambling. They visited the Royal Academy to see paintings, and Legge did occasional preaching. Hannah wrote letters of guidance to Tom and Jimmie still in Scotland, passing on James’ four rules for swimming, augmented by Hannah’s detailed instructions on what yardage of fabric Jimmie should buy to use as bathing towels if their host didn’t have towels for them. The boys in Scotland were rowdy enough that their rough play on a bed during Christmas 1873 cracked it, and James wrote details to them explaining how to fix it with splints and rope.

Hannah and James visited daughter Eliza and Horatio Lay at Burnham in South-west England less than a year after the death of their child in Huntly, and James wrote Marian that he found the remaining children “all growing, bright, and the little ones very perky and glad to see grandpapa”. He found Eliza looking well but was less

enthusiastic and more ambiguous describing Horatio, whom he found looking “stronger than usual”. Lay was involved in mining ventures in Cornwall that he believed held millions of pounds worth of arsenic and copper. James figured Lay would either become a millionaire or a bankrupt, but in the meantime he was full of hope. James joined three of the Lay children early one morning for “a long noisy game” in which they tickled the soles of his bare feet until he fled outside to the garden. Climbing up a large hill to “a wonderful height” he was amazed to be able to see the sea off Norfolk miles to the east. It was “calm and gentle, as if it never could be more and blustering – in that respect as deceitful as man and woman are often known to be”. Hannah and James next travelled north to Hull to visit Hannah's relatives.

#### A scholarly encounter in London with Douglas

In London Legge was becoming famous across a world of scholarship beyond that of Chinese history and literature. In August 1874 Robert K. Douglas of the British Museum wrote inviting Legge to present a paper at the Second International Congress of Orientalists to be held in London within a month, in September, in the “Turanian” section of the society. Turanian referred to a classification of early cultures some believed were the earliest groups of humanity including Aryans and Mongols in a rather confused grouping that also included all languages east of the Oxus river. Douglas had been appointed Professor of Chinese at King's College in 1873. Legge did not present a paper at this Congress on such short notice, but four years later went to Florence when he was invited to the Congress meetings.

Over time Robert Douglas (1838-1913) and Legge became less than easy colleagues. Other scholars of Chinese viewed Douglas as a plodding dictionary-based worker rather than as a scholar. He had been a consular official in China for only six years 1858-64, starting as a student interpreter, and had not travelled much there. In 1865 Douglas nabbed the plum job of cataloguing 20,000 Chinese books for the British Museum, publishing the catalogue in 1877. Herbert Giles, a much better scholar of Chinese, criticized Douglas for using Robert Morrison's ancient 1816 Dictionary (written when Morrison was still learning the language) because that huge collection of wood-block volumes was so riddled with pronunciation errors that they grossly damaged the alphabetizing and cataloguing system Douglas created. For Giles, Douglas's Catalogue was “a monument of immature scholarship” whose pages “swarm with hobgoblins of language” because Douglas was apparently unaware that “Morrison's system has been dead as a doornail for ever so many years”. Another British consular scholar of Chinese, Edward H. Parker wrote of Douglas, “in China Douglas's work is known – he is a steady,

respectable mediocrity, who (if left alone with his dictionaries) would do his work very passably; but he is not an eminent Sinologist in any sense, and he is a man of no weight in China”.

Douglas later became a critic of Legge’s translations and even made a rather smarmy joke in his small 1876 pamphlet of two lectures on the language and literature of China, where he was critical of Legge’s pronunciation skills. He wrote that “a well-known Chinese scholar” at Hong Kong used an incorrect tone when speaking to the Governor and Council, turning the “Honourable” Kingdom into the “Devil” Kingdom. It is not clear why Legge would have addressed the English-speaking British Governor of Hong Kong using Chinese, but if he did it is possible his “tones” were not perfect, for he was becoming a bit deaf and had always known that he had little ear for music, both problems when speaking using the multiple tones of Cantonese.

#### Book piracy, and republishing volume II to reassert copyright

While he was living in London without any employment, Legge had been working on a popular revision of his original volume II *The Life and Works of Mencius* because of continuing pressure from his publisher to re-assert copyright for his early volumes of the classics. In 1866 a Mr. Baker of Massachusetts had pirated Legge’s entire 1861 volume I on the Confucian classics, changing it only by deleting all the Chinese text, adding four pages of text he copied directly from the Chamber’s Encyclopaedia on the life of Confucius, adding four pages of original text consisting of amateur comments about Confucius that mainly revealed his ignorance, and criticizing Legge on grounds that revealed religious bias. Legge described and criticized these few pages of Baker’s comments in his Preface to his own re-publication of the work in 1867, retitled *The Life and Teachings of Confucius*.

More importantly, Baker’s piracy of the work put Legge under pressure to reassert his ownership of it and of the next volume, and he used some time in London to do major revisions, creating popular works without the Chinese. In the Confucian work he made small revisions in the essays and translations, removed all Chinese text and technical discussions from the essays and notes, but retained his magnificent introductory essay. This revision of Confucius was published in the United States in 1874. Next Legge completed a popular version of his 1861 volume II, *The Life and Works of Mencius* (1875), to complement his new popular version of his book on Confucius. These two popularizations were very successful publications, frequently republished across his lifetime, with an eighth edition even published by Trübner in 1909 after Legge’s death.

Legge is awarded the Julien Prize

In London in 1875 Legge's life began to take on shape in a new role as an international scholar, for that year he was awarded the Julien Prize by the Académie Française, as its first recipient. This prize had been established by Legge's old jousting competitor Stanislas Julien, the Chair of Chinese at the Institut de France in Paris, just before he died. It was intended to recognize the most outstanding publication on Chinese literature, and included an award of 1500 francs. Legge's five volumes on the Chinese Classics thus received international recognition with his award as the first recipient of the prize. More recently Joseph Needham won this award in 1973, continuing the distinguished historical stream, and it is still awarded annually.

In response to Legge's receipt of the Julien Prize, the *Pall Mall Gazette* wrote noting that Britain alone among the developed European nations did not have a Chair or a program for Oriental languages or literatures at its most eminent universities even though it had a long history of contact and trade with China and had a massive economic connection to China. It commented with approval that plans were being made to create a Chair of Chinese at Oxford, noting that Legge was being proposed as the first nominee. The editors of the *Pall Mall Gazette* apparently did not consider King's College, Cambridge, where Douglas was now the second man to be Professor of Chinese, to be fulfilling all that should be expected with a Chair.

Chapter 66 An Oxford appointment, complications, scandals, and controversies

*In which there are many complications related to the Oxford Chair, a furore around Max Müller, new translations, a scandal at the Shanghai mission conference, and some vicious critics.*

The plan to create a Chair in Chinese language and literature for Legge at Oxford started early in 1875, proposed by returned Shanghai merchant Thomas Hanbury (Editor, 1897c). He gave the idea to J. Taylor and A. Howell, two businessmen from Hong Kong who knew Legge although they had not been closely connected with him there. Hanbury was a Quaker who had made his fortune in Shanghai trading tea and silk and in property development before returning to England in 1866. He had been known for his fair-minded attitudes toward the Chinese, and for his charitable work in founding a school there for poor mixed-race children.

Taylor and Howell discussed the idea with other Hong Kong returnees and soon an initial committee of seven was formed, chaired by former Governor Sir Rutherford Alcock. It was expanded to include merchants who had been successful in Hong Kong, along with a Vice-Admiral, former Governor and scholar Sir John Davies, Venerable Archdeacon Gray, Robert Jardine, eminent diplomats, and other public servants who had been in China and Hong Kong. They all realized the remarkable extent and brilliance of Legge's scholarship, and approached the international "Orientalist" Professor Max Müller and the outgoing Oxford Vice-Chancellor Dr. Liddell to test out their proposal. In early February 1875 Müller wrote Legge to tell him how much he admired his "magnificent edition of the Chinese Classics", mentioning that he was trying to collect scholars for a major translation series of the sacred books of the East.

With an unofficial but positive indication from Liddell and an understanding that the university would provide some kind of matching funding for the £3,000 that the committee proposed to raise, the committee set to seeking donations to create an endowment to provide enduring support for the proposed Chair. The meetings began in April 1875 in London, and by October the committee asked Legge to meet with them. He thanked them for their interest in his work, and in early October Sir Rutherford wrote an eloquent letter to Dr. Liddell outlining the basis of the Committee's proposal to create a Chair in Chinese. He noted that while Britain had more at stake in the Far East than all other countries combined, yet Paris, Berlin, Vienna, and St. Petersburg all had created endowed professorships of Chinese while Britain had none. Sir Rutherford explained the intellectual and commercial reasons for studies in Chinese to be supported, and nominated Legge to be the first Chair and Professor of Chinese

### Complications of creating a Chair for Legge

The plan soon encountered many problems arising from the remarkable insularity of Oxford's leadership, its complex rules and traditions, and the groundbreaking nature of Legge's particular attributes in relation to the appointment.

The first problem arose in relation to Legge's religion. Traditionally faculty members at Oxford and Cambridge were all required by law to be members of the established Church of England, and Legge was definitely not of the Established church. At the outset of his life's work he had known that he would have to change his religious denomination and become a member of the Established Church (of Scotland) in order to become an academic in Scotland, and had decided against that course when he was just 22 years old, resolved to remain within his own independent Scottish church whatever the cost to his career.

The British Parliament had changed some of these restrictive religious rules affecting Oxford during the great Victorian reforms while Legge was working in Hong Kong, affecting other aspects of public positions. In 1858 the rules for eligibility for sitting in the House of Commons had even been changed to no longer require Members of Parliament to swear "on the faith of a true Christian" thus allowing Lionel de Rothschild to take his seat for the first time after having been elected to Parliament four times. Legge was benefitting from the new liberal atmosphere.

By the time the Chair at Oxford was being considered for Legge, there was no longer the legal requirement that students or professors be members of the established Anglican Church, after the University Test Act of 1871 abolished that requirement. Nevertheless, there were not yet any Chairs with men from nonconformist denominations, and the prospect of some kind of dissenter as Professor was somewhat upsetting to the self-regarding and prickly Oxford establishment. When outgoing Vice-Chancellor Liddell had been first approached by the committee in early 1875 he had written to Legge noting that "if the idea of a Chair in Chinese were decided to be a good thing – there would not be any objection to its being held by a Nonconformist as such", although "If a candidate put his Nonconformity strongly forward, or had taken a violent part in Nonconformist politics, I cannot... say how far this might affect the question". He concluded "but from your account of yourself, such an objection would not be against yourself". Liddell suggested the plan might be considered as an experiment in case the university decided it "will not want such a chair in perpetuum", in case it turned out to be a failure. The irony of this opening of an Oxford Chair for a dissenter was not lost on Legge, who was now being considered for a far more distinguished appointment than

anything he could have contemplated when he had refused to change his denomination nearly 40 years earlier.

The next problems related to the endowment and the income it could generate for a salary. The committee proposed an endowment of £3,000, reasoning that if it were matched by Oxford the fund would generate an annual income of more than £250, (apparently anticipating interest at about 4%), which “must be sufficient to meet the modest requirements of Dr. Legge”... This was astonishingly mean, a salary less than the £300 p.a. that he had been given 35 years earlier in his first year as a missionary in 1839. Legge did not object, but Liddell soon replied, foreseeing “some difficulties”. He correctly recognized that the planned size of the endowment was too small, but his concern was actually more in relation to how Oxford’s financial condition might be affected by the appointment. He suggested that if the committee raised £3,000, Oxford might simply provide an income to match that generated by the interest earned by the endowment. This was a canny way of ensuring that Oxford would not be bound to create a permanent Chair that would require the university to fund it indefinitely. He suggested delicately “When Dr. Legge vacates the Chair the Trustees of the fund can decide what they want to do with the money and won’t have to deal with the university”. They could decide to make a new appointment, or use the money for any other purpose they wished. This left the entire matter of the Chair as a function of the private group and its enduring interest, rather than embedding it as an enduring university position.

Soon there was another problem that further revealed the insularity of the Oxford leadership. In November Vice-Chancellor Liddell wrote privately to Sir Rutherford asking for Legge’s Christian name, a fairly amazing question in light of Legge’s fifteen years of published work of eight massive books, his honorary degree and international award, and his international scholarly reputation. Liddell also wanted information about Legge’s degrees, his title, and his age. He was also still fussing about appointing a nonconformist and asked nervously whether Legge “takes a strong party view of his duties, or is not of strong sectarian tendencies”. Liddell also wanted to know if Legge would live in Oxford if appointed, needing all this information in proposing the Chair to the university.

Most of the bureaucratic complexities of Oxford seemed to have been resolved, and on 22 February 1876 the Congregation of Oxford University voted to establish James Legge as the Professor of Chinese Language and Literature, announcing this in a Notice published in the Times. Liddell wrote the endowment committee outlining Legge’s responsibilities to the university. He would be required to give two or three public lectures each year concerning Chinese language or literature, and Liddell hoped there

might be even more than that. Oxford had decided it would receive the income from the endowment annually and would pay Legge a matching income during his lifetime or as long as he held the appointment. With this approval in place, the committee began organizing a more public campaign to solicit donations.

Because everything about Legge's appointment was breaking new ground, many of the normal assumptions the university would make about such appointments held pitfalls that affected Legge, and some new unforeseen and important problems still had to be conquered before he could actually assume the Chair. First, all Professors at Oxford had to be Oxford graduates, which Legge was not. This was remedied by a decision by the new Vice-Chancellor Warden Sewell to award Legge the degree of Master of Arts by Decree of Convocation, as a Member of Corpus Christi College. Before Corpus Christi could award Legge the M.A., Sewell belatedly discovered another rule created another problem that had to be solved. Legge could not receive any Oxford degree until he had matriculated, that is, been formally accepted as a member on the register of Oxford, traditionally a status reflecting a student's completion of matriculation examinations. Sewell solved this problem by writing to Corpus Christi in January 1876 that he would make arrangements for Legge's matriculation on a day suitable to him, and the College that would be Legge's new home. Matriculation involved a ceremony in which the student was required to wear subfusc (sombre garments worn under the full academic dress) but did not seem to involve any examination.

Although his daughter Helen wrote in her 1905 tribute book that Legge was named a Fellow of Corpus Christi College in the course of becoming Professor of Chinese, there are no College records to support her report. Records suggest that he was a Member but not a Fellow even though the College offered to make the income of a Fellowship (£300 p.a.) available to him if he were made Professor of Chinese by the university, "as long as he shall continue to hold that office" (Fowler, 1893). A College Statute was changed to accommodate this plan, and Corpus Christi College elected him a Member of the College, on 31 May 1876.

#### A new life in Oxford; the Chair in Chinese

All Oxford regulations were finally accommodated by 1 April 1876 and in June 1876 Seward wrote to the President of Oxford that all these complications were soon to be solved and he would be presenting a Motion at the next Hebdomadal Council to confer the M.A. on Dr. Legge so that his appointment as Professor for life could be completed. In the end, Legge was the first man appointed to the university who was not



Church of England, the first man not an Oxford graduate to be supported as Fellow of an Oxford College, and the first person named a Chair who was neither an Anglican or an Oxford graduate.

With all aspects of this appointment finally completed, Legge and his family moved from their home in London to their new home at No. 3 Keble Terrace in Oxford. His position now established, he was eventually re-elected Professor of Chinese by the Congregation of Oxford in November 1887.

Financial support for the Chair was still a problem however. As of his appointment Legge knew that the endowment committee was still short of its funding goal of £3,000 and the committee was having problems achieving that goal. Worried letters passed between the committee and Oxford for nearly two more years until the fund reached its goal with final extra donations from Andrew and Robert Jardine, and James Macadam in May 1878.

Oxford's decision not to create a permanent Chair of Chinese troubled the endowment committee and for the next two years it continued to press the university to reconsider, but the temporary and life-limited commitment of Oxford was confirmed after an Oxford meeting of its governing council as late as June 1878. Vice-Chancellor Sewell wrote Sir Rutherford explaining that the council would not commit itself to a "Permanent" Chair. Instead Oxford was firm in explaining that the Chair would expire at Legge's death or resignation, because both the Oxford Chair and the Corpus Christi College fellowship were explicitly awarded to Legge for his occupancy of the position. Sir Rutherford took this as a warning to the committee that it should make plans for the possible return of the funds should the Chair not survive Legge. Legge wrote the Trustees of the endowment committee thanking them for all their efforts, including some comments written in Chinese characters, which he knew many on the committee would be able to read.

Sewell had specific reservations about the Chair in that he believed it might be impossible to find a successor to fill it after Legge's death, and did not want the university bound to make an appointment. The controversy dragged on for another year, and Legge exchanged letters and even met with Sewell to try to dissuade him from this attitude, but as Legge wrote in a letter in June 1879 "I have often talked with Dr. Sewell about the difficulty that exists in his own mind, but not in the world of facts outside it, about the difficulty of finding an occupant for the Chinese Chair when he may be wanted." Legge finally gave up trying to convince Sewell that there would not be a problem, but the situation still worried him because he realized his current life-limited appointment would undermine any attempt to set up a real program to train Foreign

Office cadets in Chinese using the Chair, even though previous FO officials had expressed interest in Legge's proposal.

Confusion about management of the endowment money also straggled along for three years. For a while it seemed that Sewell wanted the principal to be transferred to the very safe Oxford University Curators of the "University Chest" which managed Oxford finances, from which the income could be matched and paid out to Legge. Then Sewell's plan changed and he wrote to Legge asking the endowment committee to transfer just its dividend income to Oxford so it could be used in regular payments to Legge, as done with other externally endowed chairs. Various confusions followed between Sewell and Legge until it was all finally settled in late June 1879 when the Trustees decided to keep the fund independently of the university in government securities that would only yield 3% rather than 5% but were safer as to principal. If Oxford ever decided to match that endowment and create a permanent Chair Legge knew that this would not generate enough income to attract a later scholar. But for the time being the management was finally settled: the Trust would simply transfer the interest for Legge's income to the university twice a year.

### Troubles with Trübner

Over the years of his commercial relationship with his publisher/binder Trübner, Legge had struggled to ensure he was fairly treated. Once settled in his Oxford appointment he wrote Trübner rather wistfully in 1877 complaining about their accounts with him. Trübner kept a stock of his books, but as Legge had paid for them he considered them his books. While sales in 1876 had been quite satisfactory, Legge was upset that when he asked for a set of the Classics to give as a presentation copy to Corpus Christi College, Trübner charged him for the books, while Legge expected the set to come from the stock Trübner was simply warehousing for him. Legge carefully explained that while he considered it fair to pay for the 48 copies of the *She King* that he bought for presentations in England and Hong Kong because Trübner had paid the publication costs for those, in contrast Legge had published the Classics himself “without any help” or risk from Trübner. Indeed he had published (printed) four of the eight volumes without help from anyone.

As a result of Trübner’s charges, all of Legge’s profits were consumed by his purchases of his books from them. It seems that Trübner kept the printed sheets for the volumes in storage, and would periodically bind them as the market justified. Over time they had begun to think of those sheets as their own property even though Legge had printed them all in Hong Kong at his press there. What was even more annoying was that when Legge did buy one of his books from Trübner, the publisher would charge him the regular public price and not even give him an author’s discount. He very gently asked for a reconsideration of the charges they had presented to him, even apologizing that the most recent reprints on Mencius and the *Shoo King* had not yet recovered their publication costs. However important his scholarship was on these ancient classical texts, there was still only a limited pool of readers interested in knowing about the literature and cultural ideas of China.

In 1892 Legge wrote Li Hongzhang (1832-1901), the Qing Minister for Foreign Affairs in Beijing, sending Li his last two publications for the SBE, the two works on the texts of Daoism. Referring to himself in the third person, Legge explained that he had spent most of his life studying the Chinese language and literature, including the literatures of Daoism and Buddhism. He confessed that of the three major doctrines in China, he thought “most highly of that of Kung Fu-tse” (Confucius). He wrote of following Li’s career with pleasure, recognizing the great distinction in which he was held in China and internationally. He hoped that Li and others would work to maintain the strength of the throne and the good of the people. Legge was thinking toward his own end days, musing to Li, “when we pass from this world, from high station or from

low, the best comfort is derived from the thought that we have lived and acted not for our own worldly advantage, but with a view to the benefit of others". As a general during the Taiping rebellion, Li had hired General Gordon to help the Imperial forces but then had betrayed Gordon's promise to spare the lives of rebel princes who surrendered to him, infuriating Gordon who was on the verge of shooting Li before he fled.

Four years after receiving Legge's two books Li visited the United States and Britain, where Queen Victoria made him a Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order. Li's foreign honours did not save him when the Dowager Empress Cixi turned against him, suspecting him in a threatened coup in 1898, and he died shortly after completing negotiations to end the Boxer Rebellion. Over his career Li was mostly a forward-thinking official who managed a number of major treaties opening up regular arrangements with other nations, but his reputation in modern China has risen and fallen, ranging from hero to traitor as political currents shift.

#### Oxford teaching, lecturing, and new ventures

In his years at Oxford, Legge was eager to teach the Chinese language, in addition to working on translations, lectures, and essays. He understood that the Fellowship named in his appointment reflected only the funds to pay him a salary, and that the Chair was still not a continuing position at Oxford but a transient and possibly terminal one. Arising from this fragile appointment he tried to figure out ways to create a strong teaching program for the Chinese language that could attract students, as a way of establishing the importance of a permanent Chair. He soon wrote Howell on the endowment committee recommending it approach the Colonial and Foreign Office to recommend that new consular and diplomatic staff intended for China be routinely sent for preliminary training at Oxford with him as Professor. He thought this would ensure its usefulness to the government and to Oxford, and had already spoken with Lords Derby and Carnarvon in the FO about this idea. Some students were sent but it never became a significant program even though he taught three classes per week until late in life.

Legge also wrote to mission societies including the Wesleyan Methodist and the Church Missionary Society, to encourage them to send missionaries intended for China to be trained in Chinese in his program. He was still angling for recognition of studies in Chinese in 1891 when he wrote to Vice-Chancellor Henry Boyd proposing that students in Chinese (not just students in Sanskrit) be allowed to be candidates in the Honours School of Oriental Studies. India, and thus Sanskrit, had long held the dominant place in Oriental studies in Britain because of its imperial connection, and there was still little academic interest in Chinese culture or language because it was outside the imperial

orbit. Across all the years of his life at Oxford Legge offered courses in aspects of Chinese language and literature, and copies of some of his examinations still exist, but his passions were clearly not the passions of his students or the university, and the program never attracted many students. In 1894 he wrote daughter Marian describing some of his students, a rather motley batch that included a Japanese scholar, an Austrian mission man and a couple on furlough after years in China. Legge was conscientious and spent much time preparing lessons that would be useful to them.

He also continued to give public lectures on topics in Chinese literature, starting in November 1876 with a lecture on Imperial Confucianism attended by the Chinese Ambassador Guo Songtao, who stayed at the Randolph Hotel. In December 1877 he continued with a lecture on the Chinese Civil Service examination system, in terms of whether this contributed to orthodoxy or heterodoxy in China. At times he gave lectures to help charities raise money, as in February 1879 when he wanted to help the Cottage Homes for Little Boys in Farningham Kent. There, his Oxford fame was sufficient to attract a far larger crowd to the Town Hall than previous talks in the series had generated, and so many came that large numbers had to be turned away. He gave public lectures as part of his appointment for many years, and as late as 1894 he was working on a public lecture on “a very strange and troublesome poem of the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, called the *Li Sao*”, which he published soon after. Girardot suggests that Legge’s years of effort on this poem, written by a dutiful but slandered suicidal statesman in ancient times, reflected Legge’s own melancholy (Girardot, 2004), although Legge’s emotional condition then is not clear.

#### Legge’s scandal at the China missions conference in Shanghai

Within a year of his appointment at Oxford Legge became involved in a translation controversy, with another outbreak of the old term question conflict with some of the Protestant missionaries in China. Those men who had lost the battle against the use of *shangdi* as the term for God in the Delegates Version of the Chinese Bible were still festering over their loss, and kept publishing articles attacking Legge and his use of the term. Canon Thomas McClatchie was still busy writing letters to the *Chinese Repository* and the *Chinese Recorder* in 1876 arguing against Legge’s use of *Shangdi*, claiming it was a Confucian term that only referred to Heaven. He was also busy writing essays trying to claim that the flood on Mt. Ararat and the language of that time had a link with a Chinese deluge; in earlier work he had argued that the *I Ching* represented a phallic cult, and that the Chinese race descended from Noah. Others argued in favour of *Shangdi*. Repeating arguments that had been made decades earlier, one minister

advocated simple transcription of the sounds of Jehovah into three Chinese characters with those sounds, even though this would create a meaningless word for any educated Chinese reader. A layman wrote begging the men to stop the quarrel that had lasted for 30 years.

It was all played out in a dramatic way in the first-ever conference for missionaries of all the Protestant denominations in China, to be held in Shanghai in May 1877. Legge had been invited to prepare a paper for this, to be read to the conference by Rev. Muirhead as the opening paper on this great occasion. Talks following Legge's were on topics of Taoism and Buddhism.

Legge decided to write comparing Confucianism and Christianity, and sent the paper to be read to the meeting. Legge had been the first to use the term Confucianism to identify it as a religion (W. C. Smith, 1962), while modern scholars often call this Chinese tradition Ruism, denoting moral philosophy. It is not clear, but it seems probable, that Legge was not given one extra set of instructions that were apparently known to all the mission men attending the meeting, that no contentious papers were to be presented relating to old translation controversies over the Chinese term for God. The organizers hoped for a congenial meeting freed from old quarrels.

Legge's paper included a discussion of early terms used for God as an integral part of his talk because he was directly concerned with Confucian ideas about the sacred, but it also went on to other topics. This essay became a great scandal because it included the term question, although only incidentally to its subject. When some of the organizers found out that Legge's essay included direct discussion of the term for God, they were placed in a very delicate situation. Muirhead, who was going to read the essay to the conference, was apparently sympathetic to Legge's views, and Legge's friends appear not to have consulted the other organizers, perhaps believing that they had a moral commitment to him to read his essay.

The conference opened on May 11 with prayers and a sermon, and the first afternoon was spent establishing a formal organization with committees. Muirhead read Legge's paper as the lead paper the second day. This essay had three main topics, one of which was the Confucian ideas about God, which required discussion of Confucian terms, but the other two topics related to human religious and moral behaviour in Confucian thought, and were entirely generous and thoughtful.

As Legge's paper moved across a review of Confucianism and Christianity then moved into a discussion of the term question to support his argument that the ancient texts referred to a supreme power in the same way that Christianity did, some of the audience became increasingly upset. Some considered Legge's acceptance of

Confucianism as a religion to be heretical, and his review of the term question outraged his old opponents. They became agitated and vocal, and the organizing committee was horrified as a great “excitement” took hold of the meeting (Editor, 1877), p. 239. The paper was heard to the end, but feelings were so exercised about the paper that for a time it threatened to break up not only the conference but also the general feelings of unity that the missionaries were trying to maintain across all the Protestant groups in China.

It may be that the organizers who shared his views had deliberately kept Legge in the dark about the agreement as a tactic to allow their views to be expressed at no cost to themselves during the conference. But whatever the plan had been, urgent steps had to be made to calm the assembly and to repeat the organizers’ insistence that despite this grave error, the meetings were not intended to consider the term question at all.

The uproar did not end, but quickly spread. The *China Review* summed up the storm, reporting clandestine movements in which opponents of Legge’s views had been “secretly whipped up to attend in full force, mustered strongly, whereupon, to the shame of the Conference be it said, a vote was passed without discussion, excluding Dr. Legge’s paper from the records of the Conference, and, to the greater shame of the advocates of Dr. Legge’s view be it said, not a man was among them to protest against a vote which was uncharitable as a studied insult to Dr. Legge, and intolerant as an anathema of truths which no argument would have sufficed to refute” (Author, 1877). The upshot was that the organizers were forced to exclude Legge’s paper from the final published conference proceedings, a craven retreat by the liberals in the group in the face of the anger of the traditionalists. The organizers were so embarrassed about the imbroglio that they published the essay as a separate 12-page pamphlet, *Confucianism in relation to Christianity* (J. Legge, 1877) in Shanghai and London, along with an explanatory comment. Later that year Legge included its material in his book on Confucianism and Christianity, for which he was called a heretic (Nelson, 1877), p. 351.

There is no indication in any archives that Legge knew about the no-controversy ‘rule’, or that he assertively challenged it. It seems that the whole thing started as a simple misunderstanding that was used by Legge’s old opponents to stir up a fresh outcry of ill will against him among many of his old translation adversaries. This probably added to their earlier outrage at learning of his reverential behaviour during his 1873 visit to the Altar of Heaven in Beijing. He may have been a hardworking mission man for 34 years, but many active in the Chinese missions did not welcome his liberal beliefs and no longer believed he was even a Christian.

This uproar continued well into Legge's period at Oxford, where he was attacked indirectly through Max Müller. One of Legge's antagonists in China (who hid his identity under a pseudonym "The Inquirer") wrote directly to Müller in 1880 challenging Legge's use of *shangdi* in his books for the SBE. "The Inquirer" also sent a copy of his letter to be published in the main Protestant missionary journal, *The Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal*. Arising from this furore Müller asked Legge to justify his use of *shangdi*, and he responded with a vigorous essay both to Müller and in print in the *Chinese Recorder*, providing detailed texts from Chinese classics to show that different terms for a heavenly lord were used in a way entirely consistent with his translation. These ranged from Confucian comments, to literature of the Sung, prayers used by the Ming Emperor in 1538, commentaries by Zhu Xi (one of the most famous interpreters of the classic 13 books), and included a conversation on the matter with a Chinese official at the Chinese embassy in London. After this was issued Legge received a congratulatory letter from Müller, "Your paper answers the arguments of the only champion worth speaking of which the Shin-ites now possess, I trust it will put an end to all further serious controversy".

But in 1881 Müller found it necessary to write a letter to the *China Review* summing up the reasons for his decision in accepting Legge's term, in response to the continuing challenge from some of the Shanghai mission men still raging against Legge's use. Legge wrote another article in the *China Review* of Dec 19, 1881 still responding to these challenges. This controversy staggered on for the rest of Legge's life, and even after his death.

#### De Lacouperie and Douglas criticize Legge

At Oxford Legge was also plunged into new scholarly struggles with other translators, as the numbers of men working with Chinese texts gradually increased. Although he never initiated attacks on new translation publications by other scholars, he did respond when they published comments about his work that he considered unjustified. Therrien de Lacouperie (1845- 1894) was a young French scholar new to England as the Professor of Indo-Chinese Philology at University College London. In January and May 1882 he published letters in the *Athenaeum* attacking Legge's translation of the *Yijing*. Lacouperie, who believed that Chinese script was linked with early Akkadian hieroglyphics from Babylon, claimed that Legge had lately admitted that he was "mistaken in translating as (he) did the Yih king, which decidedly in (Legge's) opinion, as in his, could not be translated". Legge had published his translation of the difficult work in 1882, and Lacouperie was promising to do his own soon.



In September Legge rose to this challenge and wrote the *Athenaeum* explaining that Lacouperie was apparently so unfamiliar with the *Yijing* that he had not been able to sort out which aspects of the Chinese text were appendices and which were the main text. Legge quoted other major scholars on the matter to prove that Lacouperie had made poor decisions in identifying the main text. Either Lacouperie was not aware of his errors, or would not admit them, implying either general ineptitude or bad character. The same year the *Academy* published Robert Douglas' review of Legge's translation of the *Yijing*, claiming that "few first rank scholars have settled on the authorship" of the work, contrary to Legge's claim. Rising to this challenge in September Legge wrote a response providing details about all the first-ranked scholars who had agreed on the authorship. In these responses Legge provided long pages of densely written arguments and citations.

The problem did not go away, and in August 1886 Müller wrote Legge about another attack on Legge's work by Lacouperie in the *Academy*, insisting that Lacouperie's "very strong measure" could not be allowed to stand, "though he may not be a fencer worthy of your steel!". Müller crowed over the good reviews that Legge's *Yijing* had received, joking "... not that I wanted to be converted, for I have always felt extremely sceptical as to the Recouperie or Recovery of Accadian China", word-play scorning Lacouperie's pretentious and strange theories of Chinese language. Müller was especially pleased that someone of Legge's authority tackled Lacouperie's peculiar claims. Legge responded to Lacouperie in a letter to the editor of the *Academy*, denying Lacouperie's claims that he had changed his views and was now accepting Lacouperie's. Legge asserted that he continued to believe that his version of the *Yijing* was correct, "and that the interpretation of it which I gave as conveying moral, social, and political lessons under the guise of the style of divination is the true one... If I had altered my mind on these points I should have taken the honourable course of publishing my change of views in some public organ. ... I differ from him on nearly every other point touched on in his paper...".

In 1882 Legge also had to respond to a critical essay from another translator. Herbert Giles, a youngish British consular official in Shanghai, had written in the *China Review* challenging Legge's decision to accept the *Daodejing* (attributed to Laozi) as authentic, claiming that it was a forgery. Giles continued with another critique in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* in 1886. Legge again rose to these challenges, and Müller's view in November 1887 was that Legge's responses demolished the critiques.

Lacouperie's own translations were also soon attacked by an old China hand, Edward H. Parker (1849-1926) who viewed Legge's work as much superior. Lacouperie

and Robert Douglas (1838-1913), both young Sinologists with far less knowledge than Legge, were busily praising each other's works as often as they criticized Legge's. In his attack on Legge's work, Giles also attacked John Chalmers, long-time colleague with Legge in the translations, and master of the intricacies of the Chinese astronomical charts. Chalmers soon responded with a stout defence using the authority of the Chinese historian Sima Qian, accusing Giles of never having read Sima Qian's classic *Shujing* book of history dating from about 88 BC. In fact Giles at that point was not a scholar of the historical literature of China, but was busy writing basic textbooks for learning Chinese. It was two more decades before he published any translations of the great classical Chinese works.

While he was tangling with English translators, Legge's international reputation meant that scholars in the major languages of Europe frequently wrote Legge to ask for his opinion or guidance as they struggled to translate Chinese texts into their languages. Many asked his permission to dedicate their works to him.

#### Consultations at Oxford

Apart from his formal scholarly work, Legge's Chinese skills triggered a steady stream of requests for non-academic help across his 23 years at Oxford, and he invariably tried to be useful. Even when his appointment was not yet fully confirmed he was asked to translate a Chinese "thank-you" letter from the Chinese Ambassador Guo Songtao, to the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford. Members of the general public sent letters asking him questions about every aspect of China, including detailed scholarly questions about translation problems, questions about Chinese ceramics and their markings, about Chinese and Japanese coins, and about parallels between Greek and Chinese. A member of the Civil Service Commission wrote in 1895 seeking Legge's help in teaching Chinese to civil servants being sent out to Burma for whom "the standard Foreign Office training in Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian, required normally for the Indian Civil Service, was not found to be helpful". At times Legge's responses would consist of many pages of densely handwritten notes in both Chinese and English, providing an education to the recipient far beyond the immediate task.

Quite apart from his ability to translate, and his knowledge of the classical literature, he had acquired a massive treasury of knowledge about Chinese dates, people, and places, and was even willing to provide estimates of the commercial value of artefacts he was sent. Other requests sought his help in setting up scholarships or in helping with a crash course in Chinese for travellers. Vicars asked him for copies of his publications. He also received letters for his personal intervention in troubled cases; in

Chinese from a prisoner seeking his help, and from a man in Bristol seeking help for a damsel in distress.

As Legge's reputation as a scholar of Chinese text became known, strangers began sending him ancient artefacts for translation of texts, interpretation, and dating. One man wrote him asking about some Chinese porcelains that had been dug up in Ireland. In the course of trying to establish some probable dates for their arrival in Ireland Legge answered with a full essay on the history of Chinese porcelains, the different types and different manufactures at various dates, and their earliest trade to Europe. On the basis of some text, he dated one large bronze urn as of the era of 3,700 years earlier. Another stranger sent him a large Chinese bell, asking for its date and Legge responded with an essay providing details of its date of casting and its location in a specific monastery. He commented in passing that 3/4 of the people who had provided donations for the casting of the bell had been ladies: "so true is it that everywhere they are the most forward in all religious works" (H. E. Legge, 1905) p.168. He dealt with another question on the cost of the acquisition of a set of the Chinese classics, by referring to his own interest in buying a similar set in 1873 in Paris, when the price of less than £1,000 was still too much for him.

Late in Legge's life a man wrote asking if a recent report could be true, that "there are more printed books in China than in all England, ... and a Chinese national encyclopaedia, of which a digest of 1000 volumes has been purchased by our Government for £1800". (H. E. Legge, 1905) p. 219. Legge responded by explaining the vast numbers of students studying the same texts and a common curriculum for the Chinese civil service examinations, and by explaining that the small numbers of successful students arose out of huge numbers of examinees at each level. This meant that while there were vast numbers of volumes in China, they were mostly repetitive copies of the small set of classic texts, while in comparison in England, there were fewer books but on a much greater number of topics.

Legge played an active role in various academic societies in his years at Oxford, becoming the Vic-President of the Royal Asiatic Society, and a member of the Oriental Board of the Faculty of Arts. In 1877 he gave secular lectures to the general public about Chinese topics such as the Chinese Civil Service Examinations, in addition to talks about mission work in China such as to the Oxford mission association in the Town Hall. He had become a member of an Oxford congregational church but refused all pressures to assume any leadership roles, as when 800 ministers and delegates to an annual general meeting wanted to nominate him to their Board of Directors in 1878.

Legge was interested in the expansion of university access for nonconformist students, such as the establishment of the Unitarian Manchester College at Oxford intended for nonconformist adult students of both sexes. This new college, opened in 1889, reflected the changes in British society evolving after the National Universities had been opened to Nonconformist students in 1871. He was a pleased visitor to the opening of Mansfield College, created as a post-graduate college for congregationalist students who wanted training for the ministry. It had earlier been Spring Hill College in Birmingham, but with the increasing participation by congregational students in Oxford colleges, its sale and re-creation as an Oxford college reflected the increasing role of Nonconformists in Oxford academic life. Its opening was further celebrated in special festivities including services and receptions in May 1893. Legge attended some of them and wrote Marian some of the gossip that prickly academics so readily generate. In one meeting Dr. Martineau made an extremely long after-dinner speech that soon turned into a rant against the Church of England. James wrote "he must have lost his self-command". Legge's neighbour Dr. Pope in the audience was so offended he walked out in the middle of the speech, and the whole meeting sank into a dampened gloom. For his part Legge criticized the Unitarian creed, which he felt contradicted religious criteria set in I Corinthians, XI, 23, 25, 26, which showed the centrality of the "Lord Jesus" in the communion ritual.

Legge also participated in the life of the university by attending lectures, including a talk at the new Indian Institutes building given by Sir William Hunter in 1894. James and Edith had arrived early so they could watch everyone arrive. Sir William (1840-1900) was a Scot, a brilliant Sanskrit scholar, statistician, historian of India, and member of the Indian Civil Service. He retired to Oxford in 1887 where he was a member of the Royal Asiatic Society. But Legge found Sir William's talk to be inaudible, and when he checked with a young Indian man sitting beside him Legge discovered that he too "was not by any means satisfied with it".

Legge attended a conference at the spa town of Buxton in the summer of 1878, which he found rather boring except that he rediscovered an old acquaintance he had thought dead, now in his 90s, and a Jardine with his young son. Time moved slowly for him at the meeting so he retired early, still rising at 4 AM to work on several hours on his translations, currently the *Daodejing*. Although he had been feeling poorly and had taken the water and the baths, he had been able to walk six miles with an acquaintance. In the end he was especially pleased that he had been able to stay in the Old Hull Hotel for the modest cost of only £3.17 for a week, with no extras, for he had not tasted beer or wine since leaving Oxford. He never became a teetotaller, and occasionally mentioned in

letters that the family had drunk a toast in the Scottish way, “to absent friends”. Legge wrote critically of the conservative policies of the Tory government, arguing that the dogged persistence of nonconformists had been responsible for nearly all the progressive legislation in Britain.

Only months before his death, Legge wrote a long letter in August 1897 to a query from France from Jacques Boyer about the way in which Legge had learned Chinese. This densely-written letter in a fine hand filling three pages provided an overview of all the ways that Legge had studied Chinese, starting with Samuel Kidd in London in 1837 when he was only 22. He explained how his early studies had often been wasted in directions that were not helpful, as in his study of the Morrison and Milne translation of the Bible (which used archaic and often incorrect Chinese), later corrected by switching to Medhurst and Gutzlaff’s much improved version. He was similarly pushed in an incorrect direction in learning the spoken Chinese of Malacca, which he only later realized was the Hokkien dialect of migrants from Fukien, not at all useful in his intended goal of moving to Canton to do mission work once China opened. The years in Malacca were not totally wasted in terms of language learning however, as Legge found it easy to learn spoken Malay while there.

Legge explained that it was extremely difficult for a foreigner to master writing Chinese. Even Medhurst, seen by most of the mission men in China as the most accomplished writer of Chinese, had told Legge that he believed it was close to impossible for a foreigner to learn to write the language as well as a native scholar. Legge explained this seemed to be specific to Chinese, because it was possible to become competent in writing in other foreign scripts. Legge praised his life-long colleague Ho without naming him, explaining how the two young men in Malacca had each helped the other master the other’s language, concluding, “...for whatever skill in Chinese composition I attempted to, I was very much indebted to him”. Similarly, in helping each other prepare sermons in the other’s language, then crosschecking the texts, they each became effective in delivering the sermons in the language of the other. “In this way (Ho) became a good preacher, so that I have never heard his equal in my English pulpit, and I in turn acquired whatever facility I attained to in expressing my thoughts in idiomatic and agreeable Chinese. The labour was severe on both of us...” but Legge explained it was a sound preparation for all the later translation work he did.

Finally, he acknowledged the help of Wang Tao, explaining that Wang had followed Legge to Scotland where they worked for two years on translations. Just as Ho had benefitted by mastering fluency in English from his work with Legge, Wang had also developed great skills in translating materials from English into Chinese, skills that

opened a major career to him with the Government of China when he returned to Hong Kong and Shanghai. Legge acknowledged rather formally the work of Parisien Stanislas Julien, explaining that they had a cordial agreement and shared the view that Chinese translation required “ a cautious analysis”. Legge ended by regretting he would not be attending the 1897 Oriental Congress, expressing gratitude for the way in which his studies of Chinese had been a source of comfort to him in the past, and would occupy him until the end of his days. Legge was quite amused at the pompous quality of the Orientalists’ congresses, writing in Sept 1878 about their need to have high government officials and royalty to open their academic meeting.

### Chapter 67 Travels and honours

Over the remaining years of his life in Oxford Legge went on occasional trips to Scotland and the continent, typically because honours were being conferred on him. In 1878 he attended the Oriental Congress in Florence with Marian. He was President of the Chinese Section, lionized for his Chinese work but faced with a challenge in giving his talk. At the Congress he was taken aback by the huge array of spoken languages among those attending his Chinese talk, worried about how he would address the audience so that most could understand him. He was disgusted to see that all the British presenters “persisted” in speaking only in English. For his part, Legge knew enough French to read it for content, but not enough to create a French translation for presentation as a talk.

Legge solved the problem in an amazing and clever way that would be unthinkable today. He was so determined to remedy the rudely ethnocentric performance of all the British and to ensure that the Britons would not be seen as limited English chauvinists he resorted to the only method available to him. He spent all night translating his Preface into Latin because he knew that virtually all of the scholars had their language foundations in Latin (D. Legge, 1951). Legge later joked about this. “The curse of Babel rests on the assemblage... For want of Italian I prefaced my address to the Chinese Section with a Latin introduction, falling back on my old facility in writing and speaking after the manner of Cicero.” He joked with a typical mixture of humility and pride “I fancied that with my command of Latin I could look all the other members of the Congress in the face” (D. Legge, 1878). His granddaughter Domenica reported that he spoke Latin with a rich “old Scottish” pronunciation that in fact was rather similar to Continental pronunciations (rather than the tight hard Oxford style used by the English), so that most of his audience could follow him without much strain.

Legge’s return was a leisurely tour of the continent, wandering north by train to Munich, Strasbourg and Paris, typically sleeping on the train under sometimes miserable conditions. In Strasbourg he climbed 250 steps in the cathedral to see the view of the city, which still showed much damage from the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71. He visited Bonn and Hamburg in 1881, and took a trip on the Rhine.

In 1884 Legge was invited to Edinburgh to receive an Honorary Doctor of Laws on 17 April. His invitation can still be seen in a large folded cardboard bearing a big red seal. “An immediate answer is requested, addressed to “The Secretary, University, Edinburgh”. Legge travelled to Edinburgh to receive this honorary degree accompanied by his zealous protector, daughter Edith. She watched the procession in which both Louis Pasteur and Ferdinand de Lesseps (1805-1894) of the Suez Canal also received

honorary degrees, walking in procession with her father. She was struck by de Lesseps' appearance. He was now an old man of 79 with "white hair and moustache and that indescribable frenchy-military look", but he had married as a second wife a "jolly lively stout young woman" now aged 36, and they came with a huge retinue of children and nurses. They had married 15 years earlier and had produced 11 children by then, with one more later. Edith wrote with enthusiasm about the magnificently robed procession up St. Giles Cathedral. It struck her that all had earned their position by the merit of their works rather than through inherited privilege, "no horrible Prince of Wales or such-like titles". When Max Müller nodded to her as he passed, "I felt like a glowing coal". In Edinburgh her thoughts drifted to sex differences, in an account she remembered from an Edinburgh doctor describing the shrieking and struggles of male patients during surgery before anaesthesia was discovered, while in contrast, "as soon as the women were brought in and saw the eager faces of the students ranged around, (the doctor) never heard them utter a sound after".

Legge had long been confident of the quality of his work, and this was further bolstered through having been awarded his Oxford position and a major role in the Sacred Books of the East, but he had never been assertive in seeking fame. In 1886 however, his style became more confident, and he wrote a letter to the Secretary of the Julien Prize Committee in Paris asking that his latest works be entered into consideration for the next round of the Prize. He enclosed the books, his two new volumes of the Book of Rites the *Liji* (his *Li Ki* from the *SBE*), and the *Travels of Faxian* (1886), reminded the Secretary that he had been the first recipient of the Julien Prize, and hoped "that again I may obtain the distinction of its being awarded to me". By 1893 honours were having less impact on him however, and when Legge was admitted to the Académie Royale des Sciences in Amsterdam on 26 April, he thought he might hang the diploma in his bedroom.

Legge was still very interested in international events, especially those in China, where volatile shifts of power in Beijing reflected struggles between reformer and reactionary factions under the nominal rule of the young Guangxu Emperor and the more powerful Dowager Empress Cixi. The Boxer Rebellion began two years after Legge's death, triggering more massive bloodshed in that beleaguered land.

#### Oxford family and social life

Apart from his rare professional trips and some travels through the Scottish countryside in 1880 that included Strathpeffer northwest of Aberdeen, Oban, Perth, Gairloch on the north-west coast, and Sligachan on the Isle of Sky, Legge spent all of his



remaining 21 years at Oxford. He continued his custom of rising at 3 AM and working in the quiet hours of early morning undisturbed, until joining his family for breakfast at 8. His habit of rising so early led to consternation at times. One night a passing policeman spotted a light in Legge's house at this ungodly hour and assumed a burglar was active. He called for help and a posse of police soon surrounded the house while one climbed a ladder to spy into the lit room. The only sight was of James in his shirtsleeves surrounded by his books and working hard. By then he was working in gas-light rather than by oil-lamp or candle, and by then he was using a steel nib pen instead of a quill as the vast changes set in motion by the Industrial Revolution began to affect scholarly methods.

Legge's family became part of the Oxford community. In February 1879 Charles Dodgson, Lewis Carroll, wrote Hannah a charming note inviting her, her daughter, and "the Professor also, if he should be at leisure and inclined to come", so that he could photograph "Miss Willetts", Marian, now 26. He asked that Mrs. Legge bring "the red vestment with you" so that Marian could be photographed in it, then proposed to show them other photographs he had taken. If they were unable to come on the date of his invitation he asked them to set a date of their choosing in the next week. The note was cheerful and playful but not overly familiar; there is no further reference to this invitation and no Dodgson photograph of Marian has been identified. Legge attended small nonconformist churches rather than joining the mainstream large and fashionable Church of England services. The *Pall Mall Gazette* in its obituary of Legge marvelled in a snobbish tone at his humbleness in " 'sitting under' Mr. So-and-so, Reverend by courtesy, and listening, with the simplicity of his great learning, to, no doubt, somewhat turgid pulpit oratory in the midst of a congregation of small tradespeople".

Legge continued to write lively and tender letters to his beloved stepdaughter Marian. For a while she lived with them in Oxford in 1877, but he sent her letters even when she left on short visits. He made up a playful little poem that mingled Chinese characters and English to entertain her as he reported on Oxford domestic life. Legge expressed the warmest love for her and insisted that he would be happy if she would stay with him at home forever if she did not accept "Mr. T." as a suitor. He concluded by discussing recent newspaper letters purporting to be about serious theological issues but that Legge considered were only quibbles about "priestcraft", which he considered "rather goody-goody", and relating more to professional quarrels than theology.

Legge was often troubled by gout, which became more severe as he aged. He was vexed by it in 1878 and in June 1879 he complained that his "vile gout" kept him tethered to his house. It was the worst attack he had ever experienced, but in April 1886

the attack was so severe he was confined to bed for a long time. Even after some recovery he was not able to walk without pain or on his own for another month. He was stoic about this. "...but otherwise my health is fairly good. I do not complain at all. The material frame must wear out".

#### Legge's children, and Marian and Bertram Hunt

In the late 1870s Marian married a young Oxford doctor of independent means Bertram Hunt (1856-1895) and in 1881 they had a son Colin, the first of three children, Marian lived near Oxford after Hunt established a practice there, and she and James maintained their wonderfully warm correspondence for many years. He wrote wishing that he perceived the pleasures of music to the extent that Marian did, and included a sentence in Chinese to her about an early Duke, Han Yu, who had written of the importance of music in allowing full expression of feelings. As he aged James wrote Marian that he became more "feckless". He lamented climate change, noting that the winters in Huntly had become much milder, because in his youth both the small rivers would freeze over and the snow lay two-three feet deep on the town square, while now in 1892 one river did not freeze at all.

After Dr. Hunt concluded he was not suited to general practise and decided to use his private income to support a life of research, he moved the family to Zurich then Munich where he worked studying diphtheria for some years, Arising from their years in Germany their young son Jack learned to speak German. James was very interested in Marian's letter from her visit to Zurich, describing Switzerland as the "best governed country in the world", and he commented on the kinds of social policies that improved countries. Legge's political attitudes were liberal, and he supported Home Rule for the Irish, referring to Mencius' view that every country had a right to govern itself.

By 1893 his daughter Edith was wandering in Greece and Turkey, passing through Munich at one point, so Legge asked Marian if Edith had gone to the *pension* where Marian and her family lived. He commented about local church squabbles and warned her not to share these with her (Johnstone) aunt, not trusting her discretion. James was unhappy with Marian's decision to send her young son Colin, age 12, home to England alone, "the parting...will be very sad for him and you, and for you all". He used lively language in cautioning her against advice she had from Herr Hagenmach about Persians in Egypt: "I think what he told you... must be all moonshine".

James also wrote directly to his son-in-law Bertram Hunt in 1894, providing comments about the local weather and the intense golfing of sons Tom and Jim. Legge was interested in Bertram's account of the gaily-decorated Christmas trees in Germany,

a custom that was just beginning in Britain. Legge reported that the only death in the family was that of his nephew William in Hong Kong, a stockbroker who had died at 48. James ended with very intense expressions of love to Bertram and his family. Later in the summer of 1894 he wrote Marian describing health problems that interfered with his sleep, but happy to report that he had visited her son Colin, now 13 and becoming a strong, “fine, dear manly-looking fellow, a typical school-lad”. Bertram and Marian were planning to return to live in England in September 1894 just as Colin was beginning school at Winchester.

Legge’s children were easy internationalists. While Marian was living in Germany in 1893 and Edith was travelling in Greece and Turkey, Jim travelled to Spain and Tom was studying science in Paris.

Legge’s son James Granville Legge had done well at the City of London School and in 1880 was elected to a Classical Scholarship at Queens College, Oxford, clearly an excellent student. A few years earlier he described to his father how easily he was able to answer examination questions on “the Cambridge papers”. He participated in the famous university boat races in 1881 and Hannah even walked a great distance to see him in the race at time when her health was fragile. Jim was gradually decorating his Oxford rooms, getting them “nicely fitted up” including a clock he bought with £5 of his £7 winnings from another race. A photograph of his rooms shows them an exotic mix of Victoriana with the “orientalism” to which he had earned the right, starting with Chinese as his mother tongue. In 1894 he was pleased to obtain a job in the Home Office as a member of the Prison’s Commission.

Tom graduated from Trinity College Oxford, completed his medical degree at St. Bartholomew’s Hospital in London in 1890, then a doctorate in public health in 1893. He still did not have a job a year later, now aged 31, and James was worried about this. Tom applied for a position with the Ministry of Health in Eastbourne and James went with him for the interview, later commenting on the “nice but unpretentious” house that Professor Huxley had built there. Unfortunately Tom failed to win the position, but James was pleased to “admire again the sweetness of his temper and the elasticity of his spirits”. The problem was soon solved when Tom was hired for a new public health job and sent to Christiania, Stockholm, and to Copenhagen to attend meetings (all in German) and to prepare reports on modern Scandinavian public health and sanitation methods. He was thrilled to write James that he had often seen Ibsen going out for walks in Christiania.

In late December 1895 Marian’s husband Bert, three years younger than she, died suddenly and prematurely, only 39 years old. Distraught and disorganized, Marian soon

realized she needed help from her father. In response James wrote her a wonderfully tender invitation in March 1896. "Come... darling. Things must be going very strangely with us, if your coming to us would not be the greatest of privileges. No presence was ever more welcomed by me than yours. It has been as a beam of light, bringing with it more enjoyment of life, and an atmosphere of brightness and pleasure". She returned to live with James, Edith, and Anna, in their Oxford house while she sought solace for her suddenly challenging situation. By mid-summer she returned to her own home in London but James continued to write loving letters to her. When she had arranged to move to a smaller house he sent her a beautiful silver wolf skin rug from Russia he bought from "a seafarer" who came into his study and "entreated" him to buy. Although "Kate" in his household warned James that Edith would be angry at him for this expensive gift James was untroubled at the prospect of his bossy daughter's ire. In August he wrote Marian that on the 18<sup>th</sup> he had "kept in my heart" the birthday of her "dear, dear Mamma". Hannah had died in 1881, and the circumstances had been miserable.

#### Hannah's death, Dr. Lister, and the miserable search for a cemetery

Across 1880 Hannah, 58, had been unwell, staying in her home most of the time. In the spring of 1881 she rallied sufficiently to walk down to the river to watch her son Jim in the Queen's College boat race, then in May she discovered a small painless lump in her left breast. Gradually her left arm went numb and her doctor sent her to a specialist in London, Dr. Joseph Lister.

Lister (1827-1912) was a deeply religious man who in the Quaker style addressed recipients of his letters using "thee". Restrictive laws against nonconformist students at Oxford and Cambridge had forced him to study medicine at University College London and in Edinburgh, where he had become an outstanding surgeon. He worked as a Professor of Surgery at the Universities of Edinburgh, then Glasgow. In 1867 Lister published his classic article in the *Lancet* advocating the use of antiseptic procedures during surgery in treating compound fractures as a means of preventing infections, then a lethal risk. This idea is unexceptional today, but Lister was attacked as a Scottish upstart by the medical establishment of his time in Britain and Europe, and spent years defending Pasteur's new 1865 "germ theory" as it was applied in his surgical methods, using argument and data.

Lister had studied in Paris with Pasteur and they had become friends. Lister was impressed by Pasteur's studies showing that micro-organisms in the air were the source of rotting, and did experimental antiseptic surgery with animals that proved that the tissues healed cleanly when careful efforts were made to keep the open flesh safe from

contamination with the use of an antiseptic, phenol (then called carbolic acid). He used it to clean the surgical surroundings, all tools and even the wounds, using a fine spray of the chemical on the open flesh during operations. Even so, it was not until 1893 that his combination of careful experimental work based on germ theory, in combination with the results of his care for living patients, finally convinced the British Council of the Clinical Society to admit him as a man who would help bridge the gap between experimental scientists and physicians.

Lister strongly argued for the need for experimental research using animals as the means of achieving significant improvements in medicine. He wrote to a doctor in Philadelphia in 1898 explaining that it was “only recently that the gross darkness of empiricism has given place to more and more scientific practise, and this result has been mainly due to experiments upon living animals” that resulted in Harvey’s paradigm-shifting studies of circulation, and the adoption of anesthesia arising from animal studies in America. Empiricism in the history of medicine referred to using techniques that seemed practical without any comprehension of the mechanisms of their actions. Within two years of his surgery on Hannah, Lister was created a Baronet upon Prime Minister Gladstone’s recommendation to Queen Victoria. Later he was appointed to the House of Lords in recognition for his work, although Lister was a modest man who never sought social success or financial reward because he considered that God directed his work.

At the time of Hannah's problems in 1881, Lister had been Professor in King’s College London for four years and had received international recognition that the *British Medical Journal* justified by explaining that his antiseptic methods had “transformed surgery – disarmed it of its terrors and anxieties”. He had been awarded a medal by the Royal Society in 1880, thus by the time that the Legges sought his care a year later he was eminent as a surgeon with low rates of surgical infection.

James took Hannah to Marian and Bertram’s home in London, and Marian took her mother to Mr. Lister. He quickly decided surgery was necessary and booked her for an operation on 17 June at the Medical and Surgical Home for Invalids at 15 Fitzroy Square. The operation was done in the morning and went well. James and Marian visited Hannah that evening and found that although she was still groggy she recognized them. The next day she was more lively and smiled at James during the visit.

Her recovery was steady over the next few days and Lister encouraged James to return to Oxford, “Your wife is doing well”. Before he left London James visited her and she spoke in a very religious and philosophical vein. James later interpreted this to mean that she did not expect to recover, “Poor darling! I can understand now that she

wished to make me aware that she did not think herself that she would recover; but my eyes were beholden so that I did not see her aim". She kissed James and smiled as he left, but looked sad. "Alas! Alas!"

James returned to see her again on Monday 20 June and was disturbed to find her in pain. He wrote "I lifted her up and held her, the dear sufferer, and it eased her pain a little". Hannah encouraged him to return to Oxford and to send Edith up in a few days, to give a few days relief to Marian who was struggling with her new baby. On Tuesday evening he received a telegram from Lister urging a return to London without delay. James took a train and was at her bedside by 11 PM. Hannah was unconscious, breathing hard, and within 10 minutes James heard the death rattle in her throat. For Legge, "Darling she was to me, and darling she will be, enshrined in my memory".

Ironically for Lister, Hannah had died of infection. Lister asked Legge's permission to do an autopsy to discover the cause of death and James agreed. It revealed that she had a perforated stomach ulcer that had caused an infection in her abdominal cavity that caused her death, and in addition had significant heart disease. Both diseases had been present prior to her breast cancer and either of them would have been fatal, while the breast cancer incisions had not been infected or the cause of death. The next day James took his children Jim, Marian, Edith, Anna, and Bertram Hunt in a last visit to see her body. Within a week Lister was giving an address to the Clinical Society of London on the comparative infective potential from different kinds of suture materials.

#### The scandalous search for a burial site for Hannah

What happened next was horrible and shows the persistence of nasty religious rules, for Hannah's death triggered a miserable search for a grave. James wanted Hannah buried in the Abney Park cemetery in northeast London, which had strong links with the LMS and was set in beautiful gardens with a handsome chapel. It was the first congregationalist, nondenominational garden cemetery in Europe. But Marian, Edith, and Anna wanted Hannah to be buried in Oxford in the Holywell cemetery, also a place of great beauty. Marian argued that even though Hannah had not requested to be buried in Oxford, she had assumed she would be. James was upset at this because the Oxford cemetery was not nonconformist and Hannah was "a very decided Nonconformist". He wrote the burial "would not be carried through without some dishonour being done to the dead and the living as Nonconformists". Legge knew that he could have used his authority to overrule his children if he had insisted, but in order to avoid conflicts he decided to accept his children's preference. The results of this decision were far worse

than any of them could have anticipated, and led him later to great regret that he had not stayed with his original plan.

Tom arrived from his work in Germany on 23 June. James knew that Tom had been “something of his mother’s pet owing to his being not so strong as the others”. They took Hannah’s coffin in a special coach by train from Paddington station, and placed it in a room adjoining James’ study in their Oxford home. Then James set out to arrange for the burial, which turned into a horrendous saga.

He went to the vicar of Holywell and discovered that the Legge home on Keble Terrace was not in the parish for Holywell, the parish cemetery for an Anglican church, and church approval would have to be gained for the burial. The Anglicans were disturbed by the idea of setting a precedent for burials of nonconformists. All the cemeteries in Oxford were tied to specific Anglican parishes for the use of their members, although by this time the rules were becoming more flexible. The vicar recommended that Hannah be buried either in the St. Giles cemetery or in St. Sepulchre’s cemetery in Jericho. Legge’s children were all determined that Hannah should be buried in Holywell because of its beauty, and under their pressure James went back to try to get special permission from the vicar there, but this time he was not available. It was a rainy day and James retreated home to figure out what to do next.

He decided to try for permission from the vicar of All Saints for Hannah to be buried in its cemetery, but walking out in the rain, could not find the vicar. Later James and Jim went again to find the vicar and found him courteous but not welcoming. He identified many problems with the plan because James also wanted to be buried alongside Hannah and with his children. The vicar explained he would have to consult his churchwarden, and claimed that there was only enough ground available in his cemetery for members of his own congregation. Legge knew that the vicar at All Saints had previously given burial permission to other university people who were not parishioners, but his case was more demanding, and the vicar was sure his churchwarden would not agree. James pleaded with him, explaining that as the Legge family was nonconformist he would think the vicar would like to set a Christian example, “and show that your Christianity extends to other Christians beyond those of your own communion”. The vicar pressed James to approach St. Sepulchre’s but apologized to him, sorry that Legge “should be going about begging a grave for my wife from this clergyman and that”. “These plain words were in harmony with the feeling in my own mind, for I was despairing myself for the quest I was pursuing”.

Oxford had declared all its 15 church cemeteries were full in 1843, in response to which three new ones had been consecrated in 1848, including Holywell and St.

Sepulchre. With no choice, James went next to St. Paul's to get help filling in a form for the vicar of St. Giles' parish, from a friend who had known Hannah. Soon he received a note from the vicar of St. Mary's, advising him that the churchwardens had refused permission. Eventually an Anglican cemetery was located that would accept Hannah's remains, Saint Sepulchre's Cemetery in St. Giles' parish.

James knew that the next day, Saturday 25 June, many other family members would be arriving and he did not know if the cemetery chapel would be available to the family, so he provided a memorial service in his home, "in Scottish style". He led a short service, then the family accompanied the hearse to the cemetery where they intended to hold another brief service in the chapel. The day was rainy and when they arrived they discovered the chapel was locked and not available to them because of their nonconformist status, so they held the final brief service at the rainy gravesite. Because Hannah's death had been so sudden and during the university term break, few knew of her death and there was only a small group of mourners for the cold, wet, miserable, and entirely unhappy occasion.

The despairing family returned home and read a note written by Hannah "For my darling children when I die". The last three pages had been added on 15 June, because she had believed her operation would be fatal. The children all copied out this tender letter. In it she expressed great regret for not having been able to accomplish more across her life owing to the oppressive headaches that had disrupted her life with pain over fifty years. She wrote special letters for Edith now 21, and Anna, 18. She was glad that she had lived to hold Marian's baby, "and coo to him as he lay on his back and smiled in response to her", and was comforted to know that she had seen her children grow to "more than boyhood and girlhood, with some promise of good in them". James had not been so lucky with five of the children born to his dear wife Mary, babes who had died either immediately upon birth or within a few years.

James mulled over all the miserable transactions surrounding Hannah's burial, wondering if he should have asked for use of the chapel at the cemetery, then realizing that if it had been forbidden to him it would have been "very galling". "I felt that I would not stoop to ask for what I believed I had a right to". He thought about the recent reform of the Burial laws, and realized the reforms did not include the explicit right of access to a cemetery chapel for all who were being buried in the cemetery. The Church of England clergy "will yet find that they have committed a fault in trying to exclude nonconformists from these buildings." They had a big chance to be peacemakers and let it slip. The events "prove to me that in the mass (these clergy) are not true gentlemen".



Legge was so stung by what he described as “the outrage... which was done in the churchyard to the dust of her of whom no church on earth had ever been worthy, and to myself”, that six years later he wrote to Mrs. Gladstone, the wife of the Prime Minister, to tell her of his experience with the laws and rules creating “religious disabilities”. Gladstone had recently made a speech arguing that these restrictive rules were now practically dead. Legge, while a great admirer of the reforming Gladstone, disagreed, arguing that these “religious disabilities will not be a thing of the past, till all religious irregularities, so far as the law and consequent social standing are concerned, have been swept away”. He enclosed the essay he had written in honour of Hannah's memory, sure that “what I have said about my wife's character and attributes will interest you, and awaken your sympathy with myself”. Legge was right; the established church was still capable of behaving in entirely unchristian ways.

#### Hannah's character

Hannah's friends wrote to James praising her special qualities, “so remarkable a combination of intellectual, moral, spiritual, and domestic”. He re-read the letters he had written to Hannah before they married in 1859 and was “astonished at the enthusiastic fervour of their language”. Looking back at their “two and twenty years and twenty-seven days” of marriage, he knew that “the reality was much greater than the anticipation had been”. While they did not always agree on opinions and events, life with her was “a reaping of ecstatic enjoyment. She was a true woman, full of ardent affection and tenderness, a most attached wife; a most loving and wise mother..., with a serenity of manner and a gentleness of spirit” that made an impression on “even the most accomplished men around us here – no inanity, no stupidity about it”. Hannah had loved the social and intellectual life of Oxford, enjoying meeting the great men of the university.

He knew also that she tended to look on the “dark side of things rather than at the bright” and attributed this to her years of prostrations with painful headaches. While Legge would get hotly indignant about events, she would brood and suffer more. He praised her genius in organizing complicated things, which “would have been developed on a great scale if not for all her health problems”. She had strong views opposing Napoleon, and wanted her children to remain nonconformist even though she had no taste for formal doctrine. Her worst fear was that they might become “worldlings or selfists... seeking only their own things”. Hannah and James had differed over Calvinism, which he considered too narrow and confining a theology, “an attempt to compress the thoughts and ways of the infinite and eternal God within the limits of a

human, erring logic". Hannah was very trusting and had a rather mystical side that led her to trust others who spoke to her of their inner spiritual life, people who James knew had sometimes fooled her.

James recalled her courage and kindness in providing tender nursing care all night to a Chinese servant sick with cholera, "attending to all his needs" and earning the love of all the staff. Two staff from their Hong Kong home still wrote letters to her in Oxford, one arriving even after her death. James remembered the way she read inspiring stories to the children, then had them read aloud as their skills developed, stories and "speeches on peace as against war, histories of men who had distinguished themselves in the maintenance of freedom, ... of the exercise of self-denial and sacrifice for the good of men and the glory of God". He ended an essay written and printed for circulation to their friends: "It was an honour ... to me to have such a wife".

#### Widowed, working in his "own peculiar department"

James gradually reconciled to his loss of Hannah, becoming more aware of his children's needs, and wanting to finish "what I have yet to do in my own peculiar department". He was now 65, a widowed for a second time.

As Legge's household changed with the developing lives of his children, his daughter Edith continued to live with him and young Anna, becoming the head of the household, supervising large dinner parties and accompanying him in the community. During this period her letters were full of everyday gossip about their social lives and the kinds of gowns that she was wearing; she even reported staying up dancing at a private house party until 2 AM. Over time she became more sombre, became Legge's vigilant champion, eventually writing a book about him (1905) that presented a very protective account of his years in mission work. She was jealous of Legge's close relationship with his step-daughter Marian, and was capable of being fairly aggressive as when in 1896 his housemaid warned Legge that Edith would be angry with him for buying Marian an expensive present, at a time when Marian was recovering from her premature widowhood a few months earlier.

#### Hong Kong connections; the LMS, Wang Tao, and Huang Shing

In 1880 the LMS decided to sever most of its connection, rights and responsibilities in relation to the pastorate of the English-language Union Church in Hong Kong, and surrendered its interest in the property and its support to the congregation. What Legge had created for the LMS was now truly severed and independent; it continues to thrive today as Union Church.

The same year Legge's old research assistant Wang Tao was invited to Government House in Hong Kong to meet the British General, "Chinese" Gordon who had first supported then attempted to destroy the Qing general Li Hongzhang during the defence of Shanghai in the Taiping rebellion in 1863. Gordon would die within five years, murdered by the forces of the Mahdi in Khartoum. Wang was now a respected public figure in Hong Kong, and in 1881 his expertise as a scholar was recognized when he was appointed by the Governor of Hong Kong to the Board of Examiners for Chinese examinations in Central School. Three years later Li Hongzhang in China realized Wang's knowledge made him valuable, lifted the old legal threats against him, and Wang left Hong Kong, moving with his family to a fruitful new career in Shanghai. There he edited and wrote for a newspaper, *Shenbao*, wrote articles for the *International Tribune* as a special columnist, and founded the Tao Garden publishing house where he nicknamed himself in literati style, "the recluse of Tao garden". He also became the Director of the Chinese Polytechnic Institute and Reading Room (Gezhi College) and in 1890 he published his travel memoirs of travels in Europe and Britain in Chinese, as *Jottings from carefree travels*, some of which have been reprinted in translation in modern times.

Wang is now considered to have been the first Chinese scholar who created a truly two-way cultural exchange between Western knowledge and Chinese culture. He helped translate western religious and scientific works on mechanics and astronomy into Chinese while working with LMS mission men Medhurst and Wylie in Shanghai, and helped Legge translate classical Chinese into English, but his contribution was wider because he had a deep understanding of Western culture derived in part from his travels and living in Scotland with Legge. This gave him the perspective to interpret and explain it to China in his later career as a writer and educator.

In 1880 Legge was delighted to receive a letter from Ho Aloy in London, a former student of his who was now on his way to America as a diplomat in the Chinese Embassy. The letter is affectionate and respectful, and begs a final meeting with Legge before Ho's ship leaves for America.

Around the time in 1881 when James was embedded in problems with Hannah's illness he received a letter from his old printer Huang Shing, now in Glasgow. Huang had taken a group of Chinese students to the US in 1878 after his work in Beijing setting up a moveable metal type printing press there for Chinese text for the Chinese Foreign Office. After arrival in the US with the students, Huang became a member of the diplomatic group in the Chinese Embassy in Washington DC, where he worked for nearly four years before he was fired on four days notice and ordered out of the country.

Huang took three sons with him to Scotland, intending to send them to the Dollar Academy, and asked James to become their guardian the way he had been for Huang's older son Yung Ching.

James agreed, but within the year two of these young men had shown themselves to be arrogant and demanding. Life in rural Scotland was not exciting enough for them after their years in Washington DC. They wanted to live in London, and ordered James to find them ways to travel and even to live independently in separate houses. One explained that he didn't want to travel alone or with his brothers, while another justified his need for a separate house on the grounds that "I always like to live in one house by myself so I can not get into any trouble at all... I depend on you". It appears they did not like each other very much, and felt entitled to extensive attention from Legge. Huang himself returned to Hong Kong and was soon (1884) made a member of the Legislative Council, serving for six years, the second Chinese man to be appointed to the Legco.

It was possible that Huang Shing had lost his diplomatic position in the Chinese Embassy in Washington as a result of political struggles in China, all in a retrograde direction. Prince Gong, the forward-thinking and effective Qing Foreign Minister, had been in a long-standing power struggle with the Dowager Empress Cixi and was finally forced to retire in 1884. In 1875 she had become the sole regent of her younger sister's son, whom she had installed as the Guangxu Emperor at the age of four. She then disposed of her competition very efficiently and held onto power until 1898. During her regime she embezzled money destined for the Navy and used it to build a new summer palace that included a marble "boat" at the lake's edge, crippling the Navy's attempts to modernize. When in 1898 the Emperor Guangxu came of age he appointed a reformer as his Secretary and they planned a campaign of 100 days of reform. This infuriated Cixi so she instigated another coup, imprisoned the Emperor and ruled until her death in 1908, adopting some reforms only after the Navy suffered humiliating losses in a conflict with eight European nations at the end of the Boxer Rebellion. Although China was remote from Oxford, its political struggles still had ramifications in the lives of Legge and the Chinese in Hong Kong and China who were trying to modernize the nation.

Another piece of Legge's early life ended in 1883 when the little port of Anjer on Java was destroyed with the eruption of Krakatoa. James and Mary had landed at Anjer as their first port in Asia after their long sea voyage out of Britain on their journey in 1839-40.

### Chapter 68 Memoirs and death

In the spring of 1896 James, now 80, began writing *Notes On My Life* at the urgings of his children. He had been working on the ancient books of China for 45 years, the last 25 on six texts for Müller's series, and he was now looking back on his life and starting to provide a lasting account. His vigour was still intact, as he wrote to Sinologist Gustaaf Schlegel in Holland, "my eye is not dim, nor is my natural force much abated", though he followed this by commenting with self-mockery from the *Shih* that "a colt the old horse deems himself, and vainly hasten to the race". In March 1897 he was under doctor's care for an unspecified problem probably gout, stretched out on two chairs and trying to write while supporting himself with his left hand.

Legge's manuscript on his early life was incomplete by the time of his death the next year. His account only reached 1848, amounting to 140 pages now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. In combination with his notes *Reminiscences* used in his lecture as he was leaving Hong Kong in 1873 (later published as the *Colony of Hong Kong* and covering his years there from 1843 to 1873) (J. Legge, 1872a), these documents describe his life before Oxford through his eyes, steady as a heartbeat across all the dramatic events of his personal life and the larger challenges in colonial Hong Kong and Britain's evolving relations with China.

In his last year of life Legge was content to live quietly in Oxford. When the question of travelling to London in June for the Jubilee for Queen Victoria's 50-year reign arose, he was happy to remain in Oxford. He wrote Marion that June that he had seen Victoria twice on the day of her coronation and had a private meeting with her, Prince Albert, and the three lads in 1848. The only anxiety he had about the jubilee procession was the risk of bad weather for the crowds, "and that the fatigue and excitement of it may not be too much for her Majesty, the dear old Lady, herself".

He continued his pattern of 3 AM rising to work on his texts until late October 1897, and gave a lecture on October 28. On 26 November he suffered a sudden collapse with loss of consciousness, and died on 29 November without recovering consciousness just days short of his 82<sup>nd</sup> birthday. He was buried in Wolvercote Cemetery near Oxford on 2 December after a memorial service in Mansfield College Chapel. Rectifying the most powerful episode of drama and pain in Legge's Oxford life, his wife Hannah was exhumed from St. Sepulchre's Cemetery after permission was obtained from vicar of St. Giles and the Home Secretary, and her remains were re-buried in the site prepared for James in the Wolvercote cemetery on the morning of the day of his later funeral.

It was a formal Oxford university event with an impressive five-carriage funeral cortege that included Max Müller walking not with the official university contingent but

with the Royal Asiatic Society. The procession included members from the Anti-Opium Society, the London Missionary Society, and others who finally and publicly recognized the contributions made by the outsider, the dissenter. Girardot notes that by the time of his death Legge had brought more honour and recognition to the LMS than vice versa, and in a belated effort to capture his reflected glory the LMS created a new narrative, talking about the high esteem they had for him (Girardot, 2002).

Legge's old friend and colleague Wang Tao died earlier the same year, aged 69, no longer regarded as a bohemian rebel but long-since as a well-respected journalist, scholar, and progressive public intellectual in China. That same year Union Church in Hong Kong severed its last connections with the LMS. Legge had never retired from scholarship, and his full life, many works, and many friendships, were now completed. He had outlived his two wives and five of his eleven children. On the day his obituary was published in the London and New York *Times*, gold miners were dying in the Chilkoot Pass in the Yukon gold rush, and Hong Kong had grown from a population of around 7,000 at the time Legge first landed, to more than 300,000.

In his 1885 will Legge provided all of his children with bequests including the large silvered-bronze memorial tablet from the Chinese people of Hong Kong (to James, his eldest child), a large silver tea and coffee service (to Tom), his house at 3 Keble Terrace (to his two unmarried daughters Edith and Anna), with a lesser bequest to his stepdaughter Marian explaining "I know she is otherwise provided for" by virtue of her marriage. His estate as of that will included fifty-year government and railway bonds. He asked the children to share his non-Chinese books as equally as possible, then sell off those that were not wanted. Legge had loaned substantial money to Mary's husband Richard Hawke and any outstanding loans were to be deducted from her share of the estate. Hawke had been involved in copper and tin mining ventures in Cornwall. Documents in 1898 summarized the accounts from his estate. Receipts were given showing payments of £550 each to his children Anna Georgina (Mrs. Collier), to Eliza (Mrs. Lay), to James Granville, and to Thomas. Marian (Mrs. Hunt) received £100 and Mary (Mrs. Hawke) received £574.17.8. Edith's share of the cash is not recorded.

Legge's Chinese books were to be sold and the proceeds to be added to the estate. These books, amounting to nearly 3,000 papers and volumes in Chinese, were sold in April 1989 by Messrs Luzac & Co., oriental booksellers of Great Russell Street London. Many were bought by James Tregaskis, a well-established antiquarian bookseller in London. In 1909 Tregaskis sold that library to Wilberforce Eames, a librarian at the New York Public Library who had a large personal collection of Chinese books. In turn, Eames sold "Legge's Chinese library" of 230 books to the New York Public Library,

where they are still available for study. By 2015 97 of these books had been fully digitized and made available online. The newspaper notice of Luzac's purchase listed some of the famous texts, adding that although Dr. Legge had "edited" and published many of these with Oxford's Clarendon Press, "but there yet remain in the collection many little known and exceedingly curious and interesting Chinese books".

Within two years archaeologists working in China discovered texts written on "oracle bones" that confirmed the reality of the early Shang dynasty as argued by Legge, and half a century later artefacts were discovered in the 1960s that were dated to the even older Xia dynasty, argued by Legge as real and non-mythical, contrary to the beliefs of other scholars of his day.

### Tributes

At the time of Legge's death the tribute published in the *Pall Mall Gazette* on December 1 left a wonderful image:

" Dr. Legge ... was the most charming of old men. After his long life of varied experiences, he was the simplest of human beings. He was delightful to look at. The frostiest of silver hair, the pinkest of cheeks, the bluest of blue eyes – these went with the most benign expression. So honest, so healthy, so much of the open-air life was in his aspect that he might have been anything rather than an Oxford don. One could have imagined his long life spent on Scottish hills in cold pure air, tramping the heather all day long... One could hardly imagine a personality more winning. In Oxford, where the life makes for simple consciousness or dryness, or both, this simple, fresh old man seemed "lovely as a Lapland night". (Editor, 1897a).

Some of these descriptions were cribbed from a memorial published in the *Huntly Express* (Editor, 1897b), and followed up by a letter describing how his childhood friends remembered James as a lad: "a frank, merry, frolicsome, romping boy, full of spirit, and more than usually venturesome".

Dr. Fairbairn gave James Legge's funeral address at the Mansfield College chapel, and the address was later published. "James Legge had a rare largeness and simplicity of nature, and was distinguished by the dignity which never fails to adorn the single-minded man. He was, though so upright, as gentle as a child, and while severely conscientious, he was saved by his delightful humour from being either fierce or fanatical". Legge "was no obscure missionary, or mere Oriental scholar, but a genuine

statesman, ... He acted almost like an embodied conscience to the English merchants, ... gained the affection and confidence of the Chinese as but few foreigners have ever done, for he loved them truly and they knew the simple integrity of his love". In translating the Chinese Classics, "only those who knew the man can appreciate the idea, the splendid dream of humanity and religion that gave it birth".

"Happily (Legge) was sent Eastwards to the oldest of living civilisations and he studied it with an eye made luminous by love. For if ever man loved a people, James Legge loved the Chinese, and he could not bear to see them do wrong or suffer it. ...he saw that the primary condition of making the West influential in the East was to make the East intelligible to the West. The missionaries who would convert a people must first condescend to know the people they would convert and the religion they would displace. The merchants who would honourably do the work of exchange amid a so-called lower race must know the inner and nobler spirit of the race... All of this James Legge understood, and out of understanding came his magnificent edition of the Chinese Classics. Of its learning it does not become me to speak, the invincible patience, the heroic industry that went to its production we can all admire. But only those who knew the man can appreciate the idea, the splendid dream of humanity and religion that gave it birth" (Fairbairn, 1897).

The *Times* quoted Herbert Giles, who acknowledged "my deep obligations to the imperishable achievements of Dr. Legge. Before his time no one seemed to know what accurate translation from Chinese into English meant. Now a faithful rendering – with ordinary reservations – of the whole of the Chinese Canon is the property of the world at large". Legge's original plan to provide mission men with the ideas and civilisation of the Chinese had gone far beyond his initial dream.

In his published memorial to Legge, Dutch professor at Leiden University Gustaaf Schlegel noted that Legge had correctly realized early in his work that the best way of learning Chinese was by reading Chinese texts rather than by studying grammars and word-lists. Schlegel reminded the sinologues who were the subscribers to the European journal *T'oung Pao*, that across Legge's 20 years as Chair of Chinese at Oxford his income had been only about £220 per year, comprised of interest from the endowment of £3000 supplemented by £100 yearly from the University, while the British government never provided any support to Legge. In contrast, Prof. Julien was paid £600 by the French government, while even the Dutch provided professors with a salary of £500 (Schlegel, 1898 (Old Series)). Despite the niggardly support provided to Legge, Schlegel emphasized that Legge always struggled to give the most accurate rendering of



difficult Chinese texts rather than taking the easy route of other Sinologists in reverting to “free rendering” when they really didn’t have any idea of the meaning.

### James Legge’s descendants

Eliza and Mary, the surviving children from Legge’s marriage to Mary Morison, married and had families. Eliza’s grandson became an officer in the Royal Canadian Navy and played a distinguished role in WW II, but Legge’s legacy as a talented man of public achievements was more visible in the four children he had with Hannah Johnstone. Their youngest daughter Helen Edith became an expert on the art of classical Greece, in 1905 she wrote an admiring book about his life (H. E. Legge, 1905), and later she wrote a popular illustrated guide to the Divinity School at Oxford. Hannah’s sons James and Tom were successful in creating exceptional careers and founding families that continue to the present day.

James Granville Legge graduated from Oxford then served in the Admiralty and as secretary to the Secretary of State Herbert Gladstone before he began pioneering work as Director of Education in Liverpool. There he created educational opportunities for girls and the poor before he retired to Oxford. In retirement he published on a number of Classical topics, helped found St. Peter’s Hall for the sons of clergy, including nonconformists although he had become a member of the Church of England, and helped support the Oxford Repertory theatre. He had a son Henry James Granville Legge, and three daughters (Cecilia Mireo, Mary Dominica, and Beatrice Pompilia) who were all energetic intellectuals, bluestockings who never married. Henry became a professional orchestral musician and orchestra conductor, founding the Rehearsal Orchestra for the Edinburgh Festival starting in 1957. Mary Dominica became an eminent professor of French (Anglo-Norman studies) at the University of Edinburgh after her Oxford doctorate.

Tom completed training in medicine at St. Bartholomew’s Hospital and post-graduate studies in public health in Paris, Stockholm, Oslo, and Berlin, and did groundbreaking research in the causes of numerous occupational diseases. He published his first of many books in 1898, became the first Medical Inspector of Factories and Workshops, and began studying the diagnosis and control of occupational diseases including those caused by anthrax dust, phosphorus, arsenic, mercury, and lead, along with studies of other public health problems including tuberculosis in cattle, and sanitation. A child of the Industrial Revolution of Victorian Britain, he was entranced by the “romance of industry” and painted industrial scenes, counterbalancing that with studies of medieval guilds and stained glass. Tom was knighted in 1925 for his

international accomplishments in epidemiology, and international epidemiologists celebrated the centenary of his first appointment in 1998.

### Part 13 James Legge's life, beliefs, and attitudes

Such a richly-lived life cannot be easily summarized, for Legge was a husband and father, a mission man, educator, and an international scholar in a time and place of turmoil in and with China, while the western world was living in the tail-end of the Romantic period and rushing through the modernizing changes of the Industrial Revolution.

#### Chapter 69 Legge the man

Drawings, paintings and photographs suggest that Legge had an attractive physical presence. The portrait of Legge drawn by George Richmond in 1848 shows him with a lean, handsome, bony face, and the large cheery oil painting of his old age in Corpus Christi at Oxford shows a genial man with a feathery aura of white hair. Although his red-blond hair turned silvery-white with age, Legge always had a very Scottish appearance, with ruddy bright cheeks and brilliant blue eyes. At the prime of his life he was a man of about 5'10" with a medium build that became stout as he aged. He enjoyed a strong physique and a bountiful supply of energy that helped across all the challenging events and demanding climates of his life. His sturdy constitution allowed him to recover from his innumerable bouts of malaria and liver complications, kidney stones, and gout, as well as from apparent overdoses of the fever remedy, quinine.

Legge was energetic, and enjoyed seeking out new physical experiences including completely unnecessary challenges, as during his visit to Japan in 1865, where his host later wrote that James "rode several miles every morning before breakfast. There were some mines near, and he went to the bottom of each, and seven volcanoes, and he climbed to the top of each". In 1871 a visitor mentioned that Legge was the only man in Hong Kong who was the picture of health – "as if he had never been out of the sight of the heather hills". He could thrive on very little sleep, and had a strong work ethic that started in his early years as a schoolboy studying in the long winter nights of northern Scotland when he formed the habit of getting up at 3 AM to work undisturbed. Initially in Scotland this night-work was done by candlelight, then by oil-lamp in Hong Kong, and finally by gaslight in Oxford. He maintained this energetic routine while all the other challenges of his life swirled around his daylight hours, even in the last week before his death at 81 in Oxford.

Legge loved his two wives dearly, was warmly interested in his children and grandchildren, and appreciated his family even at long distances, working hard to maintain family connections across all his years of remote work in Hong Kong. He wrote regular letters to his family members across all his years in China, including to his

brother John in Huntly, advising them of plans, needs, and accomplishments. He respected the meaning of family ties to others and responded to letters of inquiry from English families about such personal matters as the last days of their dying relatives in Hong Kong.

As a husband James was lavish in his language and feelings for his two wives. Absent any of his letters to Mary because they were nearly always together, we still know that his love for her was intense, and his torment at her sudden death was florid and obvious to his friend Benjamin Hobson. In his letters to Hannah across the many years of their separation after her persistent illnesses forced her return alone to Scotland, his language was also warmly loving. Although his letters were never explicitly intimate, he ended letters to her with intensely tender language, “My own darling, my brightest sweetest, most charming, most precious wifie, Ever your loving husband”, and his lusty pleasure in intimacy produced 11 children. Hannah reciprocated his pleasure in a happy physical relationship between husband and wife, her letters showing the importance she placed on this when she was worried about her stepdaughter Eliza’s lack of “animal spirits” at the time of her marriage.

Legge also loved attractive women in general and was a close observer of their charms. His appreciation for the beauties of women persisted until the end of his life. In 1894 when he was 78 years old, he wrote his daughter Marian of a recent lecture he had attended, spending considerable time describing two beautiful women in the audience, “whom I fancied”. He was struck by Louisa Macdonell’s “tall and graceful figure, with her radiant features”, while Mrs. Rennie, “though smaller, and less striking, was elegant and looked so happy”. It also seems that James was attractive to women, as is often the case with men who truly love women. Hannah was amused to write Marian of the “violent fancy” a woman in Dollar had taken for James. In part this woman innocently rationalized her excitement as intellectual and religious, remembering with a special thrill “Eh, but he was grand on the Tree of Lebanon at the Kirk”.

Legge seems to have been an indulgent father, enjoying the playfulness of his children, in contrast to any stereotype of a Victorian missionary. As a young father in his first years in the tropics he had adopted pets including a crocodile and a baby elephant for the amusement of his children. He wrote of the pleasurable thunder of the small feet of his young children, the household presence of pets, and the noisy uproar associated with happy active children. Hannah wrote of the busy racket generated by their young daughter Marian in a way that makes it clear this was treasured in the household rather than cause for discipline. Legge’s letters to Marian after she left home and returned to Hong Kong show a most tender interest in her, the care of a loving father who has every

hope for her well-being without being intrusively bossy. This joy was heightened against the background of the deaths of so many family members. Hannah wrote Marian reporting a telling incident about her 4-year-old daughter Edie that shows the closeness of death in the minds of even the youngest family members. By that time Edie knew that her father had lost his first wife and five earlier children to sudden deaths. In her childish chatter to Hannah “She not infrequently reminds me I may die soon and then “we shall frow you over the sun to God”.

James and Hannah wrote often after she and the children returned to Scotland, and James treasured news about the achievements of his children. He was full of praise when he learned his eldest son James had “vaulted” to the top of his class on the first day he attended his new school in Dollar. Legge added that he hoped that by the time the novelty of that excitement had worn off, Jamie would still like the school, revealing an interest both in Jamie’s accomplishments and in his happiness. While pleased with Jamie’s successes James understood the psychological risks of these, and was a bit worried that his son had a tendency to be overbearing. During their two separations covering four years, James wanted Hannah to send regular statistics of the heights and weights of his children, in his playful language, “their gravity and altitude”. The way this was written reflected general interest in their development rather than the obsessive worry of a man who has already lost five children to premature death.

#### Not just another dead white male

The stereotype of a Victorian missionary as another “dead white male” represents him as a joyless, abstinent man with an ardent, narrowly ethnocentric view. He is understood to be a strict disciplinarian as parent who requires children to be seen and not heard, is ashamed of sexual interests and pleasures, and is a religious bigot who is uninterested in the beliefs of those he seeks to convert.

None of these grim attributes can be fairly applied to James Legge. He was a man who took pleasure in many things, was open to joy and appreciative of the variety of human experience. Some of his pleasures were intellectual in nature because of who he was, but others extended into his family and social life in a way that shows how much his joys and values map onto progressive social life in our own time. He could equally be a romantic in his relish of Scottish things and a stoic in his response to challenging personal events.

In his daily life James enjoyed smoking (both cigars and pipes), and drinking beer, wine and spirits. He was not an abstinence-minded Methodist, but a Scotsman at ease with moderate use of alcohol. He viewed the risks of alcohol and the risks of opium as

being very similar – both allowed a relatively normal life when used in moderation, contributing to grievous problems only if used in excess. He made that argument in various papers with his colleagues while still arguing that the British should stop the trade. For his time and missionary culture, his views were radical because most Protestant missionaries advocated abstinence for alcohol and excoriated everything about opium.

After his marriage with Hannah and their more involved role in hospitality to transient missionaries, soldiers, sailors, and local gentry, James had access to good food and drink but never expressed much interest in it. Hannah in contrast, was proud of the attractive table she could set at times, and took pleasure in writing letters home boasting of all the wonderful food and drink they were able to enjoy as guests of others. James' tastes were simpler, and he was largely indifferent to the nature of his meals.

James enjoyed the pleasures of social life and showed a knack for getting along with people of every kind. He even entered into unusual situations with playful zest and spontaneity. In one village during his visit around Boluo in 1861, Legge and John Chalmers were challenged by the stoutest man present to see if either would go onto the scales in competition with him. Legge volunteered, and at first it seemed a draw. Finally the scales tipped in favour of James and the whole crowd burst into laughter, teasing their own man and complimenting James on his good size (J. Legge, 1872b), p. 3. He later reported this joke on himself.

From the time of his return to Hong Kong with Hannah, his home in the mission house was an attractive social centre open to everyone, and to the end of his life he was known for being genial. Theologian Gilbert Sadler visited him in his Oxford home and commented on Legge's "most kindly manner". He was unusually guileless in social situations, as when he referred to the mother of a bridegroom as "this aged servant", and said similarly "frank and curious" things in his sermons (D. Legge, 1951). A newspaper clipping during his life in Oxford reported another "appalling note of frankness; once at a dinner party Dr. Legge hovered about looking for the lady he was to take in. Finally he stopped before a velvet-clad matron and commented cheerfully "My daughter told me I was to take in the oldest lady among the guests", gallantly offering his arm to escort her to the dining table. When the age-sensitive woman's expression darkened and there was a moment's gasp, he quickly recouped as he followed this comment "with the utmost sweetness", "and here I am beginning with one of the youngest" (Author, 1897a). His joke saved the moment. In Oxford in another playful bit of "frankness" he took advantage of the vicarious cupidity of some acquaintances. He was asked about a report he had been left an enormous sum of money by an old lady. Legge agreed, mentioning

the vast sum, and explaining it was for missions to China. Then, after titillating his audience with this great windfall, with the deadpan timing of a comic he added, “the poor lady had a delusion. She left nothing but her debts, which I was to apply out of the fortune that had no existence” (Tynan, c. 1880).

Legge also enjoyed being playful in his scholarly work. In his very early translation of a Chinese novel into English he used funny current slang to ensure a poem rhymed (J. Legge, 1843). In translating Bible stories into Chinese he advised his Chinese readers that although the stories seem like fiction they are not; he has just written them in a loose popular style “because the Bible is so complex that it puts people to sleep” (Patrick Hanan, 2000).

Legge accommodated the usual etiquette of the colony and used the British and Chinese customs of calling cards when going visiting in Hong Kong, where he had Chinese calling cards made. He used a wood-cut block carved with his name characters printed on the red paper that was the appropriate medium for Chinese calling cards, creating a handsome and lively red paper calling card about 2” by 5”. He had chosen a Chinese name, Li Yage, the surname Li roughly meaning Justice or Reason, the second linked in sound to his given name, written using a traditional character that is now rare. His granddaughter Domenica explained that he chose justice for the first character because this was a value he admired, and of course li was chosen from a number of possible words that sounded something like Le(gge).

Legge had a tolerance for individual frailties, having cordial relations with drunks and frequenters of brothels and was “charitable to stumblers and utterly free from sanctimoniousness” (E. H. Parker, 1898), but he was strongly opposed to gambling. Gambling was the most common recreation among Chinese men and he was aware of its debilitating effects on families. In late 1870, on his birthday, he began a petition against the gambling houses of Hong Kong, and by February had obtained nearly 400 signatures by the time he sent it to the Acting Governor, Lord Kimberly. He urged the Chamber of Commerce to do the same, and worked with Turner to get leaders of the Chinese community to do a similar petition. At the same time he understood that under better conditions there did not have to be blanket prohibitions of occasional games of chance.

James was both energetic and stoical when confronted with problems, whether they were administrative, interpersonal, or physical. During his last trip through northern China, the primitive condition of roads meant he travelled using a range of miserable “Beijing” carts, wheelbarrows, and sedan chairs, to which his main response was treating these as amusing challenges.

In a lively obituary one writer mentioned that Legge was well aware of a great deal of quackery in Sinology, “and in private conversation would often crack a humorous joke at the expense of the imposters; but he never wrote a harsh word or intentionally hurt any man’s feelings. In short, he was a gentleman to the core in his literary instincts....” and “was equally ready to help any applicant, to lend books, correct translations and generally, to put his shoulder to the wheel for others in the most unobtrusive way” (E. H. Parker, 1898). Parker mentioned the “foolish” attack that Lacouperie had made upon Legge in 1884 without mentioning Lacouperie’s name, and praised Legge for responding by simply laughing about the affair, “in his good-natured way”.

Across his 34 years in Asia Legge never lost his interest in the people and natural history of Scotland. In his letters from Hong Kong he wrote of his persistent failures in trying to grow some Scots carnation seeds apparently weakened by the heat and humidity of their new home. He yearned to grow broom, which had even less chance of survival. Legge’s Scottish roots were audible in his spoken language, and he even spoke Latin and Greek with a Scottish accent. He loved speaking broad Scots and across his life he relished encounters with dialect-speaking Scotsmen because he could then break into Scottish himself. In January 1858 as he toured Canton he encountered a Scottish engineer veteran of the recent Crimean War, and later told the story. “Are you Mr. Legge of Hong Kong? Yes, but I do not know that ever I saw you before.” “But you have,” said he, bursting into the sweet Aberdeenshire Doric: “I cam oot for the work here, and we hadna time to land at Hong Kong, or I would hae come to see ye. Dinna ye ken the sma toon o’ Huntly in Aberdeenshire?” This was Legge’s town and he desperately tried to remember the man’s family without success, but “Seeing that he had the Victoria Cross on his breast, I touched it, and said, “Weel, I see you hae na been disgracing oor sma toon; fatt did ye get this for?” (J. Legge, 1872b), p. 187. James had quickly lapsed into his childhood Scots dialect to speak with the doughty worker, and found the encounter sweet to tell about 20 years later. As late as an 1892 letter to his cousin, he continued to include bits of Scottish dialect, sending love to the man’s “bairns”.

Legge also honoured the historical struggles of Scotland for independence, but without fanaticism. On his return visit to Hannah and his children in Scotland in the late 1860s James took his young sons to visit the moor of Bannockburn, site of a famous battle in 1314 in which an army of 10,000 Scots led by Robert Bruce had beaten an English force three times its size and established Bruce as the King of Scotland. Legge was very emotional about the place and the event. “I took my shoes off my feet upon it and told my boys that if ever they were found hereafter on any side but that of freedom and truth, they would not be true Scotsmen” (H. E. Legge, 1905), p.157. He told them



that if Scotland had lost that battle, its history would have resembled that of Ireland, with “perpetual revolt on one side, repression on the other”.

Despite his interest in these Scottish events and the values they represented, Legge did not use what we now call identity politics to assert special status for his Scots origins. In 1871 he wrote with amusement at the excessive Scots of a Free Church in Hong Kong, desperately trying to prove that “Dr. Somerville was Earl Somerville” in some arcane effort to add class to their little group. Legge poked fun at the attempts by these Scots to gain reflected glory, by making an analogy to the Jesuits who “got a deserved notoriety from their devotion to their Order and Society”.

While other missionaries before and after his time experimented with wearing Chinese clothing in order to melt into their surroundings and camouflage their foreignness, Legge did not, and would have regarded this as affectation. His friend young Milne had put on Chinese garments as a disguise so he could travel illegally through the countryside from Shanghai to Hong Kong in 1850 when the first meeting of the delegates to create a new Chinese Bible was held. The other Protestant missionaries were horrified at this illegal and also dangerous feat, and that was the last time it was done by missionaries in the treaty ports. Legge wore European clothing even on his trips deep into China. In cold weather he wore a dark Scottish jacket and white shirt with a loose white scarf, while in tropical heat he changed to white calico, wore a straw hat, and carried a fan.

#### Tributes to Legge the man

At the time of his death in 1897 tributes were made to Legge by both his mission and civic world, and by the world of scholars. When Hannah died in 1881, one published tribute to her added that “Those who best knew (Legge) can speak of him as a man of most tender nature, generous in the extreme, simple hearted as a child, genial, loving, a man to be entirely trusted, loyal and true in all the relations of life” (Author, 1881). Among those who knew him there was a uniform agreement about his wonderful character and of his great capacity to be loved. Another friend wrote that Legge “carried with ease his vast knowledge of China, its people and its literature; and it was all penetrated by the elevation of his character and the simplicity of his love of truth. Truly in him there was no guile. How splendid a lesson he has set us all by his unwearied industry and his single-minded devotion.” (H. E. Legge, 1905) p. 229. In a condolence letter the writer noted that Legge, “...having no evil in his own nature, was so slow to think evil of others”. And in the ultimate praise that an editor could provide, Müller’s wife wrote that while Müller often had problems with other translators of the SBE for

being “troublesome and dilatory”, Legge was always ready with his text, exactly to the time he had promised it.

### Chapter 70 Challenging life events, trauma, and resilience

Within the year of Legge’s death two of the tributes about him presented diametrically opposite views of the events he had encountered during his life. After his death Rev. Robert Troup of Legge’s home village of Huntly wrote laconically in the *Scottish Congregationalist* that Legge’s “life was comparatively uneventful”, then reviewed Legge’s work, emphasizing his diligence and accomplishments (Troup, 1897a). In contrast, another wrote in a religious journal eight months before Legge’s death: “it is impossible to enumerate the vicissitudes through which this venerable and devoted servant of Christ has passed. ... he has been “in perils oft”; exposed to fever and cholera; in a ship on fire, and near death by drowning; he has been shot at, stoned, poisoned, and pursued by a body of Chinese who had orders to behead him” (Author, 1897b). Rev. Troup, and probably many in Legge’s home village had no idea of the great adversities events he had faced because he lived through them with such resilience that his manner and his reports home gave Troup no way of knowing. In fact Legge experienced even more intrusive and dangerous events than included on the first list.

#### Challenging events in Legge’s life

Most people find uncertainty anxiety-provoking, and Legge was often plunged into deeply uncertain circumstances where there were no promises or sources of help or certainty. At the age of 20 when he stuck to his religious principles and refused to change to the Church of Scotland to enable him to move into a highly-promising career track, his decision to stay with his modest nonconformist tradition and take on the risky tasks of a life in a distant mission meant that he was willing to face unknown but possibly severe hazards. He knew of the high death rates for mission men and in light of them he renounced his share of his father’s estate in favour of his brothers, leaving behind a lock of hair as a memento in case of his death half a world away. Legge knew that one doctor had predicted probable tuberculosis when examining him for mission life at age 22, and rather than accept this threatening diagnosis and staying in Britain, he sought another opinion in order to press his dangerous plan forward.

As expected, mission life provided uncertainties and challenges from the outset. At the trivial end, after a voyage of 6 months at sea with his 23-year old wife, he was alarmed to discover on landing on Sumatra that the LMS had not provided him with correct passports, and the young couple had to wait for days for rescue from a local

mission man, Medhurst. In turn Medhurst generated uncertainties about Legge's future at the Malacca station by explaining Legge had learned the wrong dialect of Chinese during his voyage out, and by describing the chaos and incompetence in the Malacca mission. Legge next had trouble finding a boat captain willing to brave the expected monsoon to take him to Malacca and when he finally found one, the travellers' lives were threatened when they became totally becalmed at sea for weeks until everyone was close to death from dehydration.

Challenges continued. Finally arrived at his new station Legge was disturbed to find it indeed was a mess, with long-established gnarly interpersonal relationships, rigid hierarchies and customs, and worst, mission college activities at a level far below what he had been led to expect. His response as the new junior man was to withdraw from the social jealousies and complications, to stick to his own views about which church to attend and to his own domestic arrangements, and to focus on learning Chinese. He survived a period of intense illness and then took on new tasks in the mission which became massive after the senior man suddenly died of cholera, in Legge's arms. In attempting to take over supervision of the mission Legge was horrified to discover the accounts were chaotic, with enough money missing that it suggested fraud. In response, at the still-tender age of 24 he decided he had to bring in British officials to investigate. His next challenge was the discovery that the deceased mission chief had been working on a secret plan to destroy the mission college for which Legge was the Principal, by stealing all the students and their LMS-funded fees and transferring them to another new school. Virtually every aspect of Legge's life in the Malacca station was full of problems, secrets, and nasty events, and he displayed a steady resilience in managing these.

When the Legges arrived in Hong Kong it was a tiny community on the edge of a massive empire that erupted into violent internal conflicts that killed 30 million people during Legge's life there, and his Chinese friends and church members were often direct victims of that violence. On the island, new challenging life events faced by Legge included violent criminal attacks against his family and home during the early years of rapid Chinese migration into Hong Kong. In one such attack he had to use a rifle to hold off robbers during an entire night as they circled his house with torches and firearms, shouting threats.

In addition to responding to these external physical threats, Legge had courage and took initiatives to help others in which he knowingly put himself directly into a position of great danger from dangerous people. While visiting China during the Taiping rebellion, he was placed directly in the line of fire by an arrogant Qing general who then

ordered a child beheaded; risking his own life Legge was so outraged that he rushed forward and with his walking stick attacked the brutish soldier manhandling the child, saving its life. He provided intimate care for friends and to abandoned and deathly-ill parishioners. Legge risked his life for Che, the old beleaguered Chinese pastor and friend in the remote village of Boluo, when he chose to go deep inland into China to help even though he understood with good reason that the mob might decide to behead him and Che at a time in the Taiping rebellion when tens of thousands were being killed in this way. Legge's way of managing this risk was revealing. He told the British Consul in Canton that if he were beheaded the Consul had to promise not to use a gunboat to assert any powers to punish those responsible. When Legge survived this trip but Che was later murdered by a local mob, Legge raised the hackles of the British and Chinese officials by badgering them for years to press the Chinese authorities to investigate and punish the murderers. Across these events Legge showed his usual resilience, but also physical courage.

Faced with the terrors of life-threatening events of nature, Legge responded with his usual sanguine style. He was in a small sailing vessel heading up into the Pearl River delta as a typhoon developed, saved by seeking a safe harbour before the worst hit them on the open sea. On another voyage he and his family barely escaped with their lives when a fire started in the hold of their wooden sailing-ship from land, and Legge had to lead in creating and operating a bucket brigade to douse it. He lived through a cholera epidemic in Malacca, numerous massive fires in Hong Kong that affected his congregations, and six typhoons, including one during the day and night in which his wife Mary died in agony.

Legge also suffered a number of nasty accidents and serious illnesses across his life, starting during his school days. When he was a schoolboy of 13 laid up in bed for the long Scottish winter with a badly broken leg, he responded by using the situation to study Latin, developing great fluency. Two years later he suffered a serious head injury with loss of consciousness and a crushed chest 10 days before his major university entrance scholarship examination at King's College. James responded by soldiering on, telling no adult, writing the massive 12-hour examinations each day for four days, and achieving the top prize. He shocked the university officials horribly when he showed up at the award ceremony with still visible "raccoon eyes". His stoical response, seeking no special accommodation, was a style that he showed in even more challenging events across his long life.

Legge also survived a number of serious accidents during his Hong Kong life. On a voyage to Hong Kong he was badly injured in a fall through a hatch on shipboard,

bruising many ribs at the age of 54. Another time he suffered a bad fall inside his house in Hong Kong, falling off while standing on a chair trying to reach a book on a high shelf in his study, when a chair leg broke under him. He suffered a significant head injury that put him into a coma, his chest was badly bruised, and there was some question if he had broken some ribs. Hannah wrote of the later response of their Chinese staff, "...the servants put the chair for the teacher *as usual*, placing the broken leg at the corner as if it were all whole." (H. E. Legge, 1905), p. 138. Another serious fall when he was older, also left him bleeding and unconscious across the night, his staff unsure what to do.

Twice during his work in Hong Kong Legge became so ill that his life was at stake and he had to be sent back to Britain for his health, first when he was 32, and again ten years later. During his third year in Hong Kong he suffered such prolonged fevers, liver disease, and severe dysentery over the summer months that he was not expected to live. In November he was carried on board a vessel to be sent back to Britain and everyone understood that even if he survived, his mission career was finished. Legge's response, initially despair, turned to his customary resilience as he recovered, and ended with a giant lecture tour in Britain and a visit with Queen Victoria.

Over the years in Hong Kong he suffered many recurrent episodes of fever, liver disorders, and dysentery, then several bad attacks of kidney stones when he was 42, and again in the following years. In the summer of 1864, after eight inches of rain in one day, and severe heat and high humidity Legge suffered along with the whole community during a plague of nasty boils when he was 47. They were "the great plague of China", the organism so virulent the wounds took months to heal. In face of the dreadfully dangerous malaria that killed hundreds of soldiers the first summer of British settlement in Hong Kong Legge did not suffer the disease that summer but did many times later, and some years later he became almost blind from the high doses of quinine needed to counteract the recurrent fevers, the most terrifying affliction that might intrude upon a scholar's life

Legge was poisoned twice in the famous 1857 Hong Kong poisoning event, surviving mainly because he understood after his second bout of illness that it was his morning bread that was sickening him. Others were left permanently disabled and the Governor's wife died after a year of prolonged illness from her arsenic poisoning. Legge's response when he later met the accused Chinese poisoner in prison, was to develop a warm regard for the baker, who was eventually acquitted.

Within the personal confines of his family Legge was also faced with challenges that were horrific, with the terrible suffering of his wife Mary in her later pregnancies, and the repeated deaths of his infants. By the age of 65 he had lost five of his eleven

children to premature deaths, sometimes when they were separated from him by half the globe and in the care of others. He also lost both his wives to premature deaths. In the death of Mary, he lost her and her stillborn child in one day, the day of her delivery, and his close friend Dr. Hobson documented Legge's desperate anguish in the event. Despite his devastation, Legge was pressed by a fractious mission doctor to manage a troublesome mission problem, so within the next day was confronting this and working to solve it. He was worried over the years of illness suffered by his second wife Hannah with severe migraines, heart disease, and stomach ulcers before she finally succumbed to the virulent infection from a perforated stomach ulcer at the time she was recovering from breast cancer surgery.

### Resilience

Legge's outstanding resilience in response to this long list of dangers and miseries shows significant psychological robustness, and it is interesting to consider the sources of that inner strength when hundreds of other mission men were destroyed by their experiences. There are vast individual differences in the ways that people respond to challenging and even horrific events. By modern Western standards Legge was multiply faced with severe and challenging events, but he never developed anything resembling our modern diagnosable "posttraumatic stress disorder". The evidence is instead that James Legge responded with resilient emotions and behaviour. It was not just a matter of "coping" or "surviving", but thriving. Descriptors across his life emphasized he was genial, kindly, helpful, could make a joke at his own expense, and was forgiving toward the frailties of others.

Legge's inner resources included his basic temperament, his considerable intelligence, and his religious beliefs. He was reared in a tradition of stoicism with roots in the Latin authors he had studied so intensively. The Scots style of nonconformist belief stressed plain living and sustained effort, supported by the workings of Providence with its benign implications. In an 1869 sermon directed to young people in Huntly he explained that when he was faced with problems he had found "A good rule, was to give up always the course of the mind, and look difficulties in the face, accepting whatever duty seems to be devolved upon me in Providence". In the face of danger and loss he was able to regulate his emotions, learn from experience, and master pressing and on-going demands even when he was in the middle of a terrible event. His fantastic productivity in work across these decades of dramatic events is the greatest testimony to this emotional competence. His ability to respond productively to emotionally challenging events did not represent an inability to experience emotion, for his letters

and those about him by others all show his emotional life as rich and warm, and not a frozen Victorian caricature. Legge also had the support of family and friends in the LMS and general community.

When faced with conflict he was willing to support his positions with vigour, whether it was in relation to social behaviour or translations. As he became confident in his skills in understanding Chinese culture and literature he would mount a sturdy defence of his translations when challenged by those who held different views even when it created social problems for himself, as in the court cases where the British community was angered when his translations supported accused Chinese. Across the miserable years when Boone and his friends battled Legge's translation decision on the best Chinese term to use for God, Legge responded with vigour in writing, but there is no evidence of personal confrontations.

Did Legge's assertive style in contentious matters reflect egotistical arrogance, or did it arise out of strong convictions of the validity of his views in a man still willing to acknowledge expertise in others when he found it? One answer comes from examining how Legge responded when confronted with another brilliant person, William Seward, US Secretary of State and survivor of the attacks that killed President Lincoln at a time when Seward was already disabled from a terrible carriage accident and still showing gross visible damage and frailties in 1870. Legge was thrilled and exhilarated by the dinner conversations they had, and there is no hint of jealousy at meeting someone of great experience and intellectual talent. Instead, Legge was energized, marvelling at the speed, clarity, and breadth of Seward's mastery of topics.

Legge was a man of integrity and expected it of others in the mission field when contentious and murky issues arose. At times these made him significantly upset, but he navigated his thinking toward an impartial look at the evidence and a rational solution. In Malacca Legge was deeply disturbed by the evidence of Evan's improper financial manipulations and quickly turned all evidence over to the top British official to ensure that the problems were examined impartially. On the question of Gutzlaff's fraudulent converts Legge was outraged by the corruption he perceived and did not stop his efforts to show the truth until it was clear to the public that his charges had been correct.

In his younger years James had a rather strict view about what kinds of behaviour were proper for himself and others, but these softened across his years in Hong Kong where he became typically forgiving when others behaved badly. When he was a theological student Legge had been urged to go to a theatre where Malibran was to sing, began thinking about this use of his time, decided that he wanted a more upright life, and went home. This early somewhat ascetic stance is misleading as evidence of his

strictness. Later in Hong Kong his genial manner was welcomed by the annual St. Andrew's Dinner organizers when they invited him to be the evening's "croupier" (master of ceremonies) for an event that included songs and funny toasts, which he agreed to do. Despite the temperance movement spreading from Methodists to other Protestants in Britain, Legge had an easy attitude toward alcoholic drinks and enjoyed them, as did his wives. His Scots' academic tradition had included providing port to the young university scholars during their examinations, and he had been a happy recipient.

Legge was also forgiving and gentle with men who had been unable to handle the tasks of life. In his later years in Hong Kong he wrote with sympathy about some of the dispossessed Westerners in Hong Kong: "Many cases of distress there are, waifs cast ashore on the island, reduced to misery almost invariably by their own drunkenness and other misconduct; among them many scions of good families, well-educated ne'er-do-wells, who now and then make a rally and then fall into the slough again. I have had to do with some specimens of Irish poor, but worse were English and especially Scotch destitutes, men capable of better things and of rising in society, but lost, utterly lost, through various vices." (H. E. Legge, 1905) p. 166. His comments assign responsibility in a typically Protestant manner, but at the same time show pity and tenderness.

This gentle tolerance for both active and reformed reprobates during his years in Hong Kong was apparent even when he was a direct victim, as when he developed a cordial relationship with Zhang Yalin, his suspected poisoner in the Hong Kong prison. In other cases, he and his Chinese congregation acted with sympathy when they had to deal with a "fallen son". His years of collaboration with the bohemian intellectual Wang Tao also showed that Legge had a robust appreciation for the complexity of personalities.

Legge's personal style was easy, unassuming, and open. He found a companion Walker "too undemonstrative, like a snail – it requires a very fine day indeed to make him put out his horns". Legge was quite lacking in egocentricity and was often unaware of the impression he was making, as during some of his artless comments during social events in his years in Oxford. His granddaughter Domenica was amused at his absent-mindedness when she knew him in his later life. He would head out into Oxford still wearing his black study gown and the red fez that he and other men of that period wore to keep their heads warm in their chilly rooms.

In Legge's obituary in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, one acquaintance marvelled that "He had many troubles, but they never broke his serenity or dimmed his brightness... one could hardly imagine a personality more winning".



### Modern theories about responses to challenging life events

Legge's responses to the challenging events of his life can be examined through modern models of psychological response to trauma. Across the 20<sup>th</sup> century there were two major models. In the first half the Freudian model prevailed, with its core idea that very early life events laid down emotional responses that persisted as internal conflicts across life, distorting behaviour and experience. These residual conflicts were held to be unconscious and at a level more powerful than consciously experienced life events in contributing to mental disorder. In the second half of the century the behavioural, then cognitive-behavioural model gained popularity, with its conception that life events that are current and conscious are the more important features affecting emotions and beliefs, and can be the source of mental disorder or thriving.

Despite their apparent differences, both models share important beliefs, at their roots providing strongly environmental explanations. Freudians emphasize more ancient and unconscious environmentally-created emotional forces, while behaviourists stress those that are more proximal and conscious. In both theories the major explanations concern events that are experienced as traumatic, and they are similar in assuming that all events threatening danger or loss are traumatic and create increased risk for mental disorder. The most extreme expression of this idea is the diagnostic entity of posttraumatic stress disorder in the major diagnostic manual for mental disorders (American Psychiatric Association, 2013)<sup>42</sup>, the DSM, which starting in 1980 defined PTSD as a mental disorder. In criteria for the disorder the manual explicitly states that proximity to an event that can elicit great fear is the central cause of the disorder, reflecting both of the environmental models of the day.

This conception in the two main theories assigning power to events in creating mental disorder has lagged behind significant advances in behavioural genetics and cognitive psychology. There is now strong evidence from massive twin studies that some key features of personality are significantly genetic in origin. In the major current model for personality, the 'Big Five' model, (referring to five major dimensions of personality), two dimensions have been intensively studied in longitudinal and cross-cultural studies: neuroticism, and extraversion/introversion. Both these dimensions reflect behaviours

---

<sup>42</sup> The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders (DSM) now in its fifth edition, since its 1980 edition has included a diagnostic category for posttraumatic stress disorder. There is a vast literature about this category, its politicized origins and its problematic features, because of the epidemiological evidence that only a very small proportion of individuals exposed in common to dangerous events, will develop the disorder.

that show high correlations within identical twins whether or not they are separated, and much lower correlations in fraternal twins or siblings. These findings mean a high proportion of the trait is genetic in origin.

“Neuroticism” in this modern personality theory is not the cliché of 1950 dramas, but is a more general tendency to respond to life events with high arousal of negative emotion. This emotional volatility reflects a lowered capacity to regulate experienced emotion and its overt expression. This genetically-loaded volatility of temperament shows up from earliest infancy, and although the specific behaviours shift across the developmental years, the temperamental quality of rapid arousal to events is strongly consistent across life within a given individual. This represents an “individual differences” factor of genetic origins. Evidence is also establishing that neuroticism is a crucial factor in determining whether challenging life events result in a traumatized person who then develops the mental disorder of PTSD after that experience. This biological evidence means that every strong model used to understand the effects of danger or loss life events on the emotional condition of an individual, has to incorporate more than early or current life events. It also has to incorporate this genetic feature of individual temperament. From the evidence we have about Legge’s responses to the dangers and tragedies of his life it seems he was gifted with a temperament that allowed effective management of his emotions.

In addition, the evidence is strong that belief systems act to modulate emotional condition after exposure to toxic life events. Beliefs that can buffer the experience include individual beliefs about personal resilience and agency, and many specific beliefs relating to the power of other people, events, and other factors. One family of beliefs relates to religious beliefs, and in general these appear to be helpful to people facing challenging events. General intelligence is also a moderate buffer affecting the capacity to respond to toxic life events, and under broad range of environments, reasoning abilities have a significant genetic contribution. I have reviewed these issues in a book (Bowman, 1997). Extreme harsh events do not invariably create traumatized functioning sufficient to explain posttraumatic stress disorder, and instead events have to be placed in a context that includes biological and cognitive features of an individual. All these factors are relevant in understandings Legge’s sturdy responses across such an array of life-threatening and challenging events.

#### Legge’s responses to toxic life events

Freud wrote that the capacities for work and love are the criteria for effective psychological function, and these still make sense today. Examining James Legge’s life

in light of these criteria, there is no evidence of impaired capacity in adulthood for love or work. In relation to Freudian theory there is no evidence of any deep personal miseries during his early life, despite Legge's learning later that his birth-mother had died and the woman he knew as his mother was in fact a stepmother who had entered his life a few years later. Legge's recent champion Girardot suggested that Legge was "haunted by a vision of the mother he never knew" (Girardot, 2004), but the basis of this claim is not clear<sup>43</sup>. Using the behaviourist lens, looking at Legge's responses to extremely dangerous life events with high risks of mortality, or deeply saddening life events including the numerous premature deaths of beloved family members, there is no evidence of any crippling effects on his own capacity to function. In sum, there is no evidence of PTSD, of significant depression or an anxiety disorder, of any diagnosable disorder, or even of sub-clinical behavioural disturbances, despite a lifetime full of dramatic challenges and losses.

Legge responded with steady resilience to all his dangerous bodily events, illnesses, fevers, liver disease, Hong Kong boils, kidney stones, leg ulcers, visual disorders, serious accidents with broken ribs, arm and sprained wrist, gout, arsenic and quinine poisoning, and periods of massive overwork and exhaustion. His psychological functioning showed similar resilience to the direct dangers of travel and to the fractious disputes of his life in Hong Kong. Despite the truly Victorian list of perils suffered, Legge worked tirelessly at his "day job" as missionary and teacher, and at his public-service volunteer work including the public education system for Hong Kong. Above all he worked almost without any respite over a sixty-year period in the early hours of every day at the heroic translation and educational task on the Chinese classics that he had set himself as a young man of 25.

Legge's capacity to recover to productive functioning and to retain warm family relationships after even extreme events represents sturdy resilience, and is an example of the limited power of the traumatic life events-environmentalist model that the DSM has set down for PTSD. Instead, Legge's life reveals the very important additional individual factors that permitted him to transcend events.

---

<sup>43</sup> While Girardot wrote in his obituary for Legge in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, that Legge was "haunted by a vision of the mother he never knew", this is not based on any evidence. In his book Girardot on p. 28 also describes how Legge as a young man was haunted by the idea that he might become a missionary, after learning of his mother's hopes for him. I cannot find evidence of that.

From the evidence of his life, Legge's personality was low in temperamental "neuroticism" (the tendency to respond to life changes with negative emotions), he had a strong belief system in which he believed in the meaningfulness of his tasks, he had the outstanding cognitive abilities that allow an individual to have an objective perspective on events, and he had incredible energy and openness to experience. All these mitigate the impact of exposure to even horrifying life events.

Young James Legge started life as a brilliant scholar from a remote northern village, and lived a life with dramatic and emotionally challenging personal and political events powering through his daily life. In response to these he lived a wonderfully rich life, was a loving husband and parent, dedicated teacher, preacher, and publisher, while in addition producing fantastic scholarship and productivity on a scale almost hard to believe.

### Chapter 71 Social and political opinions

By early adulthood Legge had formed political opinions relating to the world beyond Hong Kong and China that were essentially liberal and progressive, but not doctrinaire. In China he argued for British neutrality toward the Taiping civil war even though this exposed him to very public criticism from both other mission men who believed the rebellion was Christian and should be supported, and from British officials who sided with the dynasty. While other Protestant missionaries who had first admired and supported the Taiping rebellion had been forced by the facts to change their views, Legge's more impartial perspective held steady. When the Franco-Prussian war broke out in 1870 he again argued for British neutrality, accurately expecting that eventually Napoleon III would end up a refugee. On the "Irish question" he supported Home Rule.

Although he held various progressive social views, Legge was not an automatic contrarian to official opinion. He did not seek out radical groups, and took no pride in any automatic attachment to any single-issue group even if he shared their views. Instead for example, in a letter to Marian in 1874 he described himself as "a truly philosophical radical, who can never think of "dissenters" with the slightest particle of personal attachment, though I would fight for them vs. powers that be".

### Legge, opium, and Joseph Jardine

Legge was of a Scots tradition in which drinking beer, wine, and spirits was no sin if not done to excess, and his views about opium use were similar and unusually nuanced for his era. He regarded moderate use as reasonable, while being strongly opposed to the British trade in opium and was outraged that the British Government did not outlaw the cultivation of opium in Bengal once India became a colony in 1857. In his 1872 farewell address to the Hong Kong community Legge said that although he "glowed with true British patriotism", he thanked God that it was the Americans who had opened Japan to the west rather than the British, for the American treaty prohibited the opium trade (J. Legge, 1872b).<sup>44</sup>

When he was on his final trip through Northern China in 1873 Legge became very upset as he realized that the Chinese were now developing their own vast cultivation of opium, with villagers growing large fields of poppies just outside the Confucian

---

<sup>44</sup> This is not to imply that Americans were not engaged in the opium trade, for they were, with the greatest American personal fortune ever collected being that of John Jacob Astor, founded in part on opium trading. Warren Delano, the maternal grandfather of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, also thrived in the trade.

ancestral village of Qufu. “It is sad to think that we have not only forced our drug upon China, but that we have thus led the people to cultivate it for themselves. There will yet be a heavy retribution for our policy and course in this respect.” (H. E. Legge, 1905) p. 195. Legge spoke to the farmers, and when he found out the crop earned them five times the value of any other crop they could grow he recognized the crop presented “an overwhelming temptation. The people will become more and more demoralised.”

During his years at Oxford Legge continued to be active in the campaign to suppress the opium trade, giving a passionate speech in London arguing for abolition of its sale. He was personally embarrassed by the hypocrisy of the British government position when he was invited to the home in London of a former Chinese Ambassador whom Legge had known in China. Guo Songtao admired Legge and considered that he was as much Chinese as English. Because he knew they shared a powerful sympathetic bond, Guo challenged Legge to tell him which country was superior. Legge felt embarrassed at being forced to make such a stark choice when he shared so many values with Guo, then finally answered that “do not be angry with me, it is in spite of all that I place England first”. Guo persisted, agreeing that in terms of industry, the railways, and the navy England was clearly superior, but pressing Legge to give a verdict in terms of the moral qualities of the two nations. After more consideration Legge again responded that he thought the English were superior. Guo then reminded him of the opium problem. “Why does your country compel us to receive opium from it?” Legge later wrote, “at these words I remained dumb; I was shamefully beaten”.

In this view of the trade, Legge was expressing opinions shared by all the Protestant missionaries, including even those of the old freewheeling maverick Gutzlaff who had first sailed up the China coast in 1832 as interpreter on an opium boat. In the records of the Protestant missionary journals the *Chinese Repository* and the *Chinese Recorder*, there are regular articles lambasting the government for its persistent support of the opium trade (Baldwin, 1868). One author recounted the problems he faced in a long debate with an ancient Chinese scholar about goodness. The scholar castigated the missionary for the evils of the British support for the opium trade and concluded that Christianity could not offer any moral message to the Chinese as long as Christian nations supported the trade. The missionary accepted the rebuke as faultless.

British officials were scornful of these nonconformist mission critics, including Legge, but he was undeterred in his views.

“I lived and went about among the Chinese for fully thirty years. I heard the testimony about it of thousands in all positions of society. I knew

multitudes ruined by indulgence in the vice, in character, circumstances, and health. I saw the misery caused in families as younger members of them were led away into the habit of smoking. I knew cases of suicide arising from it. I have been member of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade from its beginning. It is not pleasant to be called a “sentimentalist”, a “fanatic,” or a “goose,” but to the man who longs for right, such calling of names is, to use an expression of Confucius, as “a floating cloud.””

Nevertheless, from his earliest days in Hong Kong he and his LMS friend Dr. Benjamin Hobson had been careful observers of the exact nature of the risks of opium use, and had developed a sophisticated understanding that looks surprisingly modern. He and Hobson collaborated on an extended and fascinating essay reviewing every aspect of opium, from its growth, description and trade, to its uses. They concluded that it was truly a harmful drug when used to excess just as alcohol was, but used in moderation as they had seen it among the Chinese *literati*, it did not seem to impair any aspect of life. This opinion was as unpopular in the eyes of the anti-opium mission men as his critiques of the trade were in the eyes of British officials.

What are we to make of Legge’s use of a grant from two Jardines to cover the costs of the printers, paper, and ink in his publication of the the first Chinese Classics? Legge first received a promise of support from Joseph Jardine for the costs of publishing his Chinese Classics in 1861, and was supported by Joseph and his brother Robert after Joseph died suddenly later that year. Joseph and Robert were members of the huge trading company Jardine Matheson, which had been founded in 1832 in Canton by their uncle William, originally a ship’s surgeon for the EIC. William Jardine had built up his company starting by doing some free-lance trading while still employed by the EI Company, then left the EIC in 1816 to work for other traders before he set up his own firm to trade in tea using illegal opium earnings to pay for the tea. By the time the EIC lost its monopoly for trade with China in 1834, Jardine’s was a major firm.

When the Treaty of Nanking ended the first Anglo-Chinese trade war of 1839-42, the first Governor of the new colony of Hong Kong Sir Henry Pottinger issued a fiery proclamation against opium smuggling, but he allowed it to be landed and stored in ships moored at Lintin island near Hong Kong, suggesting his rant was symbolic rather than an authentic expression of his policy (Blake, 1999). For the next few years the Jardines and other traders did a steady but quiet trade in opium, eventually losing market share in the 1850s to new coastal competitors such as the steamships of the P & O Line, and then to the Chinese farmers and traders who took over the business when

the Qing dynasty legalized the trade in October 1860. By 1872 the last remnants of Jardine's opium trade ended. The firm continues today with businesses ranging from the populist Pizza Hut to the luxurious Mandarin hotel chain, and in May 1997 the modern company was welcomed back as a business partner in China after decades of estrangement. Ironically a key trigger in this rapprochement was the scolding of the company by British regulators; this apparently suggested to the Chinese that the company was not acting for the British government (Lindorff & Dawley, 1997).

At the time when Josiah Cox went to Joseph Jardine in 1856 to seek help for the costs of publishing Legge's books, Joseph was a minor figure in the company while his brother Robert had become Taipan in 1852. Old profits from the Jardines' opium trade helped to create the company whose descendants decided to cover the costs of publishing Legge's Chinese Classics, but it is not clear that Legge's patron Joseph was in the opium trade. By the dates involved it seems more likely that the two Jardine nephews were in the new kinds of business allowed by the free-trade treaties allowing British traders more trading freedoms for the sale of other goods. The Jardines were active in selling trade goods as well as financial and insurance services to offset the purchase costs of Chinese goods such as tea and silk. It is certainly not correct to write that Legge was "in the employ of opium dealer Joseph Jardine" as claimed on a website of the Schiller Institute.

#### Legge on crime and punishment

Legge was a progressive in his views on the best ways of increasing public well-being and safety. He was against the death penalty far before this became even a liberal attitude. He also understood that attitudes of respect for justice rather than brute force provided the most effective way to improve human behaviour.

"That law and order are the rule increasingly in Hong Kong and along the coast is a growing impression, and that impression is a surer preserver of the peace than the gallows, the axe and the sword. Bad men are kept habitually obedient to the law by the form of justice armed with power in their mind's eye more than by outbursts of indignation occasionally aroused against them, and from which they always hope to escape." (J. Legge, 1872a), p.180.

Legge's views about the Chinese in Hong Kong were more liberal than the views of most around him. For example, he protested against the views of other British residents who argued that British laws were too lenient for the Chinese in Hong Kong, and that



the British should use the very harsh punishments of China with Chinese within the colony. “By all means let the treatment of crime be deterrent; but that we must institute a new code of penalties taken from Chinese or other barbarous practice is an outrageous suggestion, the birth of reckless thoughtlessness, or of minds soured from their own distemperature” (J. Legge, 1872a), p. 181.

Consistent with his belief in the value of education, Legge urged that simple Chinese text translating all the Colony’s statutes be prepared for sale at a very small price to the Chinese community so that all would have an equal understanding of the rules. In proposing this Legge was mindful that one of the reasons that all foreigners inside China were so fearful of being subject to the Chinese justice system was that they had no way of knowing the laws, which were largely under the control of local magistrates and not widely available as written texts.

#### Legge’s views of the Chinese people

Consistent with his Scottish and Enlightenment upbringing Legge was a natural egalitarian in his views of other people within his home communities or a world away. He expressed that stance across his entire life in behaviour that was equally respectful to the most alarming down-and-outs in Scotland or China, and to visiting political leaders or even to the Queen. Legge’s egalitarianism was not just a matter of theory, but was applied to all, in very concrete ways. He responded to the specific person and that person’s behaviour, rather than their categories of race, wealth, or power.

His work with Chinese colleagues and assistants developed into close friendships, as with his research assistant Wang Tao, a natural Bohemian with a Shanghai past that was far from prim or conventional. The closest male friend of Legge’s adult life was Hong Rengan, the Chinese man who eventually left to help his cousin lead in the Taiping rebellion against Legge’s advice. When Chinese colleagues became embroiled in controversy he helped the other westerners study the facts with objectivity, as when Dr. Wong Fun in the Canton LMS asked Legge for help with his salary problems. Legge was straightforward in guiding Wong to use the LMS documents he had to insist the Society honour its promises to him. When Wong’s behaviour in Canton led to conflicts in the mission involving his long-time friend Benjamin Hobson, Legge tried to calm all the tempers to get a clearer view of the problems.

Legge’s views respecting Chinese people were not simply armchair, and he was not shy of physical actions to protect individual Chinese from injustices in situations that represented truly disinterested goodwill and with no advantage for himself. He once encountered an Englishman flogging a Chinese man in a dispute over money. Legge

“ablaze with indignation” grabbed the Englishman by the collar and physically interfered to protect the Chinese man. Legge showed even greater personal courage in his attempts to help poor old beleaguered Che Jinguang deep inside China during the Taiping rebellion, when Legge knowingly risked being beheaded if he were captured by one of the warring groups during his trip inland to force the mandarins to treat Che with respect. Legge made this dangerous trip solely out of a desire to see Che treated with justice. In another trip in China he had risked imprisonment and worse when he physically intervened on a battlefield against the grotesque intended beheading of a young child at the orders of the Taiping general.

Legge also taught egalitarianism to his Chinese congregations, who were steeped in the feudal hierarchical structure of Chinese culture. In a sermon about the importance of everyone keeping the Sabbath as a special day, he explained that in Christianity there is one law alike for masters and for servants. Equality was part of Christianity because the religion was for all people, intended to break down the walls between “Gentiles and Jews”. “There was one law for the master of the household and for his servants”. The glory of Christianity and its difference from all other religions was that it taught that “God had made of one blood all nations of men”, explaining in rich imagery, “The Cross affords a shelter to the dwellers in snowy and stormy climes; it yields a shade to the panting inhabitants of the torrid zone. It is the same message of love and mercy to the subjects of a despotism and the citizens of a republic” (H. E. Legge, 1905), p. 239.

Legge had a lively interest in justice and in the affairs of the Hong Kong police force, and kept his Scottish egalitarianism across all his years there, a style that was quite different from the more class-conscious imperial English style of the government and traders. Members of the English community criticized Legge for his progressive views about the need for Chinese men in the police force. He argued not just for their inclusion, but in favour of their being the majority of the force. English residents claimed he was too Utopian and isolated by his scholarly work to understand the Chinese, but Legge defended himself. He pointed out that “excepting the brothels, there was hardly a house in Victoria and the villages in which I had not repeatedly been, and where I was not known as a friend” (H. E. Legge, 1905) p. 181.

Beyond individual cases and the egalitarianism he taught his congregations, Legge was vigorous in promoting larger institutional plans to aid Chinese people that were radical among the British in Hong Kong, in domains that had nothing to do with mission work. His causes included the idea of public support of secular education, the creation of a public library, the hiring of Chinese policemen, the protection of Chinese

labourers during the era of the exploitative “coolie” trade, and neutrality re the Taiping rebellion. He faced unpopularity from the British expatriates in his role as expert witness in the Hong Kong prosecution of some Chinese fishermen when he held firm to his translation of a crucial document even though it showed the incompetence of British officials.

His general views on Chinese people and culture were based on long, deep, and varied personal experiences, and these led him to appreciate the diversity of Chinese people just as he recognized it in Scots and Englishmen. He lived in such intimate daily connection with the Cantonese people who had flooded into Hong Kong, that by the time he was getting ready to leave the colony he could remark casually that he had personally been in thousands of Chinese homes. In his address to the Hong Kong community at the time of his final departure, he made the point to these expatriates that the Chinese were among “the most law-abiding people found anywhere”. The colonial government was perfectly aware of Legge’s deeply personal involvements in the lives of the Chinese in Hong Kong and had made use of his connections with the Chinese community when it enlisted his help on many occasions, such as after the terrible fires.

Legge also tried to educate Britons about Chinese across the periods of the two Anglo-Chinese trade wars, trying to show that Chinese anti-foreign behaviour was as explicable as western was, both peoples responding to specific very difficult conditions and pressures. He wrote that the Chinese people usually showed a friendly bearing towards foreigners, but when animosities developed there were reasons. His experiences led him to understand that when anti-foreign sentiment boiled up into mob actions, it was always because local gentry were deliberately stirring the pot in order to gain some political advantage.

Legge criticized Western missionaries who came to China only to decry everything about the culture, and to treat its people and their beliefs with scorn. This was true from the beginnings of mission work in China, such as with Jesuit Claude de Visdelou, sent to China in 1687 and author of works about the Chinese that Legge called caricatures. He realized that missionaries could bring good and ill to China, regretting that the early Jesuit missionaries had brought their skills in casting cannons to the empire and had trained Chinese how to build much better cannons.

Protestant missionaries of Legge’s time in China also often expressed scorn for the beliefs and customs of the Chinese when they wrote in English. One of Legge’s old antagonists from the term question controversy, E.C. Bridgman for example, wrote in the lead article of the inaugural edition of the new *Journal of the Shanghai Literary and Scientific Society* that “the Chinese have never been able to rise higher than to a

secondary grade on the scale of nations”, arguing that any examples of Chinese cultural success derived from their early origins as descendants of Noah spread eastward after “the Deluge” described in the Bible (Bridgman, 1858). In a similar vein American missionary Justus Doolittle wrote unsigned essays in Hong Kong’s *China Mail* newspaper, then compiled these in 1867 into a famous book *Social Life of the Chinese* (Doolittle, 1867), describing Chinese customs surrounding betrothal and marriage as “not simply ridiculous and nonsensical, but manifestly injurious to society, as well as superstitious and sinful”. Doolittle considered the Chinese morally degraded, and their reverence for Confucius represented enslavement and intellectual bondage. Legge’s very different nuanced and modern views about the Chinese and their culture were attacked by many of his contemporaries in the Chinese missions, and philosopher Lauren Pfister has identified a major assortment of statements by them directed against Legge for his opinions (Pfister, 1988).

Some missionaries took a more independent stance consistent with Legge’s. Fifty years later for example, one noted that some of the characteristics showed by Cantonese as a group (“energy, grit, and pugnacity” to a unique degree) were the qualities that had led them in earlier periods to be so aggressively hostile to foreign enterprises, then in modern times to become “splendid apostles” once Christian (Bitton, 1913). He concluded “the industry and energy of the Cantonese in Hong Kong, acting under the initiative of British commerce and the protection of British power and justice, have built up the prosperity of the port. Hong Kong is a unique illustration of what may be accomplished by the cooperative activity of East and West (p. 49). In Legge’s book *The religions of China* he wrote of the Chinese people: “During my long residence among the Chinese, I learned to think more highly of them than many of our countrymen do; more highly as to their actual morality, and more highly as to their intellectual capacity.” Not surprisingly, he was still Christian and still believed that Christianity held additional promises of greater well-being for them: “It is only their adoption of Christianity that will enable the people to hold their own, and lift them up in the social scale” (J. Legge, 1880) p. 308-309. Legge’s feeling of connection with Chinese culture was strong and he was open to many Chinese customs. Awakened many times during the night in February 1871 by incredibly loud and long blasts from firecrackers celebrating the Chinese New Year, he wrote of “the noisy happiness”.

Legge was sensitive to the sufferings of the Chinese common people, whether these were from the horrors of war that he had seen during the Taiping rebellion or from miseries closer at hand. He was horrified to learn that it was common for impoverished adults in the traditional beggars guilds to maim a child so that it would present a more

pitiable object for soliciting charity. After one of the huge Hong Kong fires he played a leading role in setting up relief efforts for the people, including writing posters in Chinese that would tell them how to get help. Later in life in England he helped raise money for Chinese famine relief. It seems that he had become significantly “Sinicized” by his decades of life in Chinese culture, and toward the end of his life in Oxford he told his family that he preferred Hong Kong to Oxford (H. E. Legge, 1905).

In his address at Legge’s funeral, Dr. Fairbairn concluded that Legge loved China, “he studied it with an eye made luminous by love. For if ever a man loved a people, James Legge loved the Chinese, and he could not bear to see them do wrong or suffer it”. Only those who knew Legge understood “the splendid dream of humanity” that led him to his life’s work (Fairbairn, 1897).

James Legge held moderate views and sympathetic attitudes to the views of other people in relation to many of their religious and cultural ideas, and tried to evaluate each on their specific merits. This was the case in relation to Chinese beliefs as well as to other kinds of Christianity. His views were more generous than those of many other mission men.

#### Christian problems with Confucianism and Buddhism

From the earliest, Protestant missionaries had examined Chinese and Confucian culture, comparing those beliefs to Christian ideas. Robert Morrison observed that although Confucius did not talk about a deity, the ancient texts that Confucius collected did and Confucius did not criticize the notion. More troublesome to the mission men was the evidence that the system did not acknowledge any life after death, an idea that only seemed associated with Buddhism, a later religion in China. Morrison was also anguished by knowing that the priests were usually illiterate and simply performed *pro-forma* rituals rather than giving guidance (Lovett, 1899). Two generations later another Hong Kong missionary Edkins, was appalled by the material opulence valued in Chinese Buddhism, in which one of the local “living Buddhas” was swanning around decorated with jewellery and sable robes, a sight still seen in WW II Shanghai.

The mission men were often horrified by the sexism, racism, and excessive veneration for status in Chinese culture. Morrison was critical of the fact that Chinese people never met under conditions of equality for communal worship, rather that class-based status rules were in operation even inside temples governing such details as who could sit and stand. Two generations later missionary Lechler had been told by Chinese friends that the foreigners loved their wives much more than Chinese did, so they would pay much higher ransom for a kidnapped wife. Lechler had personally experienced a

major attack of this sort in which a gang set fire to his house and threw in stinkpots in an effort to drive his family into the street so his wife could be kidnapped and then sold back (Lechler, 1877).

Other Christians of the time reviewed some of the major ideas that conflicted with Christianity (Bitton, 1913). The concept of filial piety was so extreme in Chinese culture that it permitted fathers to kill their children under some circumstances, and fathers could use force if a wife or child became Christian and wished to attend lessons or services. The Confucian parallels of male household authority and Imperial authority led to an extreme reverence for all authority and tradition, and a great suspicion of everything new, obviously affecting attitudes to any new religion. The role of specific and different kinds of priests in different family rituals (ancestral homage during marriage, Buddhists for funerals, and Daoists using feng-shui to choose a grave-site) effectively challenged any role for Christian ceremony. The traditions of homage to “idols” and ancestors on feast days in order to fend off bad luck, the belief in ghosts and their evil powers, and the new deification of Confucius as a saint to be worshipped all led to ceremonies that Christians considered as idol worship.

These testy evaluations of Chinese beliefs by some mission men were matched by similar disapproval of foreign religions by Confucian Chinese, disapprovals that waxed and waned with political currents. An early Imperial Edict had ordered that all Chinese and foreigners who did anything in China concerning Christianity (including printing books), were to be executed. A later 1721 Imperial Edict against Christianity had described it as a delusion that failed to venerate ancestors or spirit, and the Emperor scorned Westerners for their “incredible and ridiculous” remarks. Christianity was no different from “other small bigoted sects of Buddhism or Daoism”, strange foreign religions that should be put away.

#### Legge’s attitudes toward Confucian and Daoist philosophy

Various critics have charged Legge with totally opposite biases in his evaluation of Confucianism. During his lifetime many mission men in China complained that Legge was overly favourable to Confucian ideas while ironically, some Chinese Confucian scholars have attacked Legge on the grounds that he did not show enough respect for the “person” of Confucius. Some reviewers of his work in the *Edinburgh Review* claimed Legge dealt with Confucius too favourably, while others scolded his volume I for dealing “inhumanely” with Confucius. Shortly after his death four articles mounting a major attack against Legge were published using a highly selective collection of snippets from his writings put together to apparently “prove” that he was anti-Confucian and anti-

Chinese, (Kranz, 1898). This was picked up in modern times by Lo as noted earlier. One modern critic has claimed that Legge had a “special hatred” of the Confucian commentator Zhu Xi and even more wildly, that Legge specifically trained Hong Rengan to lead the Taiping rebellion in order to help impose British rule in China (Billington, 1993). More moderate modern critics (e.g. (Yao, 2000)) often misstate his views because they have not studied the entire range of his writings over time.

The truth is more complex. Legge’s views about the Confucian moral philosophy that had formed Chinese thought and life for two thousand years changed over his years of work (Teng, 1956/57). His views about Confucian ideas were initially reserved but became more favourable as his knowledge of the Confucian texts increased. When he produced volume I of the *Classics* in 1861, Legge had been evaluating all the text and commentaries from a Christian perspective. He did a respectful review of the claims to worthiness of the Confucian philosophy and concluded that on balance, while Confucianism was worthy, Christianity was superior as a philosophy for specific reasons that did not hinge on religious belief. He concluded “I am unable to regard him (Confucius) as a great man”. A decade later, his 1872 assessment in volume V was more specific. He criticized Confucius for having too little interest in the truth (advocating instead using denial, ignoring or providing misleading accounts when the truth was difficult), and for having excessive reverence for authority and thereby insufficient sympathy for the resentments in men who were suffering from oppression. Legge criticized scholar-officials whose excessive devotion to Confucian ideas was thus going to impair the improvement of conditions in China.

But in his notorious 1877 paper to the first conference of Protestant missionaries to China in Shanghai, Legge’s views were shifting: “Confucianism is not antagonistic to Christianity, as Buddhism and Brahmanism are. It is not atheistic like the former, nor pantheistic like the latter. It is, however, a system whose issues are bounded by the East and by time; and though missionaries try to acknowledge what is good in it, and to use it as not abusing it, they cannot avoid sometimes seeming to pull down Confucius from his elevation” (J. Legge, 1877), p. 37. He argued that the more that missionaries “avoid driving their carriages rudely over the Master’s (i.e. Confucius’) grave, the more likely are they soon to see Jesus ... in the hearts of the people” (H. E. Legge, 1905) p. 38, recognizing shared core values in the two systems. By 1884 Legge was making strong parallels between Christian, Jewish, and Confucian ideas about the basic duty of mankind to love. While Legge acknowledged he was “unable to make a hero” of Confucius, he was determined to give him “a generous appreciation”.

Apart from his own conviction that overall, Christianity offered a gospel of hope for the present world and the afterlife, Legge examined specific teachings of each system in terms of their merits. First, he considered that Christianity had some ideas that were morally superior. For example, Confucius taught that injury should be answered with justice (not kindness), rationally noting that if you respond to injury with kindness, what can you do to respond to kindness? (volume I, Book XIV, Ch. 36, vs 1-3). Legge considered that the instruction by Christ to “turn the other cheek” when harmed by an enemy, was ethically superior to that Confucian (and Old Testament) approval of justice through revenge.

Secondly, in some sections Confucius taught a diminished “silver” version of the Christian “golden rule” (do unto others as you would that others should do unto you). Confucius taught “do not to do others what you do not want them to do to you” (I.XII.II). This instruction lacks the requirement to initiate acts of goodness, although in another section Confucius came closer to that idea when he taught “the man of perfect virtue, wishing to be established himself, seeks also to establish others; wishing to be enlarged himself, he seeks also to enlarge others” (I.VI.28.2). Confucius shifted in the direction of the golden rule when he suggested that at least for friends, there is a duty to behave “as I would require him to behave to me” (*Doctrine of the Mean*.I.XIII.4), but does not extend this duty to strangers or enemies. By the time of his final edition of the Confucian Analects Legge was writing that Confucius was talking about reciprocity here, then added “altruism may be substituted for reciprocity” (I.XV.XXIII). This completely expands the originally negatively-phrased Confucian “silver” rule into a closer relation of the Christian “golden” rule. Legge eventually pointed out that Confucius had criticized himself for not taking the initiative in doing to others as they would do to him, and argued that the “negative golden rule” in some Confucian texts that was so widely criticized by missionaries, was also understood by Chinese in its positive form, exhorting people to take the initiative to do good works (R. Edkins, 1898). This topic has been the focus of scholarly debates for 150 years.

Thirdly, Legge criticized Confucius for some of his moral rules, as when he wrote that it was proper for a father to conceal the misconduct of a son and *vice versa*, holding family ties more important than impartial community justice (I.XIII,23.2). Legge thought this was an “incomplete” notion of morality, and in this judgment his ideas are consistent with modern studies of the development of moral judgement. These show that from its simplest, most rigid and concrete notions in early childhood, moral reasoning changes into more complex adult notions of just behaviour that ultimately use humane universal principles that transcend family or tribal ties or specific rules



(Kohlberg, 1981). At times Legge chastised Confucius for more minor limitations, such as his exaggerated reverence for Yao, an ancient leader.

Sometimes Legge criticized not Confucius but some of the later traditional interpretations on his works handed down by famous commentators. He explained for example, how certain Confucian ideas that “every man should mind his own business” (*Analects* VIII.14) had been traditionally interpreted in a way that prevented the spread of ideas about political liberty in China. Legge also often took a more sophisticated and distanced reading of texts than the traditional commentators, recognizing irony where it was clearly present even though the commentators had made a concrete and literal interpretation (e.g. *Analects* IX.2.2). At times Legge playfully twitted Confucius for his excessively high-minded morality as when Confucius wrote that all the ideas in the classic Book of Poetry could be summed up as meaning “have no depraved thoughts”. Legge noted that some of the lusty peasant poetic sentiments would not meet the Sage’s ideas of morality, teasing that “a few individual pieces are calculated to have a different effect” (*Analects* II.2 Notes). Across his life Legge evaluated each Confucian teaching on its own terms, and it is important to see that his views changed across his lifetime of study of the texts.

By the time his second revised edition of the *Confucian Analects* was published late in his life at Oxford (1892) Legge had again altered his original mixed evaluation of Confucian ideas to an ever-more favourable conclusion, moving from a muted one of limited respect to a clear expression of great respect. He noted with approval that both Confucianism and Protestant Christianity taught a number of similar precepts. Both said that young people are to be treated with respect. (IX.22. Notes). Both claimed that the “natural” condition of humans is “morally abnormal”; in the *Analects* (XII.1) Confucius taught that it was necessary to subdue one’s nature in order to act with propriety, paralleling the Christian notion of original sin. Legge approved of Confucius writing that while facing danger with stoicism, “heaven produced the virtue that is in me” (VII.22). Legge was pleased both that this showed Confucius was calm in danger, and that this calmness came from awareness of divinity, which was consistent with all Legge’s writings on the ancient roots of the notion of a divinity in Chinese culture. He also was pleased to find that the two systems agreed that a truly virtuous person will never act wickedly (*Analects* IV.4. consistent with I John, iii, 9).

In his 1892 Introduction to that revised second edition, Legge significantly changed his summation about Confucius. “But I must now leave the sage. I hope I have not done him injustice; *the more I have studied* his character and opinions, the more highly have I come to regard him. He was *a very great man*, and his influence has been

on the whole a great benefit to the Chinese, while his teachings suggest important lessons to ourselves, who profess to belong to the school of Christ.” This daring public declaration was consistent with his private correspondence, where Legge always referred to Confucius as the Sage (never in quotation marks), and in other published work as the Master, always with the greatest respect. Modern Chinese scholars have recognized this significant shift in Legge’s views (Teng, 1956/57).

Over time Legge became so immersed in the Confucian way of thinking by the time he had completed the final revisions he had become a clear advocate for it. More amazingly, beyond that, he even analysed and criticized other Chinese commentators of the Confucian texts from a perspective that showed he was using Confucian criteria in a more classical way than they were. In this Legge was influenced by a Tang dynasty scholar who had tried to revitalize Confucian ideas in a way that paralleled the attempts of the nonconformist churches of Legge’s time to revitalize Christianity (Pfister, 1991). His consultant and friend Wang recognized the supremacy of Legge’s grasp of Confucian thought, and when the leading Chinese Confucian scholar Chen Huan died in 1863, Wang wrote in tribute that the only scholar in China capable of succeeding Chen was James Legge (Ride, 1960).

Modern Chinese scholars consider Legge’s attitudes as respectful to Confucianism. One has noted that Legge became so sympathetic to Chinese culture that he was willing to mount severe criticisms of Christian nations (Lau, 1994). Modern Yale historian Lamin Sanneh has concluded that over Legge’s lifetime of work on Chinese classics he had been “subverted by things Chinese”, revitalizing the world of learning with his work showing the intellectual greatness of China in the face of Western ignorance (Sanneh, 1995). A modern analysis of Legge’s attitudes towards Confucian thinking by a Chinese scholar notes that Legge’s evolving engagements with the Confucian canon “led to enthusiastic identification with Confucian teaching” (W. Zhang, 2002). Zhang concluded that Legge developed detachment from both his culture of origin and from Chinese culture, in an effort to reduce the confusions they created. Zhang considers that Legge gradually adopted the position of “an ancient Chinese thinker and sometimes identified himself with the Chinese Confucian tradition”. In particular Zhang noted Legge’s appreciation for the Confucian idea that rulers should set an example of personal virtue, and Legge’s conclusion that the West had begun to abandon the powerful idea of setting a good example, even laughing at the idea. Another scholar explained Legge’s detachment from his own culture as reflecting his remarkable and great appreciation for Chinese culture (Shadick, 1963).

Beyond the cloistered halls of scholarship, Legge's work was criticized in a modern book by international financier George Soros who argued that Confucian values are inadequate to support modern ideas of human rights. Writing in the *Far East Economic Review*, the reviewer of Soros' book recommended that Soros should read James Legge's translations and commentaries in order to better understand the breadth of values in Confucianism (Neoh, 1999).

Legge pioneered a radical view finding deep similarities between Christianity and Chinese culture, arguing to ultimate success that there was a longstanding concept in Chinese culture of a universal God, with a name that was present in the most ancient literatures. He also wrote "Confucius was a messenger from God to his countrymen for good" (R. Edkins, 1898). These radical views allowed a genuine dialogue between Christianity and Confucianism that acknowledged mutual influence rather than one-sided imperialism. They also laid the groundwork for on-going dialogues between Chinese culture and Protestant Christianity.

#### Other Protestant views

The similarities and differences between Christian and broader Chinese religious ideas have tantalized scholars for many generations now. Other Protestant missionaries held a range of opinions about the worth of the Confucian moral system, and some of these pursued concordances and clashes between it and Christianity to an extreme. A 1913 book explained themes on which Chinese ideas conflicted with Christian: the notion of filial piety and absolute obedience to the father's authority allowed oppression of women and children; expensive rituals for marriage and death showed excessive reverence to ancestors and idols; the belief in ghosts and their evil powers and the deification of Confucius and authority instead of scepticism (Bitton, 1913). In contrast, a curious 1932 pamphlet published by Rev. Borden at the progressive Union Theological Seminary in New York tried to prove that Confucian ideas were the same as Christian ideas. Borden tried to emphasize the similarities between the New Testament and the Confucian writings by printing passages from Legge's translation, matched in parallel columns with directly related verses in the New Testament to show their similarity (Borden, 1932).

The debate as to whether Chinese philosophy included ideas about the afterlife continue into modern times; Sinologue Joseph Needham said no, while Legge, and a modern Princeton scholar have argued otherwise (Chang, 1998). Changes in attitudes of Western scholarship to eastern religions in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* have been studied, showing that Legge and Müller's works beginning in the 1880s began a break in

the “wall of prejudice” that made it possible for the authentic voice of the eastern traditions to begin to be heard in the pages of the encyclopaedia, in part arising from Müller’s recognition of common origins in Central Asia (McDonough, 1966).

By 1951 Legge’s granddaughter, scholar Mary Domenica Legge wrote that Legge had been criticized for preferring Christianity to Confucius but that this is an illogical critique. She argued that one is a religious belief system while the other is a philosophy, and that a more logical criticism might reproach Legge for preferring the ethics of Aristotle to those of Confucius, but no one ever did that. Her own logic was correct, but she did not seem to acknowledge that Legge argued that the ancient Chinese moral culture was based on a profound belief in a deity and he did consider Confucianism part of an ancient religion repeatedly documented in the Chinese Classics.

Other Protestant missionaries were highly critical of Daoism because it included multiple gods and had a great dependence on superstitious ideas about gaining immortality through magical mercury elixirs that historically had killed even emperors. These magical beliefs were often used very creatively by Chinese officials in political moves against missionaries, as when there was a strong objection to windows in the buildings built by foreigners on the grounds that the bright light the foreigners lit crossed out through the window and across the street where it was disagreeable to the idols in the temple there (Lechler, 1877).

Legge studied the ancient texts of Daoism and concluded that it represented two distinct streams. One was a philosophical system with a rich literature that included eternal wisdom, while the other was a popular religion full of superstitious magic. When Legge had been on his grand tour of Northern China in 1873 and had gone to the top of the mountain Taishan, a mountain historically connected to Confucius, he had been dismayed by the way that this sober connection had been obliterated by superstitious Daoism, “this most debased system”, with all its amulets and idols being peddled by pathetically suffering beggars. In contrast, he considered that the Daoist philosophers who lived with the humility and asceticism of the philosophy were honourable. He thought that the cultivation of humility characteristic of Daoists was a significant advantage in terms of missionary work for it meant that Daoists did not have the pride of the Confucian literati (R. Edkins, 1898).

In his late years at Oxford Legge’s ideas about Daoism came under an aggressive and personal sarcastic attack by Herbert Giles (1885-86), retired British consular official from China. Giles asserted that Legge had shown too much reverence for the “person” of Laozi, author of the core Daoist text, and showed insufficient scepticism about what Giles asserted was actually a forged text. In response, Legge published a stout defence

of his translation method and analysis. His method had been refreshingly scholarly compared to traditional Chinese methods when he began 40 years earlier, but was now becoming old-fashioned as new techniques of textual analysis were developed in the emerging Western discipline of philology, techniques even more assertively sceptical and technical than Legge's had been.

By the late 20<sup>th</sup> century as Daoism returned to popular culture in the west, its *I Ching* text eagerly consulted for guidance by New Age romantics, its "religious" forms developed a new vitality and new scholarly fans. Its great advantage as a belief system is that the inherent deep ambiguities in the original Chinese texts provide a wonderful field on which everyone can have very different and even conflicting interpretations with no possibility of resolution. Modern scholar Girardot has argued that Legge was unduly cautious and reverential in his reading of the ancient Daoist texts as being pure and worthy, and unduly dismissive of the living popular religion (Girardot, 1999), and his 2002 book elaborates his investigation of the way Legge's ideas created Daoism for the Victorian era.

#### Chinese views of Confucianism and foreign religions

Just as Legge's views about Confucianism changed over time, so too have Chinese evaluations of Confucius changed across time. Within China the status of Confucianism has waxed and waned across different historical and political periods, with periodical attempts to revive it and purify it. One significant attempt came in 1670 when the Emperor Kangxi, one of the longest-ruling and most successful in the Qing dynasty, issued the Sacred Edict, a set of 16 guidelines on good behaviour that had to be read in public twice a month. It was Confucian in tone and even explicitly warned people against the "strange" principles of foreign religions such as Buddhism and Daoism (J. Legge, 1877). After decades of ignoring or decrying the influence of Confucianism across the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in China, in 2004 the government of China established Confucius Institutes within universities in countries across the world, somewhat in parallel with the more independent Goethe Institutes and Alliance Françaises. These new agencies promoting Chinese cultural and language programs reached more than 350 universities by 2011. The government also recently approved the revival of the ancient "tomb-honouring" festival of Qingming, as political shifts again allow attention to traditional Chinese culture.

In China there was also a long tradition of sceptical analysis of "foreign" religions including Buddhism, starting formally with the 1670 Sacred Edict of the Kangxi emperor. This perspective was based on traditional Confucian ideas antagonistic to

ideas of magic and idols that were seen in Buddhism and Daoism. William Milne wrote that this Confucian view despised Buddhism as being a religion for “silly women and children”, although there was also a paradoxical fear of Buddhist idols and the bonzes. During the 1847 attacks by British forces on one city, the Chinese were initially terrified when the foreign soldiers attacked the Buddhist temples and their idols, expecting that the soldiers would be destroyed by the power of the idols. When this failed to happen the populace concluded that although they feared the Buddha, the Buddha feared the British, putting it all into perspective. As late as 1872 a provincial Governor-General of Fukien province warned local officials they were required to stop Buddhist processions and evening plays at Buddhist temples that used magic, incantations, and the excuse of Dragon boat festivals to expel “pestilential influences”. The announcement also reminded officials that they were to enforce orders against religious processions to any house for curing sickness, the erection of shrines favouring local deities or respecting feared ghosts and other “excessively reprehensive magical practices, (Author, 1872), all anathema to Confucians.

#### Criticisms of Legge's attitudes

Legge held revolutionary ideas from early in his career in Malacca in 1840, with his conviction that traditional missionary assumptions of cultural and religious superiority were based on ignorance and had to change. “The idea that a man need spend no time in studying the native religion, but has only, as the phrase is, to “preach the gospel”, is one which can only make missionaries and mission work contemptible and inefficient” (H. E. Legge, 1905) p 229. He spent his lifetime trying to remedy that insularity with his scholarly work, yet within a year of Legge's death, a series of articles were published in the *Chinese Recorder* by missionary antagonists selectively culling sentences out of various Legge texts to try and prove that he was strongly biased against Chinese people and Confucian culture (Pfister, 1988), footnote 40.

This idea has arisen again in modern times in the writing of Lo Huimin, a scholar at the Australian National University in Canberra (Lo, 1996). In an article based on a 1976 talk he originally gave at the end of the Cultural Revolution and clearly echoing its anti-Western themes, Lo criticizes Legge as typical of Protestant missionaries who all denigrated Chinese culture as degraded, in order to justify their efforts. Lo quotes Legge who “confessed (my emphasis) that his mind “recoils shuddering from the thought that generation after generation has descended to the grave, without one individual every having had the thought of God in his mind, or the name of God on his lips”. This highly narrow and selective bit from Legge's vast writings about Chinese culture and beliefs is unfair on many grounds. Legge's quoted comments focused on religion because he was a

missionary, and it is entirely unremarkable that he should lament the fact that vast numbers of Chinese had not had the chance to learn what Legge considered to be the best and only true faith. Even in that, Lo's highly selective report grossly distorts Legge's attitudes about Confucian philosophy and about Chinese ideas of living a moral life.

Lo went on to castigate Legge for producing his translations "with the unacknowledged collaboration of diverse Chinese ghost-workers" (p. 103). This is simple falsehood because Legge did provide clear acknowledgements in print for those who helped him. Early in his work Legge learned much Chinese from working with his friend Ho Tsunshin, and Legge made it clear in their publication of a Chinese novel in English that it was a product of joint authorship (J. Legge, 1843). Late in his work on the Classics, Legge's main Chinese assistant was Wang Tao and Legge wrote specific acknowledgement in his introduction to Volume III, grateful for the help he had received from Wang. Wang was not a co-author in any sense, but a research assistant sheltered and hired by James at a time when Wang's life was in danger, hired mostly to teach rather than to devote his energies to literary consultation for Legge's translations. Even after he began helping Legge with the massive translation projects Wang did not work as a co-author because Legge did not simply copy out what Wang had communicated to him, but instead summarized material from ancient commentaries that might help Legge understand complex text. Legge's Notes spell out occasions when they differed on the interpretation of some texts, and he discussed those disagreements explaining why he reached a different conclusion. From modern studies of Wang's life in Hong Kong with Legge it is clear that Legge was the masterful and driving force when they worked together, and Legge had already put decades of work in the classics before Wang came to work with him. Another modern Chinese scholar (W. Zhang, 2002) has noted that James was assisted by two other helpers, Huang Shing and Luo Xiang, but these men were printers employed to work at the LMS printing press, literate and educated, but not scholars. Critiques of Legge's behaviour and attitudes such as that by Lo are so easily contradicted by readily available facts that they can be regarded simply as doctrinaire efforts to discredit Legge's character.

It is more productive to examine what he actually wrote, both in private and in publications, to build up a more accurate picture of his opinions.

Joseph Needham, the great British scholar of Chinese science, claimed that the classical Chinese did not have any concept of a deity or of an afterlife until the arrival of Buddhism, contrary to Legge's argument. In contrast, Yu Yingshih, a modern Chinese historian at Princeton has argued that ancient pre-Buddhist Daoist texts clearly include the idea of an afterlife with heaven and hell. Much of the Daoist system tried to avoid

death (and hell) by seeking immortality in this world through special concoctions, contrasting with the Buddhist disregard of life and welcoming of death as the opening to eternal life, and Yu's arguments are consistent with Legge's analyses (Y.-s. Yu, 1981).

Many modern critics continue to respect Legge's work even though his 19<sup>th</sup> century language has a classical formality and stateliness. One admired that "the detachment with which he could appreciate the greatness of Chinese civilisation was remarkable", noting in addition the scholarly thoroughness and persistence with which he worked to "present the wisdom of China to the rest of the world" (Shadick, 1963). A modern PhD dissertation at the University of Edinburgh argued that Legge's constant revision of his opinions about Chinese culture represented a "genuine appreciation and sympathetic understanding" that led him to criticize Christian nations for their moral failures, and to recommend study of the Chinese philosophies to learn "valuable lessons" (Lau, 1994). Another modern Chinese scholar has shown that Legge even criticized another contemporary Christian-Chinese scholar for bringing too much Christianity into his translation of Confucian texts, and concluded that Legge had come to identify with Chinese culture so strongly over time that he had become "fully enthralled and praising" (W. Zhang, 2002). Another scholar wrote of Legge, "the Western world owes much to him and the other fine scholars who worked quietly in China through many long years" (Cameron, 1970), p. 340. Scholars have noted that it was the efforts of Western scholars to read and translate ancient religious texts of non-Christian lands and to attempt to understand them from within those cultures, that is the distinctive feature of Western intellectual history (McDonough, 1966). James Legge's work is the most powerful example of this effort concerning Chinese beliefs, even today.

The confusions about what the Confucian texts do or do not teach intrude even into modern international life. Certainly the Confucian teaching that it is necessary for all those in authority to act by example and show personal virtue (J. Legge, 1892-95/1960) p. 105, is a message that can be linked with the rule of law, a condition essential for any just society. As with all criticism, some of the evaluations that scorn Legge's views appear to arise from eccentric perspectives that select only evidence that supports their beliefs rather than using an objective method of examining all the evidence. Some modern Confucian scholars may wish Confucius to be seen only in a positive light, but Legge's more respectful approach treated Confucian arguments as worthy of debate rather than patronizing them by setting them up as untouchable because of the status of the person. Legge honoured Confucian teachings by subjecting them to full scholarly scrutiny rather than accepting all of them as if they were authoritative revelation and thus beyond evaluation.



Legge's views of mission work

While many may think that it is a modern view to disparage mission work because other cultures and their religions should be left alone without intrusions from Western religions such as Christianity, the same critiques thrived in Legge's day. Typically critics would insist that people other lands had their own religions, which should be respected *per se*, rather than being exposed to Christianity. This was a nice example of what is now termed post-modern thinking, in which every point of view is argued as having equal merit, all beyond criticism - except for Christianity. Apart from the obvious problems of this thesis in light of many horrific traditions supported by various religions, ranging across abhorrent traditional cultural-religious practices that still include female genital mutilation, slavery, and ritual human sacrifice, this view is still popular in modern times as part of the Marxist critique of certain kinds of colonialism. In fact there was always vigorous criticism of the idea of taking Christianity to foreign lands. Legge thought about this issue and put forward a sophisticated explanation of why he considered this argument unsatisfactory.

First, Legge did not agree with his academic critics who argued that missions should not interfere with Confucianism because it was a model philosophy. He explained that Western proponents of Confucianism or Buddhism who were critics of Christian missionary work were usually aware of other religions only through reading the classical texts of those religions, which were becoming a huge popular vogue. He agreed that these texts often provided excellent moral guidance and exalted philosophy, but then went on to explain that in the actual living religions, the situation was very different. Legge argued that the daily life of a community had also to be observed to assess how well a philosophy operated in practice. Casual readers of the ancient translations "do not know how the leading principles which these contain have been obscured and overlaid by an ever-increasing mass of superstitions and abominable idolatries. Missionaries have to do with the systems which have grown up, and which contain many things so absurd and monstrous, so silly and so hideous, that I often found it difficult to quell the thought that some demoniac agency has been at work egging men on until their religion has become an insult..." (H. E. Legge, 1905) p. 227. In the case of China the admirable Confucian philosophy was overlaid and obscured with superstitions on such a scale that new principles of belief were required.

Legge did not spare Christianity in his critique of religion as it is practiced. In addition to his increasing admiration for Chinese culture and thought, Legge's views on Christianity also evolved. He became increasingly indignant at the gross failure of Christians to behave in a way consistent with their faith. By 1881 in a final paragraph in

his book about the religions of China he blamed Christians for the divisions within the church, “the inconsistencies and unrighteousnesses of professors; the selfishness and greed of our commerce; the ambitious and selfish policy of so-called Christian nations”. He ended by pointing out the total moral failure of the Christian world in trafficking in opium. In an 1884 book chapter he noted that the presence of degraded social conditions in Christian countries “may well make us lay our hands on our mouths, and cease from judging” the “heathen” Chinese (J. Legge, 1884) p. 35.

Legge was also critical of specific actions by Christian groups. He was part of a tradition within the LMS that was deliberately tolerant of large variations in doctrine within Protestants. Its charter explicitly stated that doctrines about church government were not of any interest, and that its missions were intended simply to spread the gospel. This generous mandate was largely successful in keeping peace across its broad swath of missions, but most Protestant mission men in China were critical of the role of the Roman Catholic Church, a criticism that was reciprocated.<sup>45</sup> Their main journal published articles that included book reviews of old RC memoirs, especially if they were critical of the RC church. For example Italian Fr. Ripa visited RC missionaries in China in the early 1700s and was disgusted by their ostentatious clothing, high style, and by their complete isolation from the Chinese people. He was ashamed that they did all their mission work through using hired Chinese staff, and made few converts. The Protestant reviewer relished Ripa’s critique, especially his report that the Jesuits in Beijing had a system of having their Chinese staff baptize all the infants found dead from infanticide as picked up in daily rounds, in order to inflate their convert numbers (Author, 1848a) p 377-400. This religious practise was sure to scandalize the Protestant mission men who had a more rigorous idea about what baptism should be, and about the criteria an adult had to meet to truly become a convert. In general the Protestant mission men scorned the work of the RC missions and were eager to see evidence of their perfidy.

Legge was different. His work in Hong Kong reflected the broad LMS vision about the differing Protestant groups, and although he strongly disagreed with the hierarchical governance structure of the “Papists”, he extended a liberal benevolence to individual Roman Catholics, as usual responding to individuals on their own merits. In 1861 a young RC Englishman in the colony wrote seeking a meeting with him to learn about the

---

<sup>45</sup> Some Roman Catholic missionaries were equally critical of the Protestants, as when Bishop Ladovic posted notices in RC chapels in Chinese asserting the primacy of the RC churches and warning parishioners about the dangers of reading books recently circulating about Christianity that are “corrupt and obscene” (i.e. Protestant). *Chinese Repository*, 1847, XVI, 246.

doctrines of the Reformation from the Protestant side, noting that all he had learned had been the version taught by his own church and he expected it would have had some “misrepresentation or prejudice” (H. E. Legge, 1905) p.165. These conversations took place, and Legge clearly did not try to convert the man but simply reviewed the various points of difference with him. Twenty-five years later the man wrote thanking him for these conversations, writing that he knew Legge would “be glad to hear” that the Pope had just made him a Knight of St. Gregory the Great, and that he would shortly become a Queen’s Counsel. Similarly assessing each behaviour on its own merits, Legge wrote very favourable comments about the work the Jesuits were doing in Japan during his 1865 visit there.

Although Legge was a Protestant, he was very critical of the largest and most powerful Protestant church of his experience, the Church of England. There were a number of principled reasons for this beyond simple traditional prejudice. Across his life Legge had strong objections to the notion of an Established church – a church receiving money from the general taxpayers and having formal privileged status with the government. The Church of England and the Church of Scotland both benefited from this establishment, and Legge considered both these churches to be beholden to the state and the status quo because of this close relationship. He also objected to formal church hierarchy in which a higher authority could place an unknown minister into a congregation without its approval, supported by government funds. Early in his own career he had turned down exactly such a lucrative offer because of his principled conviction this was wrong.

In Hong Kong he observed the development of local Church of England institutions that were able to take advantage of this lucrative connection with the government while the LMS schools and hospitals were entirely dependent on voluntary contributions that shrivelled up at unpredictable times. When he eventually was awarded the Chair of Chinese at Oxford as the first nonconformist to receive such an appointment, he took part in many efforts to make Oxford more open to students and faculty of other religions and to women, helping to establish Somerville College and others. His openness to the religions, philosophy, languages, and cultures of Asia was thus mirrored in his commitment to openness at Oxford, helping it shed its insular style and parochial, establishment regulations. He helped to broaden the curriculum to include cultural communities broader than simply Imperial India. In such ways recent scholarship asserts that Legge’s life and work was the epitome of the change from monocultural Victorian, Protestant British culture to the 20<sup>th</sup> century development of secular and scientific ways of knowing, (Girardot, 1997).

While believing that Christian faith could help foreigners, Legge equally strongly insisted that missionaries had to become thoroughly educated in the literature and religion of the local cultures in which they were working. He knew that cultural understanding required learning on both sides and recognized that missions had little hope of true results unless the missionaries were capable of speaking with the educated leaders of the local culture with knowledge and skill sufficient to gain respect. Missionaries who only preached to the masses without knowing anything about the culture would make all missions look “contemptible and inefficient”. Beyond that, his work was based on theological assumptions that did not see Christianity as totally discontinuous with Confucian culture (Thrower, 1997), and this was unusual for his time. He would never have spent a lifetime studying the Chinese classics if he had thought they had no merit.

Toward the end of his long career as a mission man Legge had developed some strong opinions about the kind of men that should be sent out to missions. The list of characteristics he wrote Hannah in 1871 was quite long and varied. “It is only a high enthusiasm that will sustain the missionary; and it is only a high degree of wisdom & prudence that will give him success. My view of missionaries is that they ought to be the foremost men whom the Christian church has in its bosom; the men who have intermeddled most with, and gone deepest into, all knowledge; whose intellectual resources are the largest, whose practical & persuasive ability is the finest, whose temper is the most under their control, and who can untiringly make their own the language, the literature, the manners & customs of the people among whom they labour; the strongest in body, the most powerful in mind, the most capable in action”. This description could fairly be applied to him. He added “There have been and are some such men in missions – but few churches or individuals appreciate the demands of mission work”. He knew from his years of bureaucratic struggles with the officers of the LMS, that even the most tireless efforts by mission men were rarely recognized by their mission societies thousands of miles away. He also understood that mainstream churches in Britain still considered most mission men as inferior to those ministers who remained in Britain and established highly visible careers there.

#### Part 14 James Legge's legacies: scholar, educator, mission leader

James Legge left important legacies as a scholar, as a visionary educator-administrator, and as a mission leader, and his life's work can be understood as developing in the reverse order, from mission man to educator to scholar. The last two of these were the most important as they left an international enrichment that continues to our present time. In 1961 Hong Kong University created an endowment fund to use for a James Legge Prize, commemorating both the university's golden jubilee and the hundredth anniversary of Legge's first publication of the *Classics*. In recognition of his contributions to the whole community, in 1994 Hong Kong issued a special stamp showing his portrait, the first such Hong Kong stamp depicting a person other than the British royal family.

#### Chapter 72 Legge the scholar

Legge's exhaustive translation and scholarly works on China were possible because of his exceptional skills in learning, and in learning languages. He had an appreciation of his ability to learn from an early age, from having won major academic prizes both entering and leaving university. He knew he had special strengths in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and although he occasionally quoted French or German authors, Legge was aware of his limitations in these languages and late in his life regretted that he had not been able to use French and German more easily. In adulthood he mastered new Asian languages, learning to speak Hokkien and Malay during his years in Malacca, and Cantonese and pidgin during his years in Hong Kong, although his spoken Chinese was never at the level of tonal accuracy as his comprehension of written texts. In Hong Kong he developed the complex skills of reading classical Chinese at a level that far surpassed that of any other missionary, diplomat, or merchant in Hong Kong or other treaty ports, according to his peers. As one part of his skills, his mission colleague Edkins gave tribute to Legge's "powerful memory", necessary for his work in learning many thousands of Chinese words. "He could store in his mind with ease the singularly complicated characters", which "frighten many persons by their difficulty. To him these were attractive" (R. Edkins, 1898).

Legge's use of multiple languages was not always scholarly in nature, and across his life his love of languages and its tricks, challenges, and games, remained a strong theme. He often did fanciful translations just for fun, back and forth from one to another unlikely combination. His publication of his attempt (with his nephews) to create a metrical version of the Book of Poetry included a few poems translated into

broad Scots, trying to provide the rustic flavour they represented. Legge's granddaughter Domenica Legge wrote that translation was often as much play as work for him, as when he amused himself by translating new versions of the Psalms from Hebrew for fun during his years in Oxford.

While his exceptional skills in Latin were recognized from an early age, Legge had broader intellectual interests, enhanced by his modern university education. His curriculum included "natural philosophy" (the natural sciences), and across his life he had interests in geology, botany, biology, medicine, history, and in technology. In Malacca Legge had written Chinese pamphlets about cholera to try and help the local Chinese population to avoid the disease during an epidemic. When he travelled in Northern China he recorded details of the millet crops in his letters home, marvelling that the millet stalks often reached 14-15 feet tall on thick stalks that he measured. When he gave a farewell lecture in Hong Kong before his final return to England, he included comments on the sewer system, the virtues of the water works, the death rates of different segments of the population at different periods and how these reflected the status of public facilities, and on the fantastic potential of China's coal fields. In the Hong Kong schools he created for Chinese children Legge ensured that the curriculum provided a broad, general, excellent education for the students that reflected his own similarly very good education in Scotland.

Along with most thinking people of his era, Legge was an enthusiast of newly developing public transportation and communication systems including railways, canals, and telegraph. He understood that the dilapidated transportation systems of China contributed to much misery, as when floods cut off remote areas from help from famine. This was a period when the British in India were laying down a magnificent railway system that was soon used to provide famine relief and save the lives of millions there. As he had travelled in northern China in 1873, Legge envisioned a Chinese railway system with Hangzhou as its hub. He wanted one spoke to connect to Canton (which now exists), and others to spread out to the remote provinces of Sichuan, Yunnan and Guizhou. He understood that the real impediment was simply the Qing government, which was strongly resistant to change of any sort, and in particular did not want to put mule-pullers out of business along the tempestuous rivers (H. E. Legge, 1905). During his trip Legge provided vivid descriptions of the miserable conditions of Chinese roads. The standard mule-carts used from Tianjin to Beijing, comfortless cramped wooden boxes, wandered along the major route that varied from flat sand to ancient ruined stone highways with bone-rattling "hideous yawning furrows between them".

Legge was interested in the contrast between building new transportation systems, and maintaining them, and was critical when he discovered that maintenance of initially well-constructed transport systems in China was very poor because of poor governance, expressing a very Scottish impatience with this fatalistic approach. He was impressed when the first steamer arrived in Hong Kong with the mail, on 13 August 1845, thrilled that the *Lady Mary Wood* had taken only 55 days from London. He was equally excited with the development of telegraph lines in Hong Kong in the 1860s and in the arrival of the overland telegraph in Shanghai in 1871.

Although Legge was interested in the marvels of science and technology and was quick to understand how they helped relieve the ghastly physical burdens of human labour, his own intellectual style was decidedly on the “arts and humanities” side of the arts and science equation. He was in permanent confusion about railway timetables across the years he lived in Oxford, and granddaughter Dominica wrote that the “entire railway staff was mobilized to see that Prof. Legge was safely put on the train” when he needed to get to London.

Legge’s general approach to new ideas and questions was a modern, scientific approach, seeking to use empirical evidence to examine claims, even though he had been originally trained in a scholarly tradition that often emphasized looking back to traditional authorities. Legge was generous as a public intellectual, and used his talents in ways that went beyond his formal translation work, generous in using time and effort to respond to every kind of question about China from members of the British general public as well as to officials in Hong Kong and Oxford. He wrote quantities of letters to both family and to strangers approaching him with idiosyncratic inquiries. The result was a massive correspondence on every kind of query on scholarly and even commercial topics relating to China, intensifying in his more accessible years in Oxford.

### Introducing Chinese philosophy to the West

Legge’s outstanding legacy was his monumental work explaining the great culture of China to the English-speaking world through the medium of translation and explanatory text of the major historical Confucian and other texts. His translations are still the standard against which any new translation is compared, while the essays accompanying his translations have never been equalled by other translators although some details have been corrected by modern studies. The original classics were published in eight large books, followed by later revisions, and by new works he published in six books as part of Müller’s great 50-book series of Sacred Books of the East, not to mention the dozens of smaller works. Legge worked on these classics of

Chinese thought across 57 years. During his 30 years in Hong Kong the work was comprised of the *Chinese Classics* of the Confucian tradition, while in his 20 years at Oxford this work included ancient texts associated with Daoism and other classics.

It is hard to imagine the depth and breadth of Legge's accomplishments in the context of his time and place. His challenges started when he began to learn written Chinese by studying in the Reading Room of the British Museum for a few months in 1839 before he left London, a student of one of the few people in Britain with any knowledge of Chinese. He began with excellent language skills in multiple other languages, but learning to read Chinese was a problem because few non-Chinese had ever studied it and there was little written material. There was only one Chinese-English dictionary (created by Robert Morrison in 1822) and Legge soon discovered it was filled with errors. The other resource was an ancient Chinese-Latin dictionary created by the Jesuits before they had been expelled from China in 1724. Energized by the lack of books about China and its culture, early after his arrival in Malacca in 1840 he decided to attempt translation and commentary for the major classical Chinese texts. At that time the only other translations of Confucian texts had been a 1662 version *Sapientia Sinica* (Chinese wisdom, or the Great Learning) done and published by Portuguese Jesuits in Beijing in Latin, and a very poor 1828 attempt into English by David Collis, an early LMS man at Malacca, published there posthumously. Legge's translations have been used continuously in the English-speaking world since their publication, even by scholars familiar with all the alternatives.

#### Legge's scholarship: beyond translation

Although Legge's 14 major and additional books are often described as translations, this is a grossly incomplete description of the actual books, and it is misleading to consider only the translations of a huge body of classical Chinese literature, histories, and philosophy as the main product of Legge's research. His translations simply represented the tip of an iceberg that was formed of his careful historical and evaluative essays, and by his detailed commentary in Notes. Legge wrote that he understood that 99 out of 100 readers would not bother to read his detailed Notes, but considered it was his obligation to write them for that "hundredth" person who might not even find them long enough.

Legge's contribution to scholarship was significant because of his critical examination of texts, consistent with emerging European philological methods. In the course of his work Legge studied all the major historical Chinese commentaries in a critical way and consulted European scholarship. He wanted to understand the context



of the books, to evaluate the authenticity of the works, and to test traditional claims about the authorship and dating. This was a completely new “scientific” approach to Chinese texts, one later adopted by leading Chinese scholars such as Hu Shi (1891-1962), now lauded as the pioneers of a more empirical approach to Chinese history texts (Q. E. Wang, 2000). Although Legge’s method of understanding texts began in a traditional Chinese way, making use of other commentaries written across two millennia in trying to establish the best meaning of difficult passages, his analysis went beyond that to a new, modern, and more critical approach that included a more empirical examination of independent evidence in a way that was very different from traditional Chinese commentaries. The Chinese approach did not seek “external validity”, examining texts and their commentaries in light of evidence external to the works, but instead consisted of reflexive study only of the works and all their canonical commentaries within a closed tradition using methods to assess “internal validity”.

As the years passed and Legge’s works expanded and received attention in world scholarship, this use of external and empirical information to evaluate claims in the commentaries was recognized as a key new feature of his work. Over time all his critics acknowledged his critical empirical method as a totally new contribution to Chinese scholarship, even when they were unhappy with some of his specific translation decisions. A modern scholar of translation has concluded that Legge may have been the first translator to identify the distinction between “dynamic equivalence” translation methods which focuses on ideas, and “functional equivalence” translation that tries to stick to a literal word-for-word method (Corless, 2004), and has noted that Legge achieved the superior dynamic equivalence approach in his translation of the *Yijing*.

Legge’s analysis of the texts in his essays and Notes in his revised second editions published in Oxford in 1892, shows a deep familiarity with vast ranges of Chinese commentaries, and guides his readers to useful additional sources of information. The Notes laid out his thinking and thus allowed his audience to evaluate his work, and it was a great pity that Müller’s *Sacred Books of the East* series did not include them for reasons of volume size. Legge’s final judgments on each controversial topic arose in a logical way from the matters he had examined. While the tone in the Notes was typically authoritative, he was also quite happy to confess when he was mystified by the text, as when he encountered Confucius as holding quite contradictory opinions at different times on key issues.

Prime among Legge’s intended readership were Protestant missionaries, and he assumed that they could all read Chinese, Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and English, using sources and explanations in the Notes from authors in any of those languages without

providing translations. His assumption was justified because those who were sent out by the main mission societies in his time often did have such wonderful educational backgrounds that they were fluent readers of those languages. This can be seen in the articles that they published for each other in the two main Protestant missionary journals in China, the *Chinese Repository*, and *The Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal*. For our generation such multilingual literacy is rarely encountered even among the well-educated, and those components of his Notes are mostly wasted.

Throughout his years in Chinese culture Legge may not have developed his oral skills in Chinese to the same level he developed his skills in reading the ancient written language, in part perhaps because he never had a “musical ear”, crucial especially in Cantonese with its many tones. But Legge was entirely within the mainstream of historical scholars of Chinese, who Matteo Ricci described in his 16<sup>th</sup> century diary as being much more interested in the written language than in the spoken tongue (L. Zhang, 1998).

#### Legge's commonplace translations into Chinese

In addition to his work creating English text from Chinese in the *Chinese Classics*, Legge created many small texts in Chinese as part of his mission work, sometimes translating an existing textbook on a topic of geography, and sometimes writing colloquial stories from the Bible that could be used to demonstrate basic ideas in Christianity. During his stay in Malacca he wrote an educational pamphlet for the Chinese community explaining cholera, trying to dissuade the people from bankrupting themselves on religious parades and ceremonies directed against the demon-gods who were believed to cause the scourge. Once established in Hong Kong he created a bilingual textbook (J. Legge, 1856) of graduated lessons about the world for school children based on an English schoolbook by Baker, a text that was useful enough to be revised in 1864. He wrote and published colloquial versions of two Bible stories in Chinese, representing the lives of Joseph (1853) and of Abraham (1857). Over the years he wrote occasional pamphlets in Chinese to help people avoid problems, for example warning Chinese labourers of the dangers of work in the Californian and Australian gold fields, abused in the “coolie trade”. He understood that for these texts to be effective they should be written in a colloquial, non-literary style. In the single-page hand-outs that he and his co-pastor Ho Tsunshin created to accompany their Chinese sermons, Legge credited Ho with having a wonderfully clear popular style that contributed to their success. This was in contrast to many of the other missionary attempts to prepare Chinese versions of scriptures and other religious texts, written in such an elevated

literary style that they did not reach their audiences with the clarity that Legge knew was important.

Legge's translations from English to Chinese posed entertaining challenges at times, and he provided a funny example to describe the very cultural nature of language and how it affected this translation. The Chinese character for jealousy includes the core meaning-radical for woman. The Chinese idea is that only women can be jealous, and "she has no right to be jealous. Whatever be the conduct of her husband, it is both weak and wicked in her to cherish the passion of jealousy. The word is never applied to a man. What is to be done then in the case of such expressions as "The Lord thy God is a jealous God". The idea must be translated and not the word" (H. E. Legge, 1905), p.228.

### The impact of Legge's scholarly work on general culture in the West

Any educated person today who recognizes the phrase *The Analects of Confucius* is evidence of the impact of Legge's work, for that was his suave term for the *Lun Yu*, "digested conversations" or "ordered sayings", the more literal translations of its Chinese title. Additionally, since his publication of the texts of Daoism, they have become the most-translated classic in the world after the Bible, and the basis of endless re-workings by others. Ezra Pound used Legge's *Book of Poetry* as the basis for modern poetry, with his annotations on Legge's text available online. Beat poet Gary Snyder consulted Legge's *Analects* and *The doctrine of the mean* in studying Confucian ideas, English occultist Aleister Crowley used Legge's Daoist texts as the basis for a more poetical version, and French psychoanalyst Lacan used them in studying the way paradoxical ideas can exist beyond consciousness. Northrop Frye (1912- 1991) literary critic and author of the *Anatomy of Criticism*, studied and annotated his copy of Legge's *Yijing* now in the University of Toronto library. Scholars have created elaborate computer data-bases of all the Chinese characters in some of Legge's texts, such as the *Zuozuan* commentaries on the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, for use by other literary scholars (Page, Garcia-Hidalgo, & Moncayo, 1998), and modern scholars of Buddhism use Legge's "A record of Buddhistic Kingdoms", in studying the travels of the Buddhist monk Faxian.

Science-fiction writer Ursula le Guin used Legge's translation of the *Daodejing* as a crucial source for *The left hand of darkness*. Contemporary I Ching practitioners have created computer programs basing their "three-coin" method of divination on the method Legge published in the book. A counterculture website on the *Daodejing* comments "It's difficult to know whether to praise or condemn James Legge... He knew the culture, and he knew the language, and through his many translations he did much

to get the great Chinese works into English for the first time. But, by his own admission, he felt uncomfortable with many aspects of the culture, especially such puzzling texts as the *Tao Te Ching*. The author adds, “even the Chinese, after 2,500 years of study, still don’t understand the little book with its 81 brief chapters” (Lumley), while another critic has charged that Legge was hostile to the Daoism of the work, and gave a biased Confucianist interpretation of Daoism that distorted 20<sup>th</sup> c. thinking about it (Kirkland, 2004). Modern martial arts theorists list Legge’s *Yijing* as the source of martial arts philosophy explaining that Legge’s translation “is a splendid version, surpassing many of later dates”, noting that “The vagueness of the original text allows for very different interpretations, as you can see in the collection below” (Stenuld). Modern experts in the game of Go use Legge’s translations of Confucius and Mencius to describe the desired state of mind of any venerated Go player: propriety, wisdom, and benevolence.

Historians seeking the origins of tea study Legge’s volumes to determine if beverages described could be tea. Scholars concerned with the origins of the Bamiyan Buddhist statues in Afghanistan (now destroyed by religious zealots) consult Legge’s translation of Faxian’s travels to date some of the items. Landscape geography historians consult Legge’s writings of Mencius to find early discussions of transforming landscapes in ancient China (Gritzner, 1999).

Legge’s scholarship built a cultural bridge to China, bringing its culture, ideas, and literature to the English-speaking world at a time when it was almost entirely unknown and mysterious, because he believed that it was important for Europeans to understand the vast and ancient culture. He accorded Chinese history and culture the respect to treat it with as much critical objectivity as he had previously given to theological doctrines and to texts in Latin and Greek. His work also contributed to the development of modern and critical approaches to the study of languages and literatures, becoming one strand in a new and more scientific study of language and the origins and changes in languages.

The western world is now facing a rise in Chinese power, and Confucian ideas are becoming spread throughout the world by the Confucian Institutes sponsored by the government of China. Even within Asian societies there is renewed interest, with South Korea creating 150 Confucian “camps” to teach children the values that were regarded as “old-fashioned” for a long period of time (Choe, 2012). Legge’s texts are still at hand to help us in the west understand some of the deep themes in Chinese culture.

### Impact as measured by plagiarism and piracy of Legge's works

One measure of Legge's success as an interpreter of Chinese ideas to the Western world in his lifetime is the extent to which his publications were either plagiarized or pirated and republished by others, often within months of his publication. In part this arose from the vagaries of copyright law, which was often flouted internationally. His worked were pirated equally in China and in the United States.

Among Chinese officials, although the government's attitude was that China had nothing to learn from other nations, Chinese officials typically pirated and republished European texts when they contained information of interest, including Legge's works. Sometimes this piracy was welcomed by the English authors. For example, Sir George Staunton's 1805 translation into Chinese of Dr. George Pearson's article to explain smallpox vaccination was soon pirated by the Chinese and widely distributed (Editor, 1851), p. 169, but this was a desirable piracy, consistent with Staunton's wishes to educate. The Chinese system of inoculation with active smallpox virus was much more dangerous than Dr. Pearson's vaccination method using the weaker cowpox virus, and Staunton's translation was intended for use by the Chinese, so this mass re-publication was consistent with Staunton's wishes. Other medical works written by Britons in Chinese as educational texts were also recognized as worthy by Chinese officials and immediately re-cut into new woodblock books by Chinese printers, including Benjamin Hobson's texts on anatomy and physiology. While these were also immediately pirated, Hobson had created them to be educational and was not troubled by the practise.

The piracy of Legge's works in English-language publishing was far more egregious because it was done by Americans who knew they were stealing his work and cheating Legge and his publisher of their properly-earned income. At times Legge's works were truly plagiarized, published without any acknowledgement of Legge's authorship, and at times his work was pirated, published by others with a minor acknowledgement that it was all copied from Legge but without Legge's permission or without any sharing of the royalty income.

Legge's works were plagiarized and pirated starting as early as 1866 and continued across the next three decades, initially by Americans Mr. Baker and Rev. Loomis, who made only a casual reference to the fact that they were copying Legge's text. Legge's publisher Trübner was forced to reissue Legge's volume I soon after that in an attempt to reassert copyright, and in 1875 it reissued the first three volumes again to reassert copyright, using this as an opportunity to slice out the Chinese text and create books for the general reader. In 1880 Legge's lectures on the religions of China were published as a book by Hodder and Stoughton, with sales so successful that Scribner and Sons in the

United States immediately pirated it without any courtesies about copyright or royalty-sharing. Legge was rueful; they “ought to have arranged with Hodder and Stoughton, but the book gets circulated, in which I must rejoice”. As he completed revisions of his original Classics during 1892-1895, his text on Confucius in volume I was quickly pirated by American Forster Jenings and published by Putnam’s Sons and the Knickerbocker Press, without citing Legge as the source of the text. Through such criminal re-publishing Legge’s title for the first book in volume I, *The Analects of Confucius* became widely-known among the educated of the English-speaking world.

#### Formal recognition of Legge’s work

From the time of his first publication of volume I of the *Classics* in 1861, Legge was recognized as a master of the language, the ideas, the literature, and the history of China as embedded in the ancient texts he translated. Within the pages of the *Chinese Recorder* Emil Bretschneider (1833-1901), Russian Sinologue in Beijing, called Legge “this erudite Sinologue” (Bretschneider, 1871), p. 51. In his lifetime the most active group of European scholars of China was in France. From the Institute of Oriental Languages there, Henri Cordier (1849-1925) said Legge had earned “imperishable fame” because he had brought a critical method to the study of Chinese classics, and this had never before been done. Cordier praised Legge for using the same “respectful and meticulous care” in the study of Confucian writings “that theologians devote to the examination of Holy Writ” (Sansom, 1965) p. 564. Stanislas Julien, Chair of Chinese Literature of the College of France created a special prize in order to honour Legge, intended to recognize outstanding European scholars of Chinese language and literature, and as Legge began his academic career in Oxford in 1876, he was named as the first recipient of this new Julien Prize.

A diplomat in the Chinese Embassy in London<sup>46</sup> wrote Legge in August 1887 that he had always loved the classic Chinese literature but regretted that the difficult language precluded foreigners from knowing it. “It is useless therefore for me to tell you what are my admirations and gratitude to you, thanks to whose labour the works of our great classical authors have been brought within reach of Europeans”. He sent gifts with the letter “in remembrance of our friendship”.

Contemporary British scholars also recognized the massive and fabulous nature of the work that Legge had done. Herbert Giles, former diplomat in China and later the second Professor of Chinese at Cambridge, in the Preface to his own Chinese Dictionary

---

<sup>46</sup> Probably S.T. Chang, who wrote a letter one year later as well. CWM, China Personal Box 8, Legge.

finally had to acknowledge this, despite some early disagreements: “I may well take this opportunity to acknowledge my deep obligations to the imperishable achievements of Dr. Legge”. The *Times* in its obituary quoted Giles: “Before his time no one seemed to know what accurate translation from Chinese into English meant. Now a faithful rendering – with ordinary reservations – of the whole of the Chinese canon is the property of the world at large” (Author, 1897a). At the time of his death, a tribute declared that Legge was the “most important Sinologist of the 19<sup>th</sup> century” (Author, 1909a).

Legge’s reputation continued across the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In August 1928 the Congress of Oriental Languages met at Oxford and a large delegation trooped to the gravesite of James Legge to lay a wreath and tribute “To the immortal genius of the great master, James Legge, from the Sinologists assembled at the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress of Orientalists at Oxford, August 31, 1928”. By mid-century Legge’s granddaughter, scholar Domenica Legge wrote that while many other scholars had translated some of the Chinese Classics into more modern language, Legge was still the only person who had done them all, and was the only one who had done them at a time when Confucian literature and philosophy was still a strong tradition with living scholars, noting that no scholar-translator since Legge had been in touch with that living tradition as Legge knew it. She acknowledged that some of the language now appeared a bit stilted, inevitable for any work still read over 90 years later (D. Legge, 1951). In her speech to the Sino-Scottish Society she defended Legge’s unsuccessful attempt to create verse in his translation of the Book of Poetry, pointing out that when he was working on this “no-one in the West knew anything about Chinese poetry, and could not have appreciated its epigrammatic quality”.

Sir George Sansom in a 1956 address to the School of Oriental and African Studies in London still recognized Legge as the greatest of all 19<sup>th</sup> century European scholars of Chinese, and modern Chinese scholar Teng wrote “his work has been accepted as a standard version even though it is not without errors.” (Teng, 1956/57) p. 315. Sansom noted that Legge’s life showed “the heroic dimensions...the epic quality” of his labours. He was working at a time when there were “no reliable dictionaries or grammars, ... no typewriters, no card indexes, no apparatus whatever, only that untiring mind, and that steadily, inexorably moving pen”. Sir George wrote “So we shall see no more of Giants like those whom I have named to you. Those days have gone. Delightful days! Engaging Giants! Alas! They are obsolete, they are prehistoric, those Giants. I think of them as massive creatures, Mastodons... and so forth, who once trod with vast assurance through linguistic jungles and philosophic swamps, tearing down great branches of

vocabulary and grammar, or absorbing immense draughts of ancient wisdom”. “Yet, though he has of course been superseded in many respects, his translations are still of great value”, and Sansom reminded his audience of modern scholars of Asian Studies of their duty and privilege to make “an essential contribution to mutual understanding between East and West, which is one of the greatest needs of our time” (Sansom, 1965).

Modern Legge scholar Girardot compared Legge’s translation skills with those of two of his eminent competitive contemporaries, Robert Douglas (Professor of Chinese at King’s College London) and Herbert Giles (Professor of Chinese at Cambridge), concluding that Legge’s translations were vastly better (Girardot, 2002).

Those 20<sup>th</sup> century evaluations are still true in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Legge’s careful methods searching for reliability and validity in the texts led him to identify ideas that have been exhaustively examined by two major scholars in recent times, Norman Girardot (Girardot, 2002) and Lauren Pfister (Pfister, 2004), each publishing massive volumes studying his work and its impact. They have shown that Legge’s work is still valuable today to anyone who wishes to learn about traditional Chinese culture. Even now, more than 100 years since Legge’s last translations, while later translators have challenged some of his work, his editions of the classical works of the Confucian and Daoist classics remain the standard text against which all others are measured (Girardot, 1997), (Taylor & Legge, 2011), and current scholars are still working on many aspects of his publications. Legge’s original *Chinese Classics* were reprinted in 1960 and plans are underfoot for new issues in our new century. The Curzon press with Routledge republished Müller’s *Sacred Books of the East* in 2001, including Legge’s six books within that series.



### Chapter 73 Legge the educator

James Legge was outstandingly successful as an educator in Hong Kong as a founder of important Chinese schools and of a school system that created a generation of Chinese leaders able to take their places in the modern world. He played a complementary role in the English-speaking world as a educator providing rich cultural information about China. More modestly, he helped a generation of young Chinese to become skilled in the modern world through his individual creation of small mission schools for boys and girls who were often children of members of his congregations, through his direct teaching in these schools, through his creation of the ACC as a bilingual preparatory school, and through his writing and creation of bilingual modern textbooks.

#### Legge and Central School

Legge's role was crucial in creating the first good public school in Hong Kong. He started a long chain of results when he founded first the ACC on behalf of the LMS, then when he set that aside and contributed in such a decisive way in the creation of the Central School (later named Victoria College and now Queen's College), as a government-funded school for Chinese children. Students who graduated from the LMS School and from the Central School became prominent members of the government and business communities both in Hong Kong and as reformers in China (N.-H. Ng, 1983).

Legge's most important educational achievements for Hong Kong thus went beyond his individual teaching and his mission schools, and reflected a major change in his thinking. Across his years in Hong Kong he changed his ideas about who should provide basic education. His earliest education in Scotland had been in schools supported by church members and this was typical of Scotland of that period. The nonconformist churches had strong ideological grounds for not allowing state support of education, and strongly disapproved of this kind of state intrusion into the life of the parish. Even after Legge had become an adult and had tried to establish the ACC in Hong Kong, he and his colleagues in the LMS all agreed that state support was undesirable for the ACC, insisting on this independence even when they were desperately short of funds. John Morrison had ensured that the Malacca ACC received an annual grant from the EIC, and there was a general expectation that when the college was re-created in Hong Kong that this grant would continue. When it was cut off Legge and the other LMS men wanted to know the reason, and wrote the LMS they needed replacement money but they did not want a government grant. When Legge and the others discovered that the LMS took action in London to meet privately with

government officials in an attempt to get the EIC grant reinstated as a government payment, they were outraged.

Over time however, Legge had a a major change in his thinking. He began to think of basic education as a more general public good that should be supported by the state rather than by different religious groups. His new direction was toward education that was modern, secular, and non-parochial. He had learned from his unsuccessful experience with students at his theological college that a far better use of teaching would be in the creation of a public school system in Hong Kong, whose structure and governance he created in its earliest version (Eitel, 1876). Across the 1850s he pressed for creation of a government system of universal primary education for children of all nationalities in the colony, which he did so effectively that it was adopted by 1860 in the foundation of Central School, and support to primary schools. While working on this major reform of education for the colony he refused all offers of payment from the colonial administration, but was eventually given a silver coffee and tea service in thanks for his powerful efforts on behalf of Chinese students. In this vast project Legge played a seminal role as the creator and key advisor in a government-supported modern liberal and secular school system that included a strong open school in Hong Kong decades before such existed in England.

Legge's ideas about what should be taught were also radical and vastly important to the modernization of China, for he understood the curriculum had to include all the most modern subjects known to European schools, rather than simply teaching Christian values and basic skills as was done in many of the mission schools. His work was also practical, and in 1861 he authorized the purchase of property with a building from American Baptists on Gough Street, and nominated the hiring of Frederick Stewart as Headmaster for the new government school. In 1862 24-year old Stewart arrived to take up his appointment as Headmaster, two years later Legge left his job as Principal of the ACC after the government appointed him to help oversee the new school, and in 1865 Legge became the Chairman of the Central School's Board of Education, which he recommended be terminated so the school could be run instead by the government as a standing department.

One of the reasons why mission schools and the Central School changed Hong Kong and China, was that they used very different educational methods and curriculum compared to those used in traditional Chinese schools. When Legge began the ACC in Hong Kong children in Chinese schools had to memorize huge amounts of set texts using individual loud recitations. The texts consisted only of the Chinese Classics, which were considered to hold all the wisdom of the world. There was no teaching of

arithmetic or any kind of science. The only history and geography was that contained within the ancient texts, which were entirely ignorant of most of the globe. Despite the limits of this method, the students, their parents, and their Chinese teachers all expected school to be done in this manner because it was their family's hope that mastery of this material would give them the prestige to allow them to earn a coveted, lucrative, and protected job in the civil service through passing the civil service examinations focussed on these ancient texts. Not only would that career give them the possibility of huge economic and political advantages, but depending on the level of their appointments in Hong Kong or China, it could also protect them from civil and criminal lawsuits and punishments. Central School was created in a very different model derived from a broader Enlightenment idea about education, and Legge was crucial in determining that.

#### Legge's living legacies in Hong Kong: educating Chinese to become leaders

The contributions of Legge's educational work in the mission, the press, and in public institutions in Hong Kong bore fruit in the emergence of a new generation of Chinese leaders who had benefited from his work. His legacy as an educator and leader in public policy was increasingly showing its broad effects within the living generations of Chinese, for Legge's approach provided graduates of Central School with opportunities and created generations of educated Chinese in Hong Kong and in China who began to lead cultural, business, charitable, and professional life, both within his lifetime and later in republican China (N.-H. Ng, 1983). Many of these young leaders had direct connections with Legge and the LMS.

Graduate Wu Tingfang (Ng Choy, 1842-1922) born in Singapore and educated in Hong Kong, became the first Chinese member of the Hong Kong Legislative Council. He married Ho Miuling, one of the daughters of Legge's LMS Chinese pastor Ho Tsunshin.

Wei Yuk (Wen Yu, 1849-1922) graduated from Central School, went to the Dollar Academy in Scotland in 1868 with the help of Legge, returned upon graduation and married LMS printer Huang's daughter in 1872. He was unsuccessful when he tried to enter the Qing civil service so turned to a career in banking then succeeded his father as comprador of the Chartered Mercantile Bank, becoming a very successful businessman. He was appointed to the Hong Kong Legco in 1896 where he served 14 years, and was knighted as Sir Boshan Wei Yuk in 1919. He urged reform of the Qing dynasty, and although sympathetic to the revolutionaries he did not join them (Choa, 1981/2000).

Ho Kai (He Qi, 1859-1914) was one of the five sons of Legge's pastor Ho. Ho Kai was fluently bilingual and able to take advantages of the new secular educational

operation that Legge advocated and fostered, starting with an excellent education through his father Ho's employment in the LMS mission. He was granted advanced placement at the new Central School, and completing that went to England to be educated under the patronage of Legge's daughter Mary Hawke. In Britain Ho Kai graduated from medicine at the University of Aberdeen in 1879, qualified for the Royal College of Surgeons and then completed a legal education in Lincoln's Inn in London where he was called to the bar. He married Alice Walkden, an Englishwoman of good family in London, and returned in 1882 to an eminent career in Hong Kong as merchant, lawyer, as the first Chinese Justice of the Peace, and as a promoter of Western education and Western medicine, while pressing the Qing dynasty to introduce modern banking and transportation. He became the second Chinese member of the Legislative Council and with Drs. James Cantlie and Patrick Manson, Ho helped found the Alice Memorial Hospital in 1877 in honour of his well-born English wife who died prematurely in Hong Kong. Ho Kai was a major critic of the traditional methods being used in the Tung Wah hospital, which showed a "stubborn unwillingness to adopt the benefits of Western science" (C. T. Smith, 1995). Physicians Ho Kai, Cantlie and Manson wanted their new hospital to bring modern western medicine to the people of the colony and the hospital he helped found soon created the Hong Kong College of Medicine. (L. N. H. Ng, 1983). Ho Kai was knighted as Sir Kai Ho Kai in 1912 (Choa, 1981/2000), and many of his sons went on to graduate from the new University of Hong Kong that emerged from Ho Kai's College of Medicine in 1911. They went to work in Shanghai after the family moved there in 1918 after the Chinese Revolution. Ho Kai's British colleagues Cantlie and Manson went on to found the London School of Tropical Medicine upon their return to the UK, still an outstanding institution.

Sir Robert Ho, Ho Tung (He Qidong, 1862-1956,) attended Central School, worked for Jardine, moved to private business where he became vastly wealthy, was knighted, and helped finance the revolution in China.

Sun Yatsen (Sun Yixian, 1866-1925) was a student of Central School in 1884-1886, moved to Canton to study medicine with Legge's physician Dr. Kerr at his mission hospital, the successor to Dr. Benjamin Hobson's LMS hospital. Sun returned in 1887 to attend the Hong Kong College of Medicine newly established by Drs. Ho Kai, Cantlie, and Manson, where he was taught by Ho Kai. After graduating in the first class and practising a few years in Macau, Sun returned to Hong Kong in 1894 to begin planning the regeneration of China. Banished as a revolutionary by Governor Sir William Robinson, he fled to Britain after involvement in an aborted attempt at revolution in 1895. In London he was kidnapped in 1896 by the Chinese Embassy and held there

waiting for a ship to send him back to China for execution, until he was saved by Dr. Cantlie in a manner that sounds like something out of James Bond. After receiving a smuggled message from Sun, Drs. Cantlie and Manson alerted the police, the Foreign Office and the press, and Prime Minister Lord Salisbury advised the Embassy that “what they planned was illegal”, in an exciting episode that caused an international sensation. Sun was released, went back to China in his own way, and led the movement that ended the Qing Dynasty in 1911, becoming the first President of China 26 years after attending Central School.

Legge’s educational vision, vastly more powerful than the simple texts for science, mathematics and geography he created for the Chinese students in his own mission schools, helped create the modern secular curriculum of Central School under government support, and was thus seminal in creating generations of educated men of many cultures who helped transform China from a medieval feudal despotism into an emerging giant entering the world stage (Teng, 1957). By 1933 Abbas el Arculli, President of the Old Boys Association, honoured the spirit of the school as “the brotherhood of man”, consistent with Confucius’ idea that “all within the four seas are brothers”.

#### Chinese men associated with Legge’s mission who made significant contributions

In addition to Central school students and his mission students, James Legge affected a number of Chinese men associated with him in other ways, and many of these went on to make significant contributions to the modernizing of China in Hong Kong, Singapore, and China.

Song Hootkiam, one of the “three lads” Legge took to his home in Huntly in 1845, became chief cashier for the Singapore office of the P. & O. shipping line and his modern outlook was passed on to his son Song Ong Siang (1871-) who became a member of the Legco in Singapore, wrote a history of the Chinese at Singapore, and was knighted in 1936 by King George V for his services. (Ride, 1960) p.8. That son welcomed Legge’s son Thomas to Singapore in 1890, delighted to see him and to remember James (H. E. Legge, 1905).

Legge also had a significant influence on men who were close to him for long periods and learned western values and skills through their work with him. Under Legge’s influence Hong Rengan tried to moderate the madness of his cousin’s Taiping kingdom, although he did not always follow Legge’s advice. Wang Tao’s career as a public intellectual in Hong Kong and Shanghai owed much to his years of translation work with Legge, including his long visit to Legge in Scotland and travels through

European capitals en route, opening his eyes to many new ideas that he realized could help China.

Legge's church-member and printer Huang Shing (1827-1895) rejoined Legge's LMS congregation after returning from an aborted educational attempt in the United States, became a printer for the *China Mail* newspaper, an interpreter for the government, then in 1853 joined the LMS mission to print works for Legge's ACC. He was named the first Chinese to serve as a member of the jury in the Hong Kong Supreme Court in 1858, and became the co-founder (with Legge's assistant Wang Tao) of the first daily Chinese newspaper in Hong Kong in 1873, the year of Legge's departure. Huang moved to Beijing to set up a Chinese printing office for the Qing dynasty Foreign Office (Tsunli Yamen) using LMS fonts, took Chinese students to the United States for higher education, had misadventures in the Chinese Embassy in Washington and various adventures in Shanghai then returned to Hong Kong and entered public life where he became one of the founding directors of the Tung Wah Hospital in 1870. He was the second Chinese man appointed to the Legco, serving from 1884-1890, succeeded by Ho Kai. Huang's daughter married Wei Yuk (later Sir Boshan Wei Yuk), a student who graduated from Central School then studied in Leicester and Dollar under Legge's sponsorship.

#### Education within Legge's mission

Legge was disappointed in the failure of his College and Theological Seminary to graduate Chinese men to do mission work, but he understood the situation of his students. He explicitly told the students in his Theological Seminary that life as a Christian pastor would not bring riches, but he hoped that they would graduate and go on to create missions in China. But Legge understood that the calculations that a Chinese student and his family might make were extremely practical, and not focused on eternal matters when they enrolled. They had more worldly business careers in mind once the students received a good modern education including English. This practical orientation contributed to problems in educating Chinese pastors and in the long-term plan to attract converts for all the missions, because so few graduates ever considered mission careers.

The Protestant missionaries realized this, and frequently wrote each other complaining of the ways in which Roman Catholic priests ensured that their converts received very tangible worldly benefits from their conversion. For example, native Catholic priests in the interior of China aggressively asserted the right of their converts not to be liable under Chinese laws, attempting to extend the concept of

“extraterritoriality” that was available for foreigners, to include native Chinese who had become Christians. These actions infuriated the local magistrates and often led to even mob actions in the interior. The problems were made worse by deliberate scheming by some Chinese criminals to “convert” simply to evade punishments by seeking the protection that the priests were demanding for them. The *Chinese Recorder* included many case reports where known scoundrels became Roman Catholic converts explicitly with the aim of evading the punishment they had earned, while the Protestant missions never even considered offering extraterritoriality as a benefit of conversion. Roman Catholic priests also intervened in other matters to advance the material interests of their converts, and these interventions created a significant pool of ill will against missionaries in general on the part of Chinese officials and the general population. This anti-foreign anger was easily mobilized by jealous scholar-officials in the Canton region, resulting in mob attacks that included some of the Protestant missions, including Legge’s remote friend pastor Che, who was murdered in such a situation.

The ACC set up in Hong Kong by Legge was not a success as an institution to create Chinese Christians, pastors, or missionaries. The graduates customarily went quickly into good positions in government service or business, making use of their English-Chinese skills as well as their general knowledge about the world. Despite this kind of success Legge was disappointed that the ACC had not been more successful in converting the boys to Christianity, and that his theological seminary had not been successful in attracting ACC graduates to train for life of poverty as missionaries to China. Two-thirds of the 70 graduates of the ACC did not even become Christian, and his record was not better than that of Robert Morrison. Across his 27 years of service to Chinese missions and education Morrison only had 10 “converts”, although these few were all very faithful. He was not alone among LMS mission men who brought only a few into the faith; in Africa famed David Livingstone returned from 15 years of mission work with only one convert. The judgement of history is that Legge’s mission schools served the general community far more successfully than they served Christian mission plans for China.

The ACC probably failed as a feeder school to the seminary because of Legge’s radically broad view of what the young men should be taught. He was interested in providing education on a wide array of subjects, basically an excellent, all-round Enlightenment curriculum. Even at the Theological Seminary he taught the highly selected seven scholars a broad curriculum that included Chinese classics and English literature, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, astronomy, electricity and pneumatics, along with ecclesiastical and general history. This provided them with an appreciation of

both European and Chinese culture that went far beyond any narrow religious or Euro-centric curriculum, and opened career opportunities for the students that went far beyond mission life. His Theological Seminary did not prosper because by the time these young men were well-educated in the mission schools in modern subjects and in written English and Chinese, they had become incredibly valuable in the commercial, military, and governmental operations of Hong Kong and China. They went to jobs with good salaries and prospects of advancement, and many became eminent members of the community.

From a broader perspective the ACC was a major success as a general preparatory school that morphed over time into the Ying Wa College, which has survived many vicissitudes over the last 150 years and thrives today because of Legge's broad view of education. The College provides subsidies for a full program of studies from Primary School onward for talented boys and girls.

Legge's belief in a modern and scientific education was not universal among the Protestant missionaries or among the British in Hong Kong. Rev. Charles Hartwell for example, was critical of teaching Chinese students the classics of their own literature in the way that Legge arranged, arguing that if you taught previously uneducated Chinese students their classics in the course of preparing them to preach Christianity, they would develop "too high an opinion" of the value of these books (Hartwell, 1871).

In this Hartwell was basically echoing what prominent Chinese believed. After Viceroy Ye was captured at Canton he was taken by ship to India and en route he was asked why he had no interest in news from different parts of the world. He explained that any man "who has the whole of the Thirteen Classics in his stomach" had no need of learning what was going on in the world. "He has already in his possession all the knowledge that is worth knowing" (Hartwell, 1893). This was the pervasive idea among most educated Chinese until late in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; they believed that all perfect knowledge resided in the Chinese Classics.

The enlightened Commissioner Lin was a powerful exception to the official Chinese opposition to learning from Europeans. He ordered the translation of vast quantities of European texts into Chinese, and this compilation was published by reform-minded Wei Yuan (1794-1857) in dozens of volumes from 1844, for the use of officials and literati. Eventually in 1893 the Qing Emperor began to learn English, and some mathematics and science had been introduced into the Chinese civil service examinations, but there was still a deep belief that everything of value in education was to be found in the Chinese Classics (Hartwell, 1893). This was an echo of the Qianlong Emperor's assertion to Lord Macartney's diplomatic mission in 1792 that China had no



need of any foreign goods because it already possessed everything of value. Hartwell recognized that the Chinese Classics did include admirable moral teachings and he even considered that they included the notion of God, “a superintending providence over human affairs”, so he was not simply blindly critical of the Classics, but he was willing to limit his students’ education in service of purely pragmatic needs in his mission. Other critics in the British community in Hong Kong thought Legge wasted too much time on teaching mathematics and science, and sniffed that he should have focussed on the Chinese Scriptures if he wanted to create Chinese missionaries. (Author, 1867).

Legge’s early support for a library open to the public was another enduring educational contribution of his years in Hong Kong, starting from small collections in mission libraries and gradually enlisting government support for the holdings in a public library that has grown into today’s major modern system.

#### Teaching British civil servants

Legge also made small contributions to the education of British civil servants in the colony. From 1844 he had promoted the importance of educating newly-arrived young government officers from England in Chinese language and culture, arguing they would be far more effective in their work if they had practical use of the language “and a sympathy with the people” (J. Legge, 1872b). Eventually this system was established although Legge complained that the government did not operate the program as effectively as it should have. Students were often removed from their classes for administrative work, and were not put to the real test as Legge saw it, interpreting in the Supreme Court, before being placed in any office. The scheme was moderately successful however, and late in his life the Hong Kong government even sent some of these cadets to Legge in Oxford for additional training.

#### Legge as printer of Chinese

Legge also helped the general education of Chinese and English through his supervision and initiatives with the LMS press in its role in creating metal fonts for modern presses that could publish major quantities of materials in both languages for both cultures. He was entangled in the business and technical demands of the press for years even though his central interests were not in a printing press, and when possible he hired staff to supervise the work. Arising from frequent periods of insufficient staff Legge often had to supervise the LMS printing press, overseeing its expansion and increasing quality to the point that it had created the most beautiful Chinese fonts available anywhere in the world. These sets of large and small Chinese fonts were used in printing thousands of pages of material for the mission work and for local businesses,

quite apart from their later use in publishing Legge's Classics. In 1864 he printed 5000 copies of a large-type version of the Bible at his press, and a small-type edition of 5000 copies of the New Testament. The Chinese fonts created during his tenure were so superior that copies were bought and made by presses in both China and Europe. The extent of Legge's accomplishments as publisher of Chinese texts deserves an article on its own, but whatever his frequent reluctance to be a printing superintendent, under his stewardship vast quantities of beautifully printed important publications in Chinese were produced by his mission press on every kind of topic.

### Chapter 74 Legge the mission man

Legge's third contribution to the future was his success in creating enduring Chinese congregations and churches in Hong Kong (e.g. the Hop Yat Church), as well as an English congregation and continuing church, Union Church, that all thrive to this day. Across its existence Union Church was moved twice and rebuilt before WW II, was massively destroyed during the Japanese occupation, then rebuilt in a fourth generation after the war.

By mid-career Legge loved preaching in Chinese and was able to attract huge crowds to sermons with his Chinese congregation. On one trip to preach to a congregation in Wan Chai, there was no standing room left, and "Macgowan was surprised at the order which I was able to maintain with such a crowd and the length of time for which I could compel their attention. He had never seen anything like it. It is true that to preach in Chinese always soothes and gratifies my own mind." (H. E. Legge, 1905), p.171.

Legge was also capable of being a compelling preacher or lecturer in English during his early years, as when he first returned to Britain in 1847 and gave talks about the mission in China (Author, 1897a), His great success in these lecture tours attracted huge crowds and his reputation spread across the country as he went. In part this response could have arisen from the novelty of his topic, for China was still an exotic and remote land. His success was probably based on more than this unique subject matter however, for within his home congregations in Hong Kong his sermons were also received with more than ordinary interest. He organized his sermons as intensive examinations of specific topics, often life events and their meaning in relation to scriptures. Their style was educational rather than inspirational, passionate, or filled with rich rhetoric, and his style changed over time.

When he was getting ready to retire home from Hong Kong in 1873, a man wrote a tribute to him from Ceylon, remembering years earlier when he had attended Legge's sermons. The man had found Legge's arguments so well explained that he often went home and wrote out the main subjects of the sermon then discussed these with his friends over the next week. But after 30 years in Hong Kong immersed in Chinese, Legge's preaching in English was no longer dynamic and passionate. Instead his style had become scholarly, careful, and rational, and one man who had described the excitement of Legge's sermons in 1847 found his preaching style had changed fifty years later (Troup, 1897b).

Whatever his skills as a preacher to the Chinese, Legge brought only a rather modest number of individuals into the church, only able to report low number of

“converts”, for which Gutzlaff had been so critical of him, because Legge had a religious understanding of conversion. It represented a deep spiritual commitment that could only be done after extensive study and full understanding of the Christian message, and he refused to baptise individuals seeking it if he considered that they were not yet fully aware of the meaning of Christianity. He would rather have fewer numbers of converts and be sure of them, than simply stack up “body counts”. Instead, his mission had its main effects through his long-term friend and colleague Pastor Ho.

Legge’s attitude contrasted in the extreme with that of Gutzlaff who reported all his work in terms of convert numbers even when it was eventually shown that his multitudes had no idea of what they had done and often sought baptism for monetary gain. Legge’s congregations were those who understood the religion and its behaviours, people who benefited from both his religious and educational teachings at a deep level affecting their families across the generations to the present day.

Legge was indignant when mission efforts were criticized in England for their costliness in relation to the small numbers of converts, which apparently reflected a Victorian interest in “accountability” perfectly echoed in our modern scrutiny of all attempts at good works. He wrote, “Here in Hong Kong have millions of dollars been squandered which might all have been saved by foresight and discreet management. People talk of the little result obtained for our missionary expenditure. I believe that ten times the result is got for it than any equivalent expenditure realises in the department of government and war. This might be made good by anyone who would take the trouble to make the calculations, and should do something to stop the mouth of gainsayers” (H. E. Legge, 1905), p. 172). Eitel, who succeeded Legge in Hong Kong and went on to important work as an educator and historian there, agreed. He wrote that Legge was “too sober and practical a man ever to indulge in dreams of... a speedy evangelization of China, or to be taken in by empty professions of faith and devotion ...” in comparison with Gutzlaff (Eitel, 1876). Instead, Legge was a patient, steady worker who spent his time preaching, teaching, superintending the printing press, and “burning the midnight lamp over his translations” (p.24). Legge’s mission style showed his basic practicality. In 1863 he summed up the work of one of the mission’s *colporteurs* (native distributors of religious books), reporting that the man had given away 667 copies of the New Testament, adding that the man could have given away many more “but I have charged him to force the Scriptures on no one, and never to give a volume where he had not some evidence that it would be read” (H. E. Legge, 1905), p. 170. Legge trained Pastor Ho, who was able to lead Hong Kong congregations so successfully they became able to support their own missions in China. The Chinese texts Legge created for Che’s mission

work in Boluo resulted in the creation of six new congregations in the region around that town even after Che's murder.

Legge's mission work was eventually recognized in Scotland by the congregation of his old church in Huntly in 1936, which installed a memorial window honouring Legge, with help from his family.

#### Legge as fund-raiser for charitable causes

Legge was generally helpful for the Chinese community in Hong Kong putting effort into raising money for good causes while he lived there, and for help to China after he returned to Britain. He always had trust in the generosity he expected to find in the community when money was needed for a worthwhile cause, and his causes went far beyond his own mission work. In Hong Kong both Chinese and English leaders knew that he was so reliable and trustworthy that when he approached their communities for help he was able to elicit good responses. When thousands of Chinese families lost their home in two terrible fires in Hong Kong he took a major role in helping the homeless by collecting donations and by explaining the kinds of help available to them.

At a more intimate level he was often sought out by desperate individual Chinese and English people whose lives were in chaos, and he went out into sorties to raise money when he recognized real need. In one case a Chinese man was distraught because his child had been kidnapped while he was away working on contract in Australia. Legge participated in the ransom negotiations and raised the \$60 needed to buy the child back again. In another case a destitute family needed \$300 to survive until the father obtained work, and Legge immediately went out to seek donations. He wrote to Hannah, "...it is much easier to get money in Hong Kong than in Dollar. I have got, in less than two hours' visiting, \$170 – all but \$10 from Scotsmen, and not in large sums". He tended to be charitable to individuals who were stumbling in their attempts to lead productive lives, rather than moralistic and scolding.

Legge had working relationships that spanned all levels of Chinese and colonial society in Hong Kong. Modern critics of the missions in China have taken opposing points of view in criticizing them. Some fault the missions for too-close ties with imperial officials and merchants, while others blame them for the very opposite, "...the missionaries saw only their converts or servants and had no use for either Chinese officials, merchants, or consuls" (Ogden, 1974). Legge's work was an example of the falsity of both these caricatures.

#### Legge as a religious scholar, and the term question

Legge left a lasting contribution to Christianity in China from his scholarship help in the creation of the new Delegates Version of the Bible, using his research to help the translation committee. Legge was not on the committee but they turned to him when they faced the problem of deciding on the best Chinese term to use for God. When that became contentious Legge put his massive energy to a review of all the Chinese classics to see what the best answer should be, documenting the reasons for his recommendation.

Legge was not an aggressive proponent of either his religion or his personal views on other topics, but he became a testy debater on this translation question. The Chinese term to be selected had to reflect a single, all-powerful personal god as envisioned in Christianity, and Legge eventually found himself in the middle of a nasty scholarly fight where he had to be vigorous in defending his position. From his earliest work in the classical Chinese books he had determined that the sages from before the time of Confucius had exactly such a conception of God, found in the Chinese characters *shangdi*. When his views were contradicted by Rev. Boone and other Americans in the Shanghai mission who were working with LMS translators in the 1840s and 1850s to create the new Chinese Bible, a struggle emerged that dragged on for more than 40 years because it reflected deeper divergent views about Chinese beliefs. Those opposed to this term tended to be more fundamentalist Protestants who believed the Chinese had never had a real religious belief system that included a conception of a true God, and needed conversion to Christianity to develop one. In contrast, Legge and those favouring *shangdi* attributed this genuinely religious conception to the Chinese, and had a broader more liberal approach to cross-cultural respect. On a deeper level this quarrel can be seen as a struggle between cultural/religious imperialists who had limited respect for Chinese culture or religion, arguing against those who understood and honoured it.

The conflict even turned into a crisis after Legge had permanently retired to England where his paper unwittingly disrupted the first mission conference in Shanghai in 1877. Over the years he presented his views in letters during the original discussions, later in two major books and in a published letter to Müller in 1880, but was never involved in personal confrontations. In later years European Sinologist Schlegel wrote that Legge was “too kind-hearted” to reply to the assaults sometimes made against his work and his character “by incompetent critics”.

Legge was very upset by the interminable conflict, and even as late as 1880 described it as a recurrent nightmare. He did not relish the battle even as others urged him on, but persisted because he was so convinced of the correctness of his reading of the Chinese literature. Müller concluded that Legge had answered all the arguments put

forward by “the only champion worth speaking of which the “Shinites” now possess”. Müller’s support essentially set majority opinion for a long time and by the 1880’s the “*shin*” camp had thinned to a few die-hards, but even Müller’s support did not settle the argument, and the term question continued as an intrusive controversy that festered for decades, even rising after Legge’s death. Modern Protestant Chinese Bibles including the newest version of 2010 are published using both versions, with evangelical churches more typically using the *shin* character and the other churches using Legge’s term.

The importance of choosing a word in a translation to represent such a profound theological construct as God, is still affecting cultural interactions. In 2010 the government of Malaysia filed an appeal of a court ruling that would have allowed non-Muslims to use the word “Allah” to refer to God (AP, 2010). The government had confiscated 10,000 Malaysian-language Bibles for using the term, which is used widely across the world by Arabic-speaking Christians.

#### Legge’s view of his life’s work

By 1877 Legge viewed his decision to leave the comforts of family and country to go into the mission field as a good thing, (H. E. Legge, 1905) pp. 9-10. His evaluation of his scholarly work about China showed his characteristic low-key pragmatism. When he had published his first few volumes of the *Classics* in April 1866 he wrote “I have brought to work a competent Chinese scholarship, the result of more than five and twenty years of toilsome study. Such a work was necessary in order that the rest of the world should really know this great Empire and also that especially our missionary labours amongst the people should be conducted with sufficient intelligence and so as to secure permanent results” (1893, p 1, quoted in (Ride, 1960). His summary of his life’s work was laconic and utilitarian.

### Chapter 75 China and Hong Kong after the 19<sup>th</sup> c. missions

The mighty Qing Empire collapsed 14 years after James Legge's death, and the Manchu language of its imperial rulers and generals has been almost lost to history; by 2007 fewer than 100 native speakers were left. Hong Kong confounded the Cantonese *feng shui* predictions of its uselessness, becoming so valuable that the People's Republic successfully negotiated its return to the motherland in 1997. Its institutions, including its public school system, its massive public library system, and its Christian churches all thrive, including outstanding modern institutions that are direct descendants of Legge's Anglo-Chinese College, his Union Chapel, and the Chinese congregation of the Hop Fat church founded by James Legge. Such civic institutions provide examples to the PRC of what effective government including the rule of law can achieve for the wellbeing of its citizens. The wellbeing of the Chinese people is a goal that James Legge had always had as his own, and his work can only be seen as contributing to that across the generations.

#### Epilogue; Why was James Legge forgotten?

Why do educated and enthusiastic readers of English not know James Legge? Despite the international recognition of his scholarship in bringing forward a magnificent and timeless treasury into world culture, James Legge is an unknown name to most educated people in the English-speaking world. The reasons for this include historical events and shifts of political ideas, with at least six main factors contributing to Legge's disappearance from the educated world across the twentieth century after his death in 1897.

#### Legge was an outsider at Oxford

Legge remained essentially an outsider in Oxford. He was not part of the cozy established High-Church Anglicans, and even persisted in attending non-conformist congregations that were decidedly not for the educated elite. Further, ancient Chinese texts were outside the interests of the Oxford scholars of oriental study, who instead revered Sanskrit and all things from the British empire in India.

#### Secularization in the Western world

In addition, the increasingly secular culture in Britain led to a more critical view of Christianity during the Edwardian frolics of the years leading to WW I, beginning a major secular critique of missions that continued across the rest of the 20th century. Many Christians struggled with some of Christianity's historical ideas as the Darwinian revolution worked its way into biology and earth sciences, and faith in the role of religion as the agent to improve society began to falter. This shift in attitudes away from religion led to a loss of awareness of the scholarship arising within mission work. Even



within Christianity there is the problem that modern English Protestant theology has become uninterested in thinking of the place of Christianity in distant lands, often even embarrassed by the role of its missions in world history (Sanneh, 1995).

#### WW I demoralization

A second reason that Legge's work drifted into oblivion is that WW I created a huge disruption within British and European society, creating a gross discontinuity with 19<sup>th</sup> c. culture. The new post-war age featured a failure of hope and in the power of goodness, substituted by experiences of the poverty of the great depression, the demoralization of European and American cultures, and breakdowns in the class structure. Strident economic problems dominated cultural life in the countries of the West, and the outgoing verve of the Victorian era became a thing of the past.

#### Marxist and Orientalist criticisms of imperialism

Legge's obscurity today is probably also partly a result of the general 20<sup>th</sup> c. Marxist criticism of all colonialism and imperialism except its own. This critique blurred all international activities by Western countries into one giant oppressive fist. There was no room for subtlety or acknowledging specifics that contradicted the stereotypes preached by the theory, and missionaries were a juicy target of the critique. Anti-colonialist ideas started to flourish during the Great Depression and moved quickly into academia, extended into recent times in Edward Said's influential book *Orientalism* (Said, 1979). This work made it fashionable to consider that all Western scholarship of "oriental" cultures and philosophies is inherently untrustworthy because it arises only out of hidden and debased political dominance motives.

This idea was not a uniquely new contribution by Said, as there is a long history of western scholarship looking at this possibility and proposing the model of "cultural relativism" long before Said wrote his book (Braginsky, 1997), but his book met with popular interest. He criticized nineteenth century scholars and missionaries working in oriental languages and cultures, arguing that they provided biased and arrogant interpretations of these exotic cultures. Missionaries from Western lands were criticized for their assumptions of religious superiority. Said never used Legge as an example of the hypocritical orientalists, as his targets were mostly scholars of the Middle East, but the ideological challenges raised by Said's work continue, and some still try to apply his concepts to studies of Chinese culture (Dirlik & Zhang, 1997).

Historian Tim Wong for example has described how the official Chinese Communist Party's early interpretation of missionaries was to regard them "as the running dogs of the imperialist West", until this blanket view started to be lifted in the 1990s (M. K. Wong, 2000). This Marxist attitude spread into mainstream academic

culture in the West, later morphing into the aggressive literary theory arguments of deconstruction and post-modernism. Writers within these new critical fashions used related arguments to preach the distrust of most western texts and works (except their own), asserting the necessity to always seek deeper for the deeply discreditable dominance motives that were certain to be found underlying all scholarly works. A ready parallel comes to mind of the now-discredited Freudian model of personality in which the analyst must look for the deeply coarse and self-interested aims of the id lying under all other motives. In the anti-colonialist model, any scholarship by a mission man necessarily falls into the most despised category.

Across the 20<sup>th</sup> century Marxist and other secularist critics accused British missionaries simply of being the foot soldiers of British capitalist imperialism. One modern critic of Legge has even claimed that he was a British agent of free trade colonialism trying to destroy the humanist tradition in Confucianism, training Hong Rengan to be the leader of the Taiping rebellion in order to impose British colonial rule over China (Billington, 1993). This is so factually incorrect as to be laughable, but across the 20<sup>th</sup> century it was commonplace to charge all missionaries with the crime of being mainly agents of colonialism. A small few undoubtedly were in obvious ways, (men such as Gutzlaff who became a direct employee of British traders on the Chinese coast and of the British government in its early forays into diplomacy into Chinese waters), but that employment relationship with the forces of empire was the rare exception rather than the rule. Legge certainly was so far outside any government support that late in his career famous Sinologues in Holland and France contrasted Legge's penury and the disinterest of the British government in assisting him, with their own fat European sinecures on government salaries as professors.

#### Loss of interest in China, the West turns inward

Another factor contributing to the 'loss' of Legge, is that most of the 20<sup>th</sup> c. in the West was a period of disinterest in China and its culture after the main trade conflicts had been settled. And even despite foreign conflicts during the past 100 years, western cultures have paid interest to remote cultures mainly in terms of power and trade conflicts, rather than in terms of cultural interest. Recent data show for example, that only about 8% of American college students study any foreign language, down from twice that rate in 1960. The loss of western interest in the cultures of China persisted across the 20<sup>th</sup> c. turmoil within China, changing only with its emergence as an economic power back onto the world stage in the final decade of the century.

Instead, political concerns centred on Europe with the world wars, in de-colonializing in the middle distances of European empires, and in the expansion of trade.

A small resurgence of western interest in some aspects of Chinese thought began in the 1960s, but it concerned only Chinese religion, arising from sub-culture interests in the *I Ching* and in its Daoist ideas generated by missionary-scholar Richard Wilhelm's translations via German and advocated by Carl Jung. During that period Legge's historically-oriented version of the *I Ching* was set aside in favour of the more mystical interpretations of Wilhelm, who propounded his own concept of universal religion appealing to New Age believers (Hon, 2005), (Hsia, 2003), even though Wilhelm's scholarship in Chinese was much weaker than Legge's and his translations looser. Despite this minor burst of interest in a narrow subset of Chinese ideas, most secular readers did not join this movement nor did this popular interest extend to the wider and deeper aspects of Chinese culture, philosophy, history and literature.

#### Legge's challenging texts

Finally, Legge's texts were, and still are challenging. They require an educated reader with interest in learning new things as set out in his briskly demanding format of complex essays, translations, and detailed notes, not to mention the indexes. His full texts demand much of the reader, yet they are a wonderful part of his work, an aspect of it that made it more interesting than the modern "revisions" that stripped out all the magnificent essays and notes. Most educated readers will not even know that such full versions exist because (with the exception of the Hong Kong University reprint editions of the 1960s) most printings of his work since 1892 have simply deleted the scholarship that makes them so fabulous. Instead, readers interested in the Confucian philosophy of China may simply read an edition of the Confucian Analects translated by Legge but denuded of the essays and notes that reveal his dazzling mastery of a long-lost world.

Legge's work is not light fare, and his stately Victorian language may seem at times too distant, although some modern scholars still prefer it for its careful grammar and eloquent reverence for the ideas in the texts (Taylor & Legge, 2011). Modern audiences have been thronging to lighter, shorter, quicker books across the 20<sup>th</sup> c., at an accelerating pace. To really enjoy Legge's works the reader needs to be willing to sink down into the books (all freely available online through Project Gutenberg), become steeped in Chinese ideas, traditions, and cultural beliefs, and willing if necessary, to guess at the meanings of footnotes in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew.

#### On the other hand; beyond cliché in a new century

While these factors help explain why few today know of James Legge and his books about China, there are other forces that may contribute to renewed interest in his books

and ideas. Each factor contributing to the loss of knowledge about James Legge's work among educated readers in the 20<sup>th</sup> c. has changed, and easy dismissal of Legge as simply another "dead white male" no longer makes sense.

Secularization: Missions spread ideas beyond Christianity

While Christianity has been faltering in the 20<sup>th</sup> c. in the European world that fostered it, yet its missions spread important cultural and ethical ideas that are now considered universally valuable (Sanneh, 1995). In creating written languages and thus literacy where this did not exist, missions opened the possibilities for people from non-literate cultures to learn about things far beyond their own personal experiences. In preaching the individual worth of every person before God to distant people caught in the grips of local despots or imperialist conquerors, missions laid the moral foundation for all critics of oppressive governments, including imperial, and these egalitarian ideas have been actively welcomed by the dispossessed. Notions of the universal rights of "man" have become internationally accepted and codified. Vast nationalist movements such as the independence of India have been founded on Christian ideas of the validity of peaceful protest adopted by Gandhi from the writings of Tolstoy, and government support for full civil rights for African-Americans was triggered by similar Christian-based peaceful protests.

The idea that a personal God cares about the oppressed, who have equal moral worth and rights with their overseers, was one of the core beliefs in the LMS missions. They spread the idea of the "oneness" of all humanity at a time when educated classes were starting to become "scientific racists" (Ross, 1999). This idea of moral equality set new movements into action including the abolition of slavery, and moves toward universal suffrage in western and eastern lands. The Arab Spring of the twenty-first century, overturning authoritarian rulers in the middle east, is a logical extension of the egalitarianism of the Christian missions, although it is not yet clear if it represents a truly broadened version of political rights or merely an exchange of despotisms. Values of literacy and equality as advocated by missions are still recognized as a force today, as in modern Turkey where defenders of free speech are denounced as "missionary children" who learned these heretical values in mission schools (Freely, 2006). The orientalism critique failed to appreciate that such "western" ideas as the equal rights of democracy are eagerly embraced in the east when the circumstances allow it. The British ideal of the rule of law rather than the rule of men appeals to all who value justice, and today Chinese companies increasingly write their contracts to require dispute resolution using Hong Kong courts where the rule of law is a strong British tradition that

mainlanders realize is necessary for successful business practise, although Beijing occasionally intrudes to disturb the situation (Bradsher, 2005).

In modern China there is renewed interest and participation in the more specific ideas of the Christian churches, with current estimates of up to 15% of the population in the large eastern cities. Many Chinese individuals attributed their ability to withstand the horrors of the Cultural Revolution to their Christian faith, seeking solace in ideas they found in the religion (York, 2004a). When Beijing began creating tough new security laws for Hong Kong in 2003 after having promised protection of basic political and economic system for 50 years after the 1997 handover, there was a vast public response with 350,000 marching in protest. Christian priests and pastors led their congregations in holding a peaceful prayer vigil at the outset of the march that summer (Bradsher, 2003). South Korean Christians have become the world's second largest overseas missionary force, mingling religious ideas with human rights in their work in North Korea and China (Onishi, 2006).

The general Western disengagement with Christian missions was unfortunate because it failed to understand that the Protestant missionaries contributed massively to the modernization of distant traditional cultures and to vast improvements in the quality of life in feudal subsistence cultures with high death rates. They helped pre-literate cultures by creating dozens of new written languages for them, and by providing broader education in the European languages through which all of world learning could be reached. The Protestant missions of the 19<sup>th</sup> c. were highly responsive to emerging social and scientific ideas and helped ancient literate cultures by acquainting them with the insights of modern science, medicine, and technology, and with broader world-views.

Legge and his mission friends created the first Chinese texts to explain modern world geography, accurate physiology and anatomy, mathematics, and the science underlying emerging technological wonders. Mission men applied European sciences in creating civic institutions that concretely helped the common people, founding modern hospitals, schools, and universities that continue to thrive today across India and China. Old mission institutions such as St. John's College in Shanghai, now invisible within the East China Normal University and Fudan University, have had their mission origins whitewashed under new nativized names and thus lost to history.

In gaining knowledge of remote cultures, missionaries also helped change attitudes in their motherlands by back-translating to reveal the cultural richness of exotic cultures. Protestant missionaries in particular were massively productive in publications

in both Europe and Asia that enhanced cultural understanding in both directions, going far beyond religion.

Legge's attitudes in particular represented a gross departure from any imperialist "orientalist" arrogance, for in Hong Kong he was noted and criticized in the newspapers for being a defender of the Chinese in dealings with the colonial authorities. In addition modern scholars have outlined the ways in which he honored Confucian thought through seeking similarities between Confucian and Christian ideas, singling out the core belief of both in the essential goodness of man (Thrower, 1997). His writings are still honoured for their "meticulous approach" and for the fact that he was the first leading scholar of China to integrate literary studies with science and history in order to enhance cross-cultural understanding. Even more importantly Legge is recognized for having worked, as did other sinologists, within the Chinese *literati* culture, sharing its values even to the extent of becoming apologists at times (Honey, 2001). Legge's research helped expand Western culture then absorbed in heroic Romanticism and colonialist expansionism, to a world-view respecting foreign cultures (Sanneh, 1995).

Legge was changed by his experience in China, and his thinking about religion changed as a result of his years of studying ancient Chinese texts. Scholar Pfister has argued that Legge's views changed in favour of accepting that all religions could have good ideas within them and that Christians should not believe that all other religions are false, during his discussions with Müller in Oxford (Pfister, 1992). Legge's 1880 book on the religions of China is now seen as a defining work in the then newly-emerging scholarly study of religions that attempted to compare them in an objective way, even though Legge used Christianity as a benchmark in his comparisons (Taylor, 1997). The idea that scholarship about missions might be valuable as history, has become increasingly of interest in both the West and in China (M. K. Wong, 2000), giving us the opportunity to take a fresh look at what actually happened.

#### Problems with the Orientalism and imperialism critique

Said's attack on Orientalism has been found deeply flawed, and by 1986 Said was backing off much of his own critique (Said, 1986). In particular the missions to China can no longer be considered simply as agents of imperialism and Western religion, but are recognized for bringing beneficial ideas and working models of egalitarianism and the rule of law to autocratic, feudal China. In educating Chinese children and adults in English and in modern curriculum subjects, missions created an educated class of men who led important reforms in China and entered public life in Hong Kong as legislators, physicians, businessmen and civic leaders.

The Orientalism critique, whether applied to the missions and scholars of the past or to modern cultural studies, is now recognized as being singularly narrow-minded in failing to examine both the harms and benefits of cultural imperialism and of cultural isolation. The critique is often ignorant, reflecting its own ideological bias that is more implicit and thus more ignoble than anything charged against the missionaries. That bias is based on the assumption that all westerners who went out had common set of attitudes and beliefs in their own superiority, and that all who spent lifetimes in remote territories retained a common set of imperialist ideas. In Said's assertion that the intellectual always has to side with the weaker, his conceptual rigidity failed to recognize that the weaker can also be wrong-minded, as for example, in the slave-owning American Confederacy, and in the pro-Nazi and jihadist movements of modern times.

The critique also failed to recognize the extent to which cultural influences go in both directions. A recent study showed how pre-Revolutionary Chinese reformers used ideas from the European Enlightenment (termed *qimeng* or *liming* in Chinese), and these approaches are again emerging in modern Chinese historical studies of the recent and remote past (Mittag, 2001). When modern authoritarian Asian regimes criticize movements toward human rights and democracy as merely western imperialism, they use a very selective lens that often ignores deep traditions for these values within their own cultures. Princeton scholar Yu Yingshih has shown that prominent Confucian thinkers began promoting such ideas as respect for the individual and the need for popular support for a government, in the seventeenth century (Y. Yu, 2000). Westernized modern enclaves in India, as in the English-speaking technocracy of Bangalore, have brought the weakening of caste and religious divisions along with huge improvements in earnings and life circumstances (Rai, 2004b), challenging the entrenched powerful as they enhance many in the multitude.

The Orientalism critique was also flawed in implying that it was uniquely superior in discovering ethnocentrism in human attitudes, and in assuming it was a specifically Western moral failing that created flawed versions of "the Other" when confronting new cultures. Most cultures, including indigenous cultures, have significant beliefs in their own superiority, on moral or spiritual grounds if material wellbeing cannot be invoked. Recent studies, for example, show how a parallel "Occidentalism" (Buruma & Margalit, 2004) can be found in Islamic and other Asian writings, in which everything in the west is decried as morally inferior, in an Asian mirror-image version of western ethnocentrism. The extremists of the Taliban movements across the mid-East share a strong belief of the superior moral purity of their faith in comparison with that of the degenerate west. Thus the Orientalism critique itself was ignorant in failing to

understand the general human tendency of groups to believe in their own superiority, including those in both the European and Chinese empires.

Orientalism failed to appreciate that thoughtful travellers and scholars across the ages have been forced to confront their own assumptions about culture when first encountering new and alien practices, although there is a vast published history of such questioning reflections. The critique argued as if its analysis represented the “real truth”, whereas all previous travellers, scholars of the orient, and missionaries were uniquely arrogant and narrow in believing in their particular truths. In the end, the critique is itself a product of its own time and place, a deeply illogical combination of arguments based on idiosyncratic fact-picking that ignored contrary evidence (Duke, 2000).

In adopting the Orientalism critique it became fashionable for sociologists to use missionary letters as proofs of the distortions that mission people presented back to their home cultures, in a paradoxical effort by these modern scholars to argue for the superiority of their own anti-colonialist views. Before highly selected ethnocentric missionary letters are used to support an anti-mission argument, it is necessary to take a long sample of them and see both the general tenor and the specific individual differences in missionary attitudes. My reading of these letters shows that this narrow cultural domination charge has failed to examine a broad array of the evidence, or to consider it objectively. I have read thousands of LMS China mission letters and they are quite different from what the anti-colonialists would have us imagine. These letters show the men to be mostly conscientious, humane professionals who are trying to buy land to build schools, hire teachers, train nurses and medical students, help families to treat their daughters and widows fairly, fight against injustice with bureaucrats back home and on site, deal with horrific illness and sudden deaths of their wives, children, friends and congregational members, while suffering from the class-based scorn of the colonial hierarchy, typically prejudiced against missionaries. Chinese people are directly discussed in terms of individuals involved in problems that needed solving, and some political comments, but much of the religious comment in LMS letters consists of apologies for the low rate of individual baptisms. Objective scholars of mission history have noted that “as individuals many missionaries exhibited a rare humility in the face of other cultures and religions; it would be surprising if (their) painstaking cultural research was motivated solely by the desire to convert and thereby civilize” (Newby, 1996).

Happily the Orientalist critique has fallen into disarray (Irwin, 2006) (Rice, 2000) with revelations of gross misrepresentations, undone by its own excesses and now



residing mainly in politicized academic fringes. Historian John MacKenzie has shown the hubris and deep errors in the critique, using facts from imperial history around the globe rather than just the mid-East favoured by Said. Mackenzie has shown the ways in which colonial experience generated great international respect for oriental arts, architecture, and an expanded openness to new approaches, all the inverse of the orientalism argument (MacKenzie, 1995). Just as the free traders and missionaries of the 19<sup>th</sup> century British empire circled the globe starting out mostly comfortable in beliefs about the superiority of their own culture, so too do the orientalism critics sit comfortably in their beliefs in the superiority of their own analysis, just as earlier versions of themselves in the Enlightenment used similar critiques against their established authorities. Modern critics have been so convinced of the hidden agendas and unexamined assumptions of those working a century ago, they failed to recognize their own. Scholars of Chinese literature have mounted their own critique of the Orientalism charge using empirical data to reveal the shallowness and ignorance at its heart (P. Williams, 2000).

Apart from the Orientalism critique with its focus on literary culture, other westerners criticized missionaries for being agents of imperialism, advancing imperialist trade interests in indirect ways, but this critique is flawed. First it is necessary to see whether those educated by the missionaries became active agents of western imperialism. Historian Paul Harris examined this, focusing on the American missions and their possible role in “cultural imperialism” in China. He concluded that even the Chinese students with the most extensive educational support from the missions (those sent to the United States for High School and university), did not return to China to create benefits for western imperialism, but rather helped China to improve (Harris, 1991). Secondly, the interests of the missions and of the imperialists often clashed. Harris found that the missions essentially lost the support of the imperial merchants and diplomats starting with the 1842 Treaty of Nanking, ending the first trade war. In that small war British merchants and diplomats no longer saw any shared interests with the missions in achieving access to Chinese ports.

In Hong Kong the traders stopped supporting the mission-supported MES School once they had achieved success through military and diplomatic means and no longer needed mission allies. They had been allies only in the most basic issue, access to China according to international rules, and once that was achieved many merchants saw no further benefits to associations with missions. In fact many merchants and government leaders actively opposed and scorned mission activities even though they frequently needed the help of bilingual mission staff. In the case of the British, many traders and

officials up to the highest levels were adversaries of the missions, and ignored mission pleas to include provisions for protection for missionaries' lives and property in making treaties with China, treating the mission men's pleas for fair treatment under the treaties as troubling nuisances.

Most missions operated according to complex interests and needs. At times these overlapped with commercial or diplomatic activities but at other times these were very divergent, and it is simply naïve to view missions as generic softening agents for western imperialistic capitalism. Each mission and each mission station and its members has to be studied on a case-by-case basis, an argument spelled out in historian Neill's classic overview of missions around the world (Neill, 1966).

### Missions, imperialism, and extraterritoriality in China

Some traditional PRC scholars (Bai, 2002) have tried to claim that China was "colonized" by outsiders including missionaries, on the evidence of the treaty ports and the extraterritoriality rules. Chinese officials in modern times sometimes complain that the extraterritoriality clauses made the British treaties unequal and thus humiliating, because the rules were not mutual mirror images. This complaint ignores various one-sided Chinese rules, such as those that often prohibited Chinese from emigrating, and ignores China's use of extraterritoriality from ancient Tang dynasty to current times. Lacking faith in the 19<sup>th</sup> c. Chinese justice system, the pragmatic British on the China coast ensured treaties protected their citizens from Chinese judicial procedures that required an admission of guilt, routinely using judicial torture if necessary to gain this. The obvious fact is that China never was a colony of the West. Wu notes that trade treaties and regulations have never been an index of national inferiority, and concludes that no foreign nations ever had domination over China in a way that would meet criteria of colonialism (Wu, 2000).

The principle of extraerritoriality, however, remains a complex modern issue, and the principle of extraterritoriality is invoked by the Chinese government for its own citizens in sensitive cases even today<sup>47</sup>, as the rules between China and the west are still evolving. In 1943 London and China agreed to the abrogation of extraterritoriality and

---

<sup>47</sup> Of interest, China itself claimed the benefits of extraterritoriality for an individual in a 2004 murder case in which a young Chinese man who fled to China after becoming suspected of a murder of a Chinese student in Vancouver, was protected by the Chinese government from extradition on the grounds that both he and the victim were Chinese thus Canadian law did not apply even though the crime took place in Canada (York, 2004b).

foreign management of treaty ports, but after Mao's victory in 1949 China again retreated to the isolationism of the traditional Qing dynasty and the treaty ports were effectively closed by a mutual agreement between London and Beijing to abrogate their treaty and suspend the protections of extraterritoriality. This changed again with Mao's death and the arrest of the Gang of Four, following which Deng Xiaoping began opening China to foreign ideas and trade that has generated huge advances in Chinese wellbeing, starting with the creation of "special economic zones" in an echo of the treaty ports. Unofficial policies now give extraterritoriality protections to foreigners living in these from the full rigors of Chinese law, in an echo of the agreements reached in the Qing dynasty (Hacker, 1976), and the old treaty ports are again thriving.

#### Mission men vs. traders, on Chinese culture

Although mission men arrived in China believing that their religions and cultures were superior to those of the Chinese, in general they developed far more positive views of Chinese culture during their years of work, than did the single-minded traders. Mission men often tried to mitigate the militaristic bombast of traders when their trading aims were being frustrated. Mission men such as E.C. Bridgman, the American founder of the Canton journal *The Chinese Repository*, and his colleague S. Wells Williams, tried to show the traders that the Chinese were rational and had an advanced culture that just suffered from being "mistaken" in some domains. Their analysis meant that rational means of changing Chinese ideas were feasible and force was not necessary. (Despite this helpful concept, it is true that these particular men showed a darker side with their publication of an address by John Quincy Adams justifying the Opium War, and their general disinclination to comment on the opium trade in order to avoid upsetting the merchants whose support their American mission in Canton needed.) In time they left their American mission work and moved into consular jobs during the 1850s, becoming more militaristic and aggressive in their views on the way that China needed to be forced into change, but their politicized changes were not shown by the LMS missions or by Legge. The British missions in Hong Kong freely criticized the opium trade and suffered direct losses of support for their MES school, and Legge wrote against the opium trade across his career in Hong Kong.

Legge and the LMS missionaries showed another significant difference in interests compared to the colonialist businessmen and government officials who left Europe in order to enhance empire. That difference lay in the local people of interest to the expatriates. The most effective imperialist officials and traders worked with the élites in the societies they were developing trading relations with or colonizing, and had little

interest in the impoverished masses. In India for example, there were strong formal and warm personal connections between the British and Indian élites. In contrast, Legge and the LMS missions specifically worked with the most dispossessed Chinese, and British officials criticized them for this. Ambassador to China Sir Frederick Bruce proposed to eliminate any consideration of the needs of missions in treaties, writing that the China Protestant missionaries should be working with the Chinese élites instead of the downtrodden masses with no social standing or influence, an élitism that outraged Legge.

There was an aspect of Chinese culture that began to worry the missionaries in the years after Legge left, relating to the ways in which Confucius had to be honoured by Chinese men wishing to become officials, including graduates of mission schools. In 1869 one mission man wrote an essay examining the morality of Chinese Christians writing the Chinese civil service examinations, identifying three problems with them. First, if the man were successful and appointed to an official position there would be much required that would be contrary to Christianity, so it would be acceptable only if the man chose a non-official appointment if he were successful (Hartwell, 1869). More problematically some of the civil service rituals required “worship” of Confucius, and work would have to be done on the Sabbath. With such elaborate scrutiny of the lives of Confucian élites it is not surprising that the missions were not actively intertwined with the local Chinese officials in the way that the Jesuits had been.

### James Legge and Orientalism

Modern Orientalism critiques tar with a broad brush, but it is necessary to test their validity in terms of James Legge’s behaviour and scholarship. The core question concerns his attitudes. Did Legge respect the Chinese people and their Confucian culture, or was he basically dismissive of these and interested only in changing Chinese to become more like him? There were mission men who thought that way. The Orientalism critique claimed that Orientalists did not respect the exotic cultures they studied, but held deep convictions of their own superiority that in the end could never accord any other culture a full or honest appreciation.

By such a criterion James Legge is innocent of the charges. Scholars, including modern Chinese scholars, view Legge as a strong exception to any hint of Orientalism because of his great respect for Confucius and for the Chinese texts and their ideas (Reinders, 2004) (Girardot, 2002). Legge’s respect shifted over time into the adoption of a Confucian perspective (W. Zhang, 2002), and Legge is regarded as a man who “delighted in the study of Chinese learning and culture” by Hong Kong scholar Luo

(Luo, 1963). Legge's respect for Confucian thinking became so widely known that it made him a target for other mission men. Modern scholar Girardot has shown that Legge was a maverick among the mission men in many ways relating to his attitude to Chinese ideas (Girardot, 2002), for example, insisting on mastering the language and literature of China rather than just learning to speak the local dialects. He accommodated Confucian ideas within a broader philosophical and Christian framework rather than simply rejecting them as heathen, earning outrage from the fundamentalist mission men that continued to erupt even after his death. Legge also argued against contemporary mission theories that tried to assert the primacy of Biblical culture, such as the attempt to prove that Chinese language arose from ancient Biblical languages, and that tried to use Chinese texts to validate Biblical events. He was truly ecumenical, believing that the hand of Providence could be found in the sacred texts of China and other religions, thus antagonizing Christian imperialists. In his lecture-based book on the religions of China Legge argued that religion in China, lacking an official priesthood such as Roman Catholicism and Tibetan Buddhism had, resembled Protestantism. This parallel between Protestantism and the Confucianism that they considered heathen, further enraged the Christian fundamentalists. In all, Legge was not an easy man for missionaries convinced of the superiority of their religion and culture. Conferences held by Chinese and English-language scholars in Hong Kong, Beijing, and Edinburgh in 2015 examined the possible contamination of Legge's translations by Protestant or Christian ideas, and uniformly concluded that such kinds of bias could not be discovered.

Overall a deconstructionist, Orientalism critique against Legge is not supported by evidence, and an Orientalism critique was never strongly argued against him because it simply did not fit. Legge's responses to Chinese culture represent exactly the demythologizing of China in favour of creating what modern Chinese scholar Zhang has termed a dynamic "fusion of horizons that transcends language and boundaries" (L. Zhang, 1998). In doing so Zhang points out that East and West do not have to idealize or excoriate the Other. We lose the myths, but can see the beauty and the real differences as contributing variety to the world.

The values that Legge powerfully represented for Chinese people, respect for justice and the rights of individuals including women, and the benefits of education for all, are values sought by people around the world and cannot be simply dismissed as western colonialism.

### Modern evangelisms

The 19<sup>th</sup> c. mission men were not unique in trying to bring new thinking to a distant land, and the basic charge of bringing western ideas to China cannot be claimed to be the exclusive behaviour of religious missions. There are now numberless agencies in the west that are aggressively proselytizing China in every domain imaginable. Within religion, Roman Catholic churches in China are facing the same problem with hierarchical authority that the Jesuits had 300 years ago: who has the ultimate authority over the church there, the Pope or the Chinese government? But that modern and ancient problem concerns power and hierarchy, while many of the things that concerned the Protestant missions were more domestic than political, and the issues they faced then have now been superceded by modern secular versions of influence from the western worlds into the Asian.

It is easy to criticize missionaries of two centuries ago, but every age creates its own kinds of missionary work, and new secular religions have arisen in the West that cover the same exhortatory territory used as the basis for Christian missions, often with less humility. Each claims a particular system will bring universal benefit to foreign cultures, propagating it through assertive intrusion. Each of these new world-views regards competing systems as unenlightened about the true sources of community wellbeing and hope for a better future. These movements include evangelism from congregations representing Marxism, feminism, global capitalism, humanitarianism, advanced technology-ism, environmentalism, gender rights, and post-modernism. An expensive meeting in Delhi in February 2011 featured American politician Sarah Palin preaching the soulfulness of rural living, while Bill Gates and Warren Buffett preached the virtues of private philanthropy.

These new evangelisms have replaced the 19<sup>th</sup> c. role of missions based on Christianity, but Christianity may be the most truly multicultural of all these –isms, and deep and active indigenous centres outside the West are now even asserting their traditional views in Christian dialogues, reverse-proselytizing back into the original mission cultures. US Roman Catholic churches are now “outsourcing” the offering of special Masses to priests in India (Rai, 2004a) and many American parishes are being staffed by priests from the developing world, who are now trying to uphold traditional Christian beliefs against modernizations of the secular western world.

Modern secular evangelisms have to face the same critiques that the missions experienced. In one modern version, contemporary human rights proponents are criticized by leaders in recipient countries for applying inappropriate “Western” ideas about universal human rights, which are charged with being colonialist, patronizing,

and debasing to the receiving cultures. Buruma terms this reverse cultural prejudice insisting on western moral inferiority, “Occidentalism”. He notes it has been argued equally by Japanese imperialists, Maoists, the followers of Pol Pot, and by other authoritarian Asian governments when they are trying to fight against the multiculturalism and empiricism of science that western cities represent, and trying to contrast that to the spiritual purity that is attributed to traditional acquiescent peasant life (Buruma & Maraglit, 2002), (Buruma & Margalit, 2004). That killer dictator Pol Pot was a Buddhist monk, or that the Bhutanese and Burmese Buddhist governments use ethnic cleansing to purify their nations is ignored in such assertions of Asian moral superiority.

More than a century ago, the China mission men were very aware of cultural values that affected their work, and wrote in their mission journal the *Chinese Recorder* of the need to promote their work not “by force or gunboat... but by persistently bearing testimony with patience and politeness”, to put forward “ideas of what contributes to a wise governmental administration”, uplift morals and bring tranquillity to a state (Boomerang, 1871). The Orientalism critique and its counterpart Occidentalism both represent exaggerated high-culture claims, failing because they do not appreciate the subtlety and complexity of cultural interactions.

Although I am not a Christian or a believer, there seems to be no basis on which to conclude that 19<sup>th</sup> century Christian missions in China created more harm on balance than any of the later or now current global initiatives based on very different but equally belief-driven models, including the theologies of Marxism and its varieties of post-colonial studies, theologies of global capitalism, secular non-governmental humanitarian theory, ecological salvation, and political models and actions designed to forcibly export the American version of democracy. All these fashions in interpretation of how the West should interact with poorer and more chaotic nations, can also be judged harshly by critics. Most international proselytizing ventures start with a combination of motives that often include altruism, then generate unexpected problems as theory encounters the real world, and as frail individual humans take on their tasks with varying degrees of skill, wisdom, and self-interest. I was struck by an interesting quotation from the 1868 *China Mail*: “excepting the missionary, what person studies Chinese except for the purpose of converting it into dollars” (Author, 1868a). This may be still mostly true today 150 years later, but western interest in China is increasing, even if not to sufficient intensity to lead to mastery of the language. Legge’s explorations

into the history and culture allow us all a much easier access to the nation that will soon play a dominant role in world affairs.

### Education as a core value

The single greatest factor contributing to an individual's position in the hierarchy of success in work and family life in the modern western democracies is education and its strong correlate, income. This is becoming increasingly true in other nations as they improve their functioning. Universal compulsory education is the core civic institution through which this mobility is achieved. The idea of the value of education can be found in the traditions of many different ancient literate cultures including those of China, India and Japan, but it is within western cultures that the idea of universal mandatory education was first advocated, by a Protestant, the Scottish Calvinist John Knox. His idea was simple: ensure that all can read the Bible and you will then allow individuals to think for themselves and be resistant to control by priests. The idea spread rapidly within western cultures and is now taken for granted.

At its root, all education has a component of proselytizing ideas, skills, and ways of thinking, and thus always represents "cultural imperialism" in a missionary vein, even when it is as basic as teaching the last Qing Emperor Pu Yi how to do simple arithmetic as did his Scottish tutor (Johnstone, 1934). This gave the young man skills greater than the dynasty's ethnocentric officials as they failed to understand the empire was running out of money, scornful of the trader class despised in Confucian thinking, that had skills with the abacus that allowed calculations.

The ideas, skills, and values that are disseminated through education provide opportunities for people to learn new things that may be very beneficial. Active outreach to teach skills in reading, science, and medicine to illiterate or uneducated people is a western-based kind of imperialism that has to be recognized as a positive force for all humanity, including its force in resisting despotisms.

An important aspect of expanded skills is access to more universal languages, and to more universal moral values. The spread of one language throughout the world can easily be criticized for "cultural imperialism", but since the Latin of the Roman Empire, the English of the British and American empires, and the Chinese text of the Chinese dynasties, access to a common language has enhanced communication across cultures. The ancient Silk Road was successful for hundreds of years in part because documents and letters from one end of the route to the other could be written and read using a common phonetic script, Brahmi, across cultures with no shared spoken language. Formal development of the idea of universal human values has similarly been helpful in modern times. The spread of the ideas of the inherent rights of all individuals as spelled



out in the 1948 UN Declaration of Human Rights has often been criticized by dictators as western cultural imperialism, but it has benefited millions and is actively sought by dispossessed populations.

The question of Legge and imperialist attitudes can be examined in terms of the kinds of education that Legge and other missions were creating. Scholar Paul Harris has examined the question of an “imperialist” style in the Protestant missions from different nations to Hong Kong and China (Harris, 1991), showing how missions from different homelands were dramatically different. The American home mission boards were opposed to educating Chinese students in the English language, for example, because then the graduates would be likely to take jobs in commerce or government rather than staying close to the mission. The American missions were established in an entrepreneurial fashion, expected to pay their own way and not be “dependent” on American support. They were supposed to be in contrast to the British missions and their presumed connection with an imperial mission, but the Americans actually operated in a way that was much more imperial than the British missions. This was because the racially- and culturally- biased educational system of the American missions meant that the Chinese men who graduated from the American mission schools were still unilingual Chinese, made completely dependent on their mission for their subsequent employment as workers subordinate to the missionaries. This was a paradoxical consequence of the refusal of those missions to provide a broad and bilingual education, but perfectly natural in light of the American home mission boards views that missions were in competition with trade and diplomacy for the services of the Chinese they educated.

In contrast, Legge and the LMS believed in education in a much broader sense even though the result of this was that they routinely lost their bilingual graduates from mission careers. Not only were the LMS schools bilingual, but also their curricula were modern and broad even by today’s standards. The result was that their very well-educated graduates did leave the frugality of the missions for independent and lucrative jobs in the wider community. This constantly frustrated LMS hopes to create a large indigenous network of congregations, but it was wonderfully non-imperial and very helpful for the talented and educated young men who took on major roles in the lives of their communities and eventually helped China into the modern world. This progressive educational policy was far less imperial and far more successful than the much narrower system established by the American mission boards. The LMS in particular garnered praise from unexpected sources, with visiting international HSBC banker Sir Charles Addis writing his family that the London Mission “...has a class of men and women

superior to any which can be shown by another mission”, being managed with especial care to ensure the mission men were not beset by the “two sins” common to the mission class, “luxury and idleness”, and honouring both scholarship and direct work with the Chinese people (Addis, 1886).

By 1892 British missionary Timothy Richard argued more explicitly in six points for secular education for material improvements in China as being an integral part of the Protestant mission’s task (M. K. Wong, 2000) p.25. Richard went further one year before Legge’s death and advocated a League of Nations, argued against the British and European struggle to gain territory in China, and created a strategy for funding universal education in China. All these goals were radical and prescient for their time, and all were completely consistent with the life and writings of James Legge. All educators are imperialists, passing on new ways of thinking to their students, in addition to teaching them facts about geography and arithmetic and new methods of doing things. Education can be in aid of enlightened ideas intended to help students achieve their fullest potential and go beyond their teachers, or it can attempt to provide only selective ethnocentric and religious ideas intended to narrow students’ understanding of the world, representing propaganda rather than true education.

Legge was an educator in the better tradition, both in teaching the English-speaking world about China, and in teaching Chinese children and adults in his mission and schools and in the public educational system in Hong Kong. Legge was a striking example of the more enlightened perspective that valued Chinese culture, and had been since his earliest years in Malacca when in 1840 he had realized the richness of Chinese culture and its history of ideas and understood the absolute necessity of the western world in learning about it. His work clearly represented a two-way version of cultural exchange rather than naïve western imperialism.

### Legge in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

But if there are many reasons we can understand why readers lost awareness of Legge’s *Classics* across the last 100 years, historical forces are now developing that may change this for the better. Scholars at Beijing Foreign Studies University in cooperation with Prof. Pfister at Hong Kong Baptist University are planning publication of selected works of Legge’s in honour of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth in 2015. As China’s vast productivity and growing wealth and power come to command attention in world events in exactly the way that Wang Tao envisioned, Legge’s works may find new audiences in the West that include keen readers, students and scholars, travellers, businessmen and political leaders.

James Legge was always more than “just a translator”, or even “just a scholar”, he was a distinguished transmitter of Chinese culture, history and values to the western world, and his works were a guide to the consciousness of the people. In addition to his cultural contributions of books and essays, he created important legacies in the concrete world, bringing western ideas about education as he created the school system in Hong Kong, and bringing Christian ideas about the human rights of all persons as a founder of continuing English and Chinese churches. On the smaller scale of aesthetics, he was the supervisor of the creation of the most beautiful Chinese printing fonts of his age, fonts that were treasured and used by others including the Qing court and the 20<sup>th</sup> c. Oxford University Press.

I hope this book helps recapture some of the man who was universally recognized as “the Sinologist” of the nineteenth century. Best of all, I hope that some will turn to James Legge’s books with all their complex glory and challenging detail, and sink into a world of massive, dazzling, individual scholarship opening up an exotic language and culture from a uniquely welcoming, skilful, and respectful perspective that will probably never be seen again.

## Notes and Sources

Quoted material without a citation is nearly entirely from hundreds of unpublished letters mainly held in London in the School of Oriental and African Studies in its Church World Mission archive of LMS mission letters, to a lesser extent from letters in the Wellcome Library, and in the Bodleian archives, Oxford. While I can provide the specific references, they are easily accessible in those archives by date, thus CWM sources are not individually referenced.

## References

- Addis, Charles. (1886). *Letter from Peking*. SOAS Archives. Peking.
- Alabaster, Chaloner. (1855). *Diary; ms 380451*. School of Oriental and African Studies University of London. London.
- American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5th ed.). Washington DC: Author.
- AP. (2010, January 4). Malaysia appeals "Allah" for Christians ruling, *Associated Press*.
- Author. (1843a). History of Hong Kong IV. *Chinese Repository*, 12(7), 362-368.
- Author. (1843b, September 9). Postage rates, *Canton Press*.
- Author. (1844a). Journal of Occurrences. *Chinese Repository*, XIII (1), 52.
- Author. (1844b). VI Journal of occurrences *Chinese Repository*, XIII (7), 386-392.
- Author. (1845, 21 April). Edict of Toleration, *Friend of China*.
- Author. (1846). Art. IV: Riot in Canton. *Chinese Repository*, XV(1), 46 - 55.
- Author. (1847a, November). News. *Chinese Repository*, XVI, 514.
- Author. (1847b). Review of Hai Kwoh Tu Chi: Lin's Statistical Notices of the ocean kingdom with maps, in 50 books. *Chinese Repository*, XVI(9), 421.
- Author. (1848a). *Chinese Repository*, 377-400.
- Author. (1848b). News. *Evangelical Magazine and Missionary Chronicle*, XXVI(308), 428-429.
- Author. (1849, September 26). The Colonies, *The Friend of China and Hong Kong Gazette*, p. 506.
- Author. (1850). Art. IV: Movable metallic types amongst the Chinese. *Chinese Repository*, XIX(5), 247 - 253.
- Author. (1853). Letters on the death of Mrs. Mary Isabella Legge, from China. *Evangelical Magazine and Missionary Chronicle*, XXXI(March).
- Author. (1858, May 10). From our Special Correspondent, *Times* p. 9.
- Author. (1859). Occurrences. *Journal of the North-China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, II(May), 253.
- Author. (1860). Morrison Education Society, *Overland Register*, pp. 199-200.
- Author. (1863, 15 August ). Pekin diplomacy and Protestant missions, *The Caledonian Mercury*.
- Author. (1867). *China Mail*(May 1).
- Author. (1868a). Native education in Hong Kong, *China Mail*.
- Author. (1868b, January 9). The Scot in the East, *The China Mail*, p. 3.
- Author. (1872). Proclamation forbidding idol processions. *Chinese Recorder*(march), 267-269.
- Author. (1873-1874). Feng Shui. *China Reveiw*, II, 34-40.
- Author. (1876). Notices of recent publications. *Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal*, VII(July-August), 301-302.
- Author. (1877). The missionary conference in Shanghai. *China Review*, V, 399-400.
- Author. (1881). Hannah Legge. *Christian Herald*.

- Author. (1897a, 30 November). Obituary, obituary, *The Times*
- Author. (1897b). Weekly missionary portrait: Rev. J. Legge, LL.D., D.D., Missionary and Professor. *The Christian*(March 11), 17.
- Author. (1909a, March 19). Notable men and women of Strathbogie: XLII. Legges, *The Huntly Express*, p. 6.
- Author. (1909b, March 26, April 2). Notable men and women of Strathbogie: XLIII, Professor James Legge, *The Huntly Express*, p. 6.
- Bai, Shouyi (Ed.). (2002). *An outline history of China*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press.
- Baldwin, S.L. (1868). Opium smoking in China. *The Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal*(September), 93-95.
- Ball, James Dyer. (1894). *Readings in Cantonese Colloquial*. Hong Kong: Kelly & Walsh.
- Ball, Richard (Ed.). (1850). *Christianity in China: State and progress of the work of the native evangelists, in a series of tracts* (Second ed.). London: Partridge & Oakey.
- Barmé, Geremie R. (1997). Gong Xiagong: A case of mistaken identity. from Asian Studies Institute Victoria University of Wellington  
<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/slc/asi/publications/02-occ-gong-xiaogong.pdf>
- Barr, Pat. (1967). *The coming of the barbarians: A story of western settlement in Japan 1853-1870*. London: Readers Union/Macmillan.
- Beeching, Jack. (1975). *The Chinese opium wars*. London: Hutchinson & Co.
- Bickley, Gillian. (1997). *The golden needle: The biography of Freckerick Stewart (1836-1889)*. Hong Kong: David E. Lam Institute for East-West Studies.
- Bickley, Gillian. (2001). The student-interpreters' scheme and the Chinese teacher's allowance: Translator education in nineteenth-century Hong Kong. In S.-W. Chan (Ed.), *Translation in Hong Kong: Past, Present and Future* (pp. 9-19). Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press.
- Bickley, Gillian. (2002). *The development of education in Hong Kong 1841-1897*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press.
- Billington, M.O. (1993). China's Taiping Rebellion; The International diplomacy of the Confederacy. *American Almanac*(June 14).
- Bitton, N. (1913). *Our heritage in China*. London: London Missionary Society.
- Blake, Robert. (1999). *Jardine Matheson: traders of the Far East*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson.
- Bogaars, George. (1955). The effects of the opening of the Suez canal on the trade and development of Singapore. *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 38(1), 99-143.
- Bondfield, George H., Hickling, C. H., & Ball, James Dyer (Eds.). (1903). *A history of Union Church*. Hong Kong: China Mail Office.
- Boomerang. (1871). Foreign influence in China. *Chinese Recorder*, 3(October), 126-130.
- Boomerang. (1872). Indiscretions of diplomats. *Chinese Recorder*, IV(10), 269-274.
- Boone, William J. (1848). An essay, on the proper rendering of the words Elohim and Theos into the Chinese language (Vol. vi). Canton China: Chinese Repository.
- Boone, William J. (1850). Defense of an Essay on the proper rendering of the words elohim and Theos into the Chinese language (contd). *Chinese Repository*, XIX(7, 8, 9, 11, 12), 345-385, 407-444, 464-478, 569-618, 625 - 649.

- Boone, William J. (1852). Vindication of comments on the translation of Ephesians I in the Delegates Version of the New Testament (pp. 80). Canton: Chinese Repository.
- Borden, J. C. (1932). Selections from the Confucian analects; chosen to show the Christian and Christ-like elements in Confucianism and Confucius. New York: Union Theological Seminary.
- Bowman, Marilyn L. (1997). *Individual differences in posttraumatic response: Problems with the adversity-distress connection*. Mahweh NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Bradsher, Keith. (2003, 2 July). Security laws target of huge Hong Kong protest, *New York Times*, pp. A1, A3.
- Bradsher, Keith. (2005, March 20). In Hong Kong, China prefers power to law, *New York Times*, p. 4.
- Braginsky, Vladimir. (1997). Rediscovering the "Oriental" in the Orient and Europe: new books on the East-West cultural interface: a review article. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and Asian Studies*, 60(3), 511-532.
- Bretschneider, Emil. (1871). (Legge's translation of a botanical natme). *Chinese Recorder*, IV(2), 51-52.
- Bridgman, E.C. (1858). Article i: Inagural Address. *Journal of the Shanghai Literary and Scientific Society*, 1(1), 1-16.
- Bruce, Henry William. (2000). Eye-witness account of the British take-over of Hong Kong & the payment of war reparations by the Chinese. In C. A. S. Catalog (Ed.), *Sale 594 online*. London: Cavendish House.
- Buruma, Ian, & Maraglit, Avishai. (2002). Occidentalism. *New York Review of Books*, 49(1), 4-8.
- Buruma, Ian, & Margalit, Avishai. (2004). *[Occidentalism]*. New York: Penguin.
- Byrd, Cecil K. (1970). *Early printing in the Straits settlements 1806-1858*. Singapore: Singapore National Library.
- Cameron, Nigel. (1970). *Barbarians and Mandarins*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chang, Chinju. (1998). The same old life in the afterlife? -- Chinese concepts of heaven. from <http://www.sinorama.com.tw/en/1998/199807//707006e5.html>
- Choa, G.H. (1981/2000). *The life and times of Sir Kai Ho Kai; A prominent figure in nineteenth-century Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press.
- Choe, Sanghun. (2012, February 5). Feeling adrift, Koreans send children to camps for Confucian learning, *New York Times*, p. 11.
- Clark, Arthur H. (1910). *The clipper ship era: An epitome of famous American and British Clipper Ships, their owners, builders, Commanders, and crews, 1843-1869*. Camden ME: G. P. Putnam's Sons.
- Coates, P.D. (1988). *The China Consuls: British consular officers, 1843-1943*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cohen, Paul A. (1963). *China and Christianity: The missionary movement and the growth of Chinese antiforeignism, 1860-1870*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.
- Cohen, Paul A. (1967). Wang T'ao and incipient Chinese nationalism. *Journal of Asian Studies*, 26 (4), 559-574.
- Cohen, Paul A. (1974). *Between tradition and modernity: Wang T'ao and reform in late Chi'ing China*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

- Corless, Roger. (2004). Review of Girardot: The Victorian translation of China. *Buddhist-Christian Studies*, 24(1), 276-278.
- Cua, Antonio S. (2003). The ethical significance of shame: Insights of Aristotle and Xunzi. *Philosophy East & West*, 53(2), 147-202.
- Davies, E. (1846). *Memoir of the Rev. Samuel Dyer, sixteen years missionary to the Chinese*. London: John Snow.
- Davies, John Paton. (1972). *Dragon by the tail: American, British, Japanese, and Russian encounters with China and one another*. New York: Norton.
- de Bary, William Theodore (Ed.). (1961). *Sources of Chinese Tradition*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Dirlik, Arif, & Zhang, Xudong. (1997). Postmodernism and China. *Boundary2: An International Journal of Literature and Culture*, 24(3), Special issue.
- Doolittle, J. (1867). *Social life of the Chinese, Vol. I*. New York: Harper & Brothers.
- Duke, Michael S. (2000). Everyday resistance to postmodern theory. *Tamkang Review*, 30(3), 7-49.
- Eames, James Bromley. (1909). *The English in China*. London: Curzon Press.
- Editor. (1851). *Chinese Repository*(March), 169.
- Editor. (1877). The Missionary Conference in Shanghai. *Chinese Repository*, 8(2,3), 239.
- Editor. (1897a, December 1). Dr. Legge, the Chinese Professor; by one who knew him, *Pall Mall Gazette*.
- Editor. (1897b, December 4). The late Dr. Legge, a distinguished son of Huntly, *Obituary, Huntly Express*.
- Editor. (1897c). Rev. J. Legge, LL. D., D.D. *The Christian*(March 11), 17.
- Editorial Committee. (1859). Article VIII: Record of Occurrences. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society North China*, 1(3), 353-368.
- Edkins, J. (1872). Feng shui. *Chinese Recorder*, IV, 274-277.
- Edkins, R. (1898). *Sermon honouring James Legge*. Church World Missions, (China, Personal, Box 7, James Legge). SOAS, London.
- Eitel, Ernest J. (1876). The Protestant missions of Hong Kong. *Chinese Recorder*, VII(1), 21-29.
- Eitel, Ernest J. (1895). *Europe in China: The history of Hong Kong from the beginning to the year 1882*. Hong Kong: Kelly & Walsh.
- Endacott, George Beer. (1962/2005). *A biographical sketch-book of early Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- Fairbairn, A. M. (1897). Address in Memoriam *Mansfield College* (pp. 1-11). Oxford: Unwin Bros.
- Foreman, Amanda. (2010). *A world on fire*. London: Allen Lane.
- Fowler, T. (1893). *The History of Corpus Christi College*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Freely, Maureen. (2006). Writers on trial. *The New York Times Book Review*.
- Gerson, Jack J. (1972). *Horatio Nelson Lay and Sino-British Relations 1854-1864*. Cambridge MA: Harvard East Asia Monographs.
- Giles, Herbert A. (1912). *China and the Manchus*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Girardot, Norman J. (1997). Corpus and Chinese: James Legge (1815-1897). *The Pelican Record*, XL(1), 23-26.



- Girardot, Norman J. (1999). "Finding the Way": James Legge and the Victorian invention of Taoism. *Religion*, 29, 107-121.
- Girardot, Norman J. (2002). *The Victorian translation of China; James Legge's Oriental pilgrimage*. Berkeley CA: University of California Pres.
- Girardot, Norman J. (2004). Legge, James (1815-1897) Sinologist and missionary. In H. C. G. Matthew & B. Harrison (Eds.), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Vol. 33, pp. 189-191). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gritzner, Jeffrey A. (1999). Landscape as seen by geographers. *Landscape Geography*(Autumn).
- Hacker, Arthur. (1976). *Hacker's Hong Kong*. New York: G. Powell and T. Thomas.
- Halliday, Stephen. (1999). *The great stink of London: Sir Joseph Bazalgette and the cleansing of the Victorian capital*. Somerset: Sutton Publishing.
- Hanan, P. (2003). The Bible as Chinese literature: Medhurst, Wang T'ao, and the Delegates Version. *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 63(1), 197 - 239.
- Hanan, Patrick. (2000). The missionary novels of nineteenth-century China. *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 60(2), 413-443.
- Harris, Paul W. (1991). Cultural Imperialism and American Protestant missionaries; Collaboration and dependency in mid-nineteenth-century China. *Pacific Historical Review*, 60 (3), 309-338.
- Harrison, B. (1976). Anglo-Chinese College at Malacca, 1818-1843. In Cowan & Walters (Eds.), *Southeast Asian History and Historiography* (pp. 246-261). Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press.
- Harrison, Brian. (1979). *Waiting for China*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- Hartwell, Charles. (1869). The relation of Christians to the examinations. *The Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal*, 1(11), 217- 220.
- Hartwell, Charles. (1871). Selecting and Training Native Helpers. *Chinese Recorder*, IV(5), 116-118.
- Hartwell, Charles. (1893). To what extent should we teach the Chinese Classics in our Mission schools? *Chinese Recorder*, XXIV(December), 568-573.
- Henderson, James. (1864). The medicine and medical practise of the Chinese. *Journal of the North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, New Series I*(1), 21-69.
- Hevia, James L. (1995). *Cherishing men from afar. Qing guest ritual and the Macartney embassy of 1793*. Durham and London: Duke university Press.
- Hiney, Tom. (2000). *On the missionary trail*. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press.
- Hitchens, Christopher. (2004). Great Scot. *Atlantic Monthly*, 104-107.
- Hobson. (1842, January 17). *Letter*. Church World Missions, (Box 4 Folder 2 Jacket C). School of Oriental and African Studies, SOAS -London.
- Hobson, Benjamin. (1848). Report. *Chinese Repository*, XVII(May), 256.
- Hon, Tze-ki. (2005). Constancy in change: A comparison of James Legge's and Richard Wilhelm's interpretations of hte Yijing. *Monumenta Serica*, 53, 315-336.
- Honey, David B. (2001). *Incense at the altar: Pioneering Sinologists and the development of classical Chinese philology* (Vol. 86). New Haven, CT: American Oriental Society.
- Hsia, Adrian. (2003). Richard Wilhelm's reception of Confucianism in comparison with James Legge's and Max Weber's. *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 40(1/2), 96-110.
- Hutchinson, A.B. (1877). Statistics of hte Hong Kong Protestant Mission to January 1875. *Chinese Recorder*, VIII (1), 30-46.

- Ibrahim bin Ismail. (1984). Samuel Dyer and his contributions to Chinese typography. *The Library Quarterly*, 54(2), 157-169.
- Inglis, Brian. (1975). *The forbidden game: A social history of drugs*. New York: Scribners.
- Ingrams, Harold. (1952). *Hong Kong*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
- Ip, Chiyin. (2000). Selections from An Illustrated World Geography by Wei Yuan. *Renditions*, 53-54, 14-17.
- Irwin, Robert. (2006). *Dangerous Knowledge: Orientalism and its discontents*. New York: Overlook.
- Johnstone, Reginald F. (1934). *Twilight in the Forbidden City*: Victor Gollancz.
- Jones, Y., Nelson, H., & Wallis. (1974). *Chinese and Japanese maps*. London: British Library Board.
- Kerr, j.G. (1866). Description of the great examination hall at Canton. *Journal of the North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*(December), 63-71.
- Kerr, j.G. (1872). Chinese Medicine. *China Review*, I(3), 176-181.
- Killick-Kendrick, Robert. (2010). Oriental sore: An ancient tropica disease and hazard for european travellers. *Wellcome History*(43), 4-7.
- Kingsmill, Thomas W. (1865). Article IX: Retrospect of events in China and Japan during the year 1865. *Journal of the North china Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, New Series, II*(December), 134-170.
- Kirkland, Russell. (2004). *Taosim: the enduring tradition*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Kohlberg, L. (1981). *The meaning and measurement of moral development*. Worcester MA: Clark University Press.
- Kranz, P. (1898). Some of Professor Legge's criticisms of Confucianism. *Chinese Recorder*, 29(6), 273-282.
- Latourette, Kenneth Scott. ( 1929/1966). *A history of Christian missions in China*. New York: Macmillan.
- Lau, Tseyui. (1994). *James Legge (1815-1897) and Chinese culture: a missiological study in scholarship, translation and evangelization*. (Ph.D.), University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh.
- Lay, H.N., & Osborn, Capt. Sherard. (1868, January 20). The Foreign Office & our policy in China, Letter to editor, *The Morning Post*, pp. 1-12.
- Lechler, R. (1877). Historical sketch of the Basel Mission station at Lilong. *Chinese Recorder*, VIII(1), 46-54.
- Lee, Chifang. (1981). Wang T'ao and his literary writings. *Tamkang Review*, 11 (3), 267-285.
- Lee, Chifang. (1986). Wang T'ao's contribution to James Legge's translation of the Chinese Classics. *Tamkang Review*, 17(1), 47-67.
- Legge, Domenica. (1878).
- Legge, Domenica. (1951). *Address to the Sino-Scottish Society, University of Edinburgh*. Address ms. Bodleian, c. 865-4, Oxford
- Legge, George. (1863). *Memoir Lectures on Theology, Science, and Revelation* (pp. 1-98). London: Jackson, Walford, and Hodder.
- Legge, Helen Edith. (1905). *James Legge: Missionary and scholar*. London: The Religious Tract Society.

- Legge, James. (1843). *The Rambles of the Emperor Ching Tih in Keang Nan; a Chinese tale*. London: Longmans, Green.
- Legge, James. (1850a). An argument for Shang Te as the proper rendering of the words elohin and theos, in the Chinese language: with strictures on the essay of Bishop Boone in favour of the term shin etc. (pp. 43). Hong Kong: Hong Kong Register.
- Legge, James. (1850b). Letters on the rendering of the name God in the Chinese language. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Register.
- Legge, James. (1852). *The notions of the Chinese concerning God and spirits; with an examination of the Defense of an essay, on the proper rendering of the words Elohim and Theos, into the Chinese language, by William J. Boone, D.D.*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Register.
- Legge, James. (1856). *Graduated Reading; comprising a circle of knowledge in 200 lessons*. Hong Kong: London Missionary Society.
- Legge, James. (1861). *The Chinese Classics I: The Confucian Analects, the Great Learning, the Doctrine of the Mean* (Vol. I). Hong Kong; London: At the Author's; Trübner.
- Legge, James. (1872a). The Colony of Hong Kong. *China Review*, 1 (3), 63-76.
- Legge, James. (1872b). *Reminiscences*. Oxford.
- Legge, James. (1877). Confucianism in relation to Christianity. Shanghai; London: Kelly and Walsh; Trubner.
- Legge, James. (1880). *The Religions of China: Confucianism and Taoism described and compared with Christianity*. London: Hodder & Stoughton.
- Legge, James. (1883). Two heroes of Chinese history. *The China Review*, 1 (6), 370-381.
- Legge, James. (1884). Christianity and Confucianism compared in their teaching of the whole duty of man. In S. W. Muir (Ed.), *Non-Christian religions of the world*. New York: Fleming H. Revell Co.
- Legge, James. (1892-95/1960). *The Chinese Classics, 2nd. rev. ed.* (Vol I based on Oxford 1892 ed (2nd, rev) ed.). Oxford; Hong Kong: Clarendon Press; Hong Kong University.
- Legge, James. (1896, 1896). *Notes on my life* Bodleian ms. Eng. d. 996. Ms. Engl misc., (d 996). Bodleian, Oxford.
- Legge, James, & Legge, John (Eds.). (1863). *George Legge: Lectures on theology, science, and revelation*. London: Jackson, Walford, and Hodder.
- Lindorff, Dave, & Dawley, Heidi. (1997, 26 May). The kowtow still works in China. Just ask Jardine. *Business Week International Edition*.
- Lo, Huimin. (1996). The tradition and prototypes of the China-watcher. *East Asian History*, 11, 91-110.
- Lodwick, Kathleen L. (1996). *Crusaders against opium: Protestant missionaries in China 1874-1917*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.
- Lovell, Julia. (2007). *The Great Wall: China against the world 1000 BC - AD 2000*. London: Atlantic Books.
- Lovett, R. (1899). *The history of the London Missionary Society 1795-1895*. London: Henry Frowde.
- Lu, Sheldon H. (2003). Waking to modernity: The classical tale in late-Qing China. *New Literary History*, 34 (4), 745-760.
- Lumley, Ceci. Wei Wu Wei. *Magellan's Log 24: Culture, counterculture, anticulture*. from <http://www.texaschapelbookpress.com/magellanslog24/weiintro.htm>

- Luo, Xianglin. (1963). *The role of Hong Kong in the cultural interchange of East and West*. Tokyo: Center for East Asian Cultural Studies.
- Lutz, Jessie G. (2000). The legacy of Karl Friedrich August Gutzlaff. *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 24(3), 123-128.
- MacKenzie, John M. (1995). *Orientalism: History, theory and the arts*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Marx, Karl. (1853). Revolution in China and in Europe, *New York Daily Tribune*.
- Marx, Karl. (1857, March 16). Parliamentary debates on the Chinese hostilities, *New York Daily Tribune*. Retrieved from <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1857chin/china03.txt>
- Marx, Karl. (1858a, 5 October). Trade and the treaty, *New York Daily Tribune*.
- Marx, Karl. (1858b, 20 September). Trade or opium?, *New York Daily Tribune*.
- McDonald, Ewan. (1990). The story of Strathbogie Church. In S. C. o. Scotland (Ed.). Edinburgh: Trustees of Strathbogie Church of Scotland.
- McDonough, S. (1966). Sene and sensibility: A survey of Western attitudes to Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam as expressed in various editions of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. *Journal of World History*, 9, 769-784.
- McGibbon, John. (1997). *Going abroad: the McGibbon family and other early Scottish emigrants*. Wellington New Zealand: Ngaio Press.
- Medhurst, W.H. (1848). Reply to the Essay of Dr. Boone on the proper rendering of the words Elohim and Theos into the Chinese language (pp. 107). Canton: S. Wells Williams.
- Medhurst, Walter, Stronach, John, & Milne, William. (1852). Reply to Dr. Boone's Vindication of comments on the translation of Ephes. I in the Delegates' version of the New Testament. In L. M. Society (Ed.), (pp. 80). Shanghai: London Mission Press.
- Mei, Kangjun. (2005). *Christianity in China* (C. Zhu, Trans.). Beijing: China Intercontinental Press.
- Melancon, Glenn. (2000). Peaceful intentions: the first British trade commission in China, 1833-35. *Historical Research*, 73(180), 33-47.
- Miller, G. (1990). Union Church: A short history. Hong Kong: Union Church.
- Minford, John. (1999). Review of Anthony Yu: Rereading the Stone (1997). *China Review International*, 6(2), 307-318.
- Mittag, Achim. (2001). *The excitement about Enlightenment -- On the notion of "Enlightenment" (qimeng) in Chinese twentieth-Century historiography*. Paper presented at the Modern Chinese historiography and historical thinking, Heidelberg, Germany.
- Morrison, Robert. (1832). *Letter to LMS*. Church World Missions. SOAS London.
- Neill, Stephen. (1966). *Colonialism and Christian Missions*. New York: Mcgraw-Hill.
- Nelson. (1877). Review of Dr. Legge's paper. *Chinese Repository*, 8(4), 351.
- Neoh, Anthony. (1999). No answers here. *Far eastern economic review*, 9903(4), 39.
- Newby, Laura. (1996). Review of Harrell: Cultural encounters on China's ethnic frontiers. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and Asian Studies*, 59(3), 599-601.
- Newnham, Richard. (1980). *About Chinese*. London: Penguin.
- Ng, L. N. H. (1983). The role of Hong Kong-educated Chinese in the shaping of modern China. *Modern Asian Studies*, 17(1), 137-163.

- Ng, Ngai-Ha. (1983). The role of Hong Kong educated Chinese in the shaping of modern China. *Modern Asian Studies*, 17(1), 137-163.
- O'Sullivan, Leona. (1984). The London Missionary Society: A written record of missionaries and printing presses in the Straits settlements, 1815-1847. *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 57(2), 61-104.
- O'Sullivan, R. L. (1980). The departure of the London Missionary Society from Malacca. *Journal of the Malaysian Historical Society*, 23, 75-83.
- Ogden, A. (1974). *Letter to P.D. Coates*,. Letter to P.D. Coates, author of *The China Consuls*. SOAS
- Onishi, Norimitsu. (2006, 24 February). Campaigning for human rights, and fishing for souls, *New York Times*.
- Page, John, Garcia-Hidalgo, Isabel, & Moncayo, Rosa. (1998). Computer Indices for the Zuo zhuan. *Computers & Texts*, 16/17(Winter).
- Paquette, Jean. (1995). "As ye sow": Charles Gutzlaff, the Chinese Christian Union, and the London Missionary Society. In R. D. Long (Ed.), *The man on the spot: Essays in Baritish Empire history*. London: Greenwood Press.
- Parker, E.H. (1898). In Memoriam: The life and labour of the late Dr. James Legge. *Saturday Review*, 5(3), 187-188.
- Parker, Peter. (1840). The hospital reports of the Medical Missionary Society in China for the year 1839. In M. M. S. China (Ed.), (pp. 1-17). Canton: Chinese Repository.
- Pernick, Martin S. (1985). *A calculus of suffering*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Pfister, Lauren F. (1988). The "failures" of James Legge's fruitful life for China. *Ching Feng*, 31(4), 246-271.
- Pfister, Lauren F. (1991). Some new dimensions in the study of the works of James Legge (1815-1897): Part II. *Sino-Western Cultural Relations Journal*, 13, 40-44?
- Pfister, Lauren F. (1992). Some new dimensions in the study of the works of James Legge (1815-1897): Part II. *Sino-Western Cultural Relations Journal*, 13, 37-38.
- Pfister, Lauren F. (1999). Discovering monotheistic metaphysics: the exegetical reflections of James Legge (1815-1897) and Lo Chung-fan (d. c. 1850). In K.-w. Chow, O.-C. Ng & J. B. Henderson (Eds.), *Imagining boundaries: Changing Confucian doctrines, texts, and hermeneutics* (pp. 213-249). Albany NY: State University of New York Press.
- Pfister, Lauren F. (2004). *Striving for "The Whole Duty of Man": James Legge and the Scottish Protestant encounter with China* (Vol. I). Mainz: Peter Lang.
- Pfister, Lauren F. (2010). Bible translation and the Protestant "Term Question". In N. Standaert & R. Tiedemann (Eds.), *Handbook of Christianity in China; Volume Two: 1800 to the present* (pp. 361-370). Leiden: Koninklijke Brill.
- Rai, Saritha. (2004a). Short on priests, U.S. Catholics outsource prayers to Indian clergy. *New York Times*, 13.
- Rai, Saritha. (2004b, February 22). US payrolls change lives in Bangalore, *New York Times*.
- Reed, Christopher Alexander. (2004). *Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese Print Capitalism, 1876-1837*. Vancouver: Univeristy of British Columbia Press.
- Reinders, Eric. (2004). *Borrowed Gods and Foreign Bodies; Christian missionaries imagine Chinese religion*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, & London: University of California.

- Rice, James P. (2000). In the wake of Orientalism. *Comparative Literature*, 37(2), 223-238.
- Ride, Lindsay. (1960). Biographical Note. In J. Legge (Ed.), *The Chinese Classics I: Confucian Analects, The Great Learning, The Doctrine of the Mean* (Vol. I, pp. 1-25). Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press. (Reprinted from: 1960).
- Ross, Andrew. (1999). David Livingstone: The man behind the mask. In j. DeGrucy (Ed.), *The London Missionary Society in Southern Africa* (pp. 37-54). Cape Town: David Philip.
- Said, Edward W. (1979). *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage/Random House.
- Said, Edward W. (1986). Orientalism reconsidered. In F. Barker, P. Hulme, M. Iversen & D. Loxley (Eds.), *Literature, politics and theory* (pp. 210-229). London: Methuen.
- Sanneh, L. (1995). Global Christianity and the re-education of the West. *The Christian Century*, 19(16), 715-718.
- Sansom, George Bailey. (1965). Address delivered by Sir Geoge Sansom at the Ceremony 1956. *Journal of Asian Studies*, 24(4), 563-567.
- Schlegel, Gustaaf. (1898 (Old Series)). Nécrologie: James Legge. *T'oung Pao*, II (9), 59-63.
- Shadick, Harold. (1963). Review on the Chinese Classics. *Journal of Asian Studies*, 22(2), 203.
- Shchutskii, Iulian Konstantinovich. (1980). *Researches on the I Ching* (W. L. Macdonald, T. Hasegawa & H. Wilhelm, Trans.). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Shirley, R.W. (2001). *The mapping of the world: Early printed world maps 1472-1700* (4th ed.). Riverside Conn: Early World Press.
- Sinn, Elizabeth. (1998). Fugitive in Paradise: Wang Tao and cultural transformation in late nineteenth-century Hong Kong. *Late Imperial China*, 19 (1), 56-81.
- Slade, John. (1843-1845, February). *News Canton Register*. Retrieved from <http://www.houghton.idv.hk/?p=22>
- Smith, Carl T. (1995). *A sense of history: Studies in the social and urban history of Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Educational Publishing Co.
- Smith, George. (1847). *A narrative of an exploratory visit to consular cities of China and to the islands of Hong Kong and Cusan in behalf of the Church Missionary Society in the years 1844, 1845, 1846*. London: Seeley, Burnside & Seeley.
- Smith, W.C. (1962). *The meaning and end of religion: A revolutionary approach to the religious traditions of mankind*. New York: Macmillan.
- Southey, Robert. (1809). Account of the Baptist Missionary Society. *Quarterly Review*, I(1), 193-226.
- Staunton, George. (1810). *Penal Code of China (Ta Tsing leu lee; da Qing luli: Laws and procedures of the great Qing dynasty)*. London: Cadell and Davies.
- Staunton, Sir George Thomas. (1849). *An inquiry into the proper mode of rendering the word "God" in translating the sacred scriptures into the Chinese language*. London: Lintel Booth.
- Stenuld, Stefan.). Tao Te Ching and aikido. from <http://www.taoistic.com/>
- Stokes, Gwenneth, & Stokes, John. (1987). *Queen's College: Its history 1862-1987*. Hong Kong: Queen's College.

- Taylor, Rodney L. (1997). *James Legge and Confucius: Religion, Sinology and the Confucian tradition*. Paper presented at the Legge Conference Aberdeen, University of Aberdeen.
- Taylor, Rodney L., & Legge, James (2011). *Confucius the Analects: The Path of the Sage, Selections Annotated and Explained*. Woodstock VT: SkyLight Paths Publishing.
- Teng, Ssuyu. (1956/57). The predispositions of Westerners in treating Chinese history and civilization. *Historian*, 19(3), 307-327.
- Teng, Ssuyu. (1957). The predispositions of westerners in treating Chinese history and civilization. *Historian*, 19(3), 307-327.
- Thrower, James. (1997). *James Legge and the methodology of mission*. Paper presented at the The Heritage of China and the West: An International Conference, Aberdeen University.
- Times, New York. (2004). Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, 83, First Prime Minister of Fiji, *New York Times*.
- Townsend, W. J. (1928). *Robert Morrison: Pioneer of Missions to China*. London/Glasgow: Pickering & Inglis.
- Troup, Robert. (1897a). Dr. James Legge. *The Scottish Congregationalist* (12), 17-19.
- Troup, Robert. (1897b, December 11). The Late Professor Legge, Letter to the Editor, *The Huntly Express*, pp. 8- 16.
- Tynan, Katherine. (c. 1880). (fragment), *Unknown newspaper, ms. 380476 SOAS*.
- Vittinghoff, Natascha. (1998). Why did Wang Tao go to Hong Kong? Some preliminary observations from the Unpublished Documents in the Public Records Office, London. *Contemporary Historical Review*, 1(3).
- Waley-Cohen, Joanna. (1997). A brief history of Hong Kong *Picturing Hong Kong, 1842-1910* (pp. 15-26). New York: Asia Society.
- Wang, Q. Edward. (2000). Historical writings in 20th century China: Methodological innovation and ideological influence.  
<http://www.oslo2000.uio.no/program/papers/s1/s1-wang.pdf>
- Wang, Tao. (1886). *Unpublished letter to James Legge (in Chinese)*.
- Wei, Yuan. (1844). *Geography of the world (hai guo tuxi)*. Canton.
- Williams, Philip. (2000). Outside the Gurus' sandboxes: Reconsidering common assumptions in the contemporary study of modern Chinese literature. *Tamkang Review*, 30(3), 1-5.
- Williams, Samuel Wells. (1851a). Letter to the Editor of the Chinese Repository. *Chinese Repository*, XX(7), 485-488.
- Williams, Samuel Wells. (1851b). List of Protestant missionaries to the Chinese, with the present position of those now among them. *Chinese Repository*, XX(December), 513-545.
- Williams, Samuel Wells. (1855). List of Protestant Missionaries sent to the Chinese *American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*. Canton.
- Williams, Samuel Wells. (1858). *List of Protestant Missionaries to the Chinese*. Church World Missions, (26, Williams 5852). School of Oriental and African Studies London.
- Wing, Yung. (1909). *My life in China and America*. New York: Henry Holt.
- Wong, Fun. (1860). Canton, report of Missionary Hospital at Kum-lee-fou for the year 1858-59. *The Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal*, 686-691.

- Wong, M.K. (2000). British Missionaries' Approaches to Modern China, 1807-1966 (pp. 1-42). Hong Kong: Hong Kong Baptist University.
- Wood, Frances. (1996). The Treaty of Nanking: Form and the Foreign Office, 1842-1843. *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 24(2), 181-196.
- Wood, R. Derek. (1997). Photocopying the Treaty of Nanking in January 1843/ Part 1. <http://www.midley.co.uk/Nanking/Nanking.htm>
- Wu, Yenna. (2000). Pitfalls of the postcolonialist rubric in the study of modern Chinese fiction featuring cannibalism: From Lu Xun's "Diary of a madman" to Mo Yan's Boozeland. *Tamkan Review*, 2000(30), 3.
- Yao, Xinzhong. (2000). *An introduction to Confucianism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Yates, M.t. (1868, 20 July). Ancestor worship and fung-shuy, *The China Mail*, pp. 3-4.
- York, Geoffrey. (2004a, February 21). Jesus challenging Marx for soul of China, *Globe and Mail*.
- York, Geoffrey. (2004b, February 21). Mother waits in vain for justice, *Globe and Mail*.
- Yu, Ying-shih. (1981). New evidence on the early Chinese conception of afterlife - a review article. *Journal of Asian Studies*, XLI(1), 81-.
- Yu, Yingshih. (2000). *China's struggle with modernity*. Paper presented at the Coping with China Conference, Ethics and Public Policy Center.
- Zhang, Longxi. (1998). *Mighty opposites: From dichotomies to differences in the comparative study of China*. Stanford CA: Stanford University Press.
- Zhang, Longxi. (2002). *Maps, poems, and the power of representation*. Paper presented at the Conference Celebrating Special Collections: Scholarship and Beauty, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. Colloquium paper retrieved from <http://library.ust.hk/info/colloq/jun2002/zhang-talk.html>
- Zhang, W. (2002). Detachment or confusion? James Legge's complicated attitude towards Chinese culture. *E-journal on Hong Kong Cultural and Social Studies*, [http://www.hku.hk/hkcsp/ccex/ehkcss01/a\\_pdf14.htm](http://www.hku.hk/hkcsp/ccex/ehkcss01/a_pdf14.htm).
- Zhang, Yan. (2004, December). Charlie Soong and Wilmington. *China Today*.



About the Author

Marilyn Bowman PhD, Professor of Psychology (Emerita) of Simon Fraser University, lives in Vancouver, Canada. Across her academic and professional career in clinical neuropsychology she was interested in people with outstanding intellectual abilities and in the variations of resilience, and her professional publications were mostly studies within those domains. Her encounter with James Legge's work aroused an interest in his exceptional life that related to those longstanding professional interests.