

**Re-Thinking *Re-Thinking Missions*:**  
**Jonathan and Rosalind Goforth, the China Inland**  
**Mission and the Disappearing Fundamentalists**  
**1910 – 1932**  
**by**  
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**The Fork in the Road**

*Re-Thinking Missions: The Laymen's Report* (1932) begins, the first sentence of the preface, with an assertive, though qualified, statement: "It is doubtful whether any enterprise dependent entirely on continuous giving has so long sustained the interest of so many people as has the foreign mission." (Note in passing the unconscious association of money as a signifier of piety, which continued to be an undercurrent of the report.) This paragraph closes with another qualified, passive assertion: "There is a growing conviction that the mission enterprise is at a fork in the road, and that momentous decisions are called for."

A few pages later, *Re-Thinking Missions* came to the fork in the road:

As to the first and most searching question put to us, whether these missions should in our judgment any longer go on, we may say that this

question has been with us, honestly and objectively entertained, throughout our inquiry... It is somewhat like asking whether good-will should continue to exist or cease to express itself... But at the center of the religious mission, though it takes the special form of promoting one's own type of thought and practice, there is an always impulse of love to men: one offers one own faith because that is the best one has to offer... [W]hether [good-will] should cease to operate would seem to suppose that the very substance of friendship among men and races might somehow be mistaken.<sup>1</sup>

By any theological standard, that's pretty meager fare – an impulse of love, the best one has to offer – to sustain a movement that once proclaimed its earth-shaking mission to evangelize the world in “this generation.” Had that generation passed? Perhaps, by the 1930s – that “low, dishonest decade” – good-will and friendship among the races really were in danger of ceasing to exist.

*Re-Thinking Missions: A Laymen's Inquiry after One Hundred Years*, also known as the *Hocking Report*, was the one-volume summary of the Commission of Inquiry that toured missions in India and Burma (both British colonies), and China and Japan in 1931. Published in 1932 – halfway between the World's

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<sup>1</sup> William Ernest Hocking and the Commission of Appraisal, *Re-Thinking Missions: A Laymen's Inquiry after One Hundred Years* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1932), pp. ix, 4.

Missionary Conference (Edinburgh 1910) and the World Council of Churches (1948) – the *Hocking Report* is considered a milestone in the development of twentieth-century ecumenicism. Yet, reading it before and after reading Brian Stanley’s history of the Edinburgh conference in order to write this paper is dislocating. It is not just that Edinburgh was a conference – a conversation dominated by British clerics, American YMCA executives, boards of foreign mission boards, and experienced missionaries; the *Hocking Report* is red-white-and-blue American, written by a small group of liberal, New York based, disinterested laymen and underwritten by Rockefeller money.

The Commission of Inquiry consisted of fifteen individuals, twelve men and three women (two wives), who were – as *Time* magazine said of Mr and Mrs Harper Sibley – “very rich, very pious.”<sup>2</sup> The chairman and author of the report was Dr Ernest W. Hocking, a highly respected theologian and philosophy professor at Harvard University who wrote agonizingly earnest apologies for faith in a secular world (which would be called neo-orthodoxy). His wife, also a

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<sup>2</sup> *Time* published three articles about the Sibleys’ tour of Asia as members of the Laymen’s Inquiry, including 12 June 1933, “Religion: Mrs. Sibley’s Sacred Food.” Sibley (whose grandfather founded Western Union) was a High Church Episcopalian from Rochester, New York, the owner of mines, banks and extensive ranches out west, which supposedly gave him expertise as an agricultural expert. Mrs Sibley was also a member of the commission, “studying the lives of Oriental women.” Online at: <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,745693,00.html>.

commissioner, had established a Dewey open-air school in Cambridge which met on her verandah (in the winter the students wore sleeping bags around their legs). The others included university professors of philosophy and agriculture, educators, medical doctors, YMCA and YWCA executives, business men and lawyers. Only one had any foreign experience, Ruth F. Woodsmall, the executive secretary of the World's YWCA for the Near East, and later its general secretary.<sup>3</sup>

Edinburgh was triumphalist, filled with “expectations of a new age.” In his opening address, the Archbishop of Canterbury prophesied that if the western churches gave foreign missions the central place – a big if – “it may well be that there may be some standing here tonight who shall not taste death till they see,” – here on earth, in a way we know not now, – “the Kingdom of God shall come with power.”<sup>4</sup>

The *Hocking Report* was embarrassed by this sort of talk. In fact, God is almost entirely absent: the word “God” appears only twice in the first chapter, and “Jesus” only once. The Holy Spirit does not appear at all. There was no talk of

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<sup>3</sup> Miss Woodsmall was a feminist and international women's rights advocate who wrote *Eastern Women Today and Tomorrow* (1933) and *Moslem Women Enter a New World* (1936). Presumably she was responsible for the *Report's* chapter on women. Her papers are in Smith College.

<sup>4</sup> Brian Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910* (Grand Rapids and Cambridge UK: William B. Eerdmans, 2009), p. 1.

Christianizing foreign cultures at a time when the home base was losing interest. Instead it uses circumlocution and euphemism, usually with a negative tail: God is “the everlasting and real”; a missionary preaches “his own conception of the way of Christ”; and “the preaching of Christ has at times been the prelude or the pretext for exploitation by other hands.” This tone of aggressive modernism combined with a querulous defeatism, even anger, permeates the report – as though foreign missions were the light that failed.

Nowhere is this anger more apparent than the *Report’s* judgment of the missionaries the commissioners had encountered – and who had been their hosts – during their eight months in the Orient:

Of these thousands of people, there are many of conspicuous power, true saintliness and a sublime spirit of devotion, men and women in whose presence one feels himself at once exalted and unworthy. It is easier to say this, than to say the rest of the truth; the greater number seem to us of limited outlook and capacity; and there are now a few whose vision of the inner meaning of the mission has been obscured by the intricacies, divisions, frictions and details of a task too great for their powers and their hearts.<sup>5</sup>

Women missionaries fare even worse: they are made to disappear. The phrase “women missionaries” is entirely absent from this first chapter and all

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<sup>5</sup> *Re-Thinking Missions*, p. 15.

discussions of women are confined to a chapter at the end – after educational, industrial and agricultural missions – called, paternalistically, “Women’s Interests and Activities.” Again in this chapter, “women missionaries” appears a handful of times, replaced by “missions in work for women” or “the missionary enterprise as related to women” – as though “Women’s Work for Women” was run by men.

The unmarried woman missionary presents a special problem. Many of them represent the highest values in the missionary field, and in general they appear to be contented in their work and healthfully adjusted to their environment. Even a superficial observation, however, reveals the fact that breakdowns from emotional crises, the development of neurasthenic states and even more serious disturbances are by no means infrequent...

[T]he administrative problem of unmarried men is not acute, for they are comparatively few in number, and those who go to the field for life service ordinarily marry with within a few years of their arrival.<sup>6</sup>

And with that, the conundrum of single women missionaries, single male missionaries, and missionary wives vanishes.

Among its recommendations, the *Report* stated that the Women’s Missionary Societies should be dismantled and consolidated into the general boards, and that the separate girls’ schools should be amalgamated with co-ed schools, and women’s hospitals with hospitals for men and women, which would,

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp. 299-300, in chapter “Problems of Administration.”

naturally, be run by male principals and doctors. As to direct evangelism – which could penetrate behind the curtains of purdah in India and reach the bound-feet women inside the courtyards of China – which had always been the justification for Women’s Work, “women missionaries should be replaced by trained oriental leaders as rapidly as is possible without detriment to the work, since eastern women, because of language equipment and understanding of folkways, can carry on the work much more effectively.”<sup>7</sup>

What happened to the fundamentalists – whom the *Hocking Report* dismissed as “individuals who foment theological discord or endeavor to defeat the programs of social reconstruction advocated by their broader-minded associates”<sup>8</sup> – who got written out of the liberal narrative? (Alas, the disappearing women must be the subject of another paper.) In this paper, I will tell the story of Jonathan and Rosalind Goforth, who were responsible – in my estimation, as much as any two people – for transferring American-style Fundamentalism to China.<sup>9</sup> (They formed a team, he the evangel and she the hagiographer, so when I

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp. 264, 275.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 299.

<sup>9</sup> I recognize that “Fundamentalism” is a contentious term but that is how Goforth described himself. I use the term as short-hand to include conservative evangelicals and self-described Fundamentalists who shared a temperament (militant) and an anti-modernist theology (primarily premillennial dispensationalism).

refer to “Goforth” I often mean the two of them.)<sup>10</sup> They attended the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference in 1910, but the message they took away was not the liberal, ecumenical, church-union trajectory that led to the *Laymen’s Report*, but the fork in the road that led to Fundamentalism. After all, *The Fundamentals*, the series of booklets that gave the movement its name, were published starting that same year, 1910.

The Edinburgh conference – held in that golden Edwardian summer, before the revolution in China, before the First World War – coincided with many currents in missions at home and abroad. In fact, Edinburgh itself unleashed some of those currents that were to trouble the waters for many years to come.

### **The Goforths’ Road to Edinburgh**

Among the 1215 official delegates at the World Missionary Conference were 35 Canadians, including several missionary families returning to China.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> The primary sources for Jonathan Goforth (1859-1936) and Rosalind Bell-Smith (1864-1942) are listed in the bibliographical note at the end of this paper.

<sup>11</sup> There were 35 Canadian delegates, 30 men and 5 women, at Edinburgh: 5 Baptists; 13 Methodists; 2 Congregationalists; 11 Presbyterians; 2 Anglicans; and 2 from the China Inland Mission. If one calculates these Canadians, and the 27 from South Africa and Australasia, as British nationals (according to their hearts and their passports), this alters the figures in Stanley, *World’s Missionary Conference*, p. 38, increasing the British

Jonathan and Rosalind Goforth also attended but were not listed as official delegates. For Goforth, the conference was a humiliating moment. He was shunned by the official Canadian Presbyterian delegation; “the reserved coolness ... has been too obvious to be mistaken,” he said.

Rosalind wrote an adoring biography, *Goforth of China. By his Wife*, in which she glossed over the conference in one cryptic sentence: “The World’s Missionary Conference was to meet in Edinburgh, June, 1910, and as Mr. Goforth was appointed a delegate, it was decided the Goforths as a family should return to China by way of England.” A sentence later, she skipped to: “The Conference had closed. We were going down the steps...” when an old classmate warned him frankly, “Goforth, you have only yourself to blame. It was that address before the [General] Assembly, a year ago, that did it!”<sup>12</sup>

Let us go back to see what brought him to this point.

In 1910, Jonathan Goforth was aged 51 (born 1859) and had spent 22 years in China. He had been born in the Scottish diaspora, in Oxford County, Ontario, the heart of Free Church Presbyterianism, which always had a revivalist tinge. Rosalind Bell-Smith, five years younger, was born in England and raised in

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Empire majority to 571 (up from 509 British); and 429 Americans (down from 491 North Americans).

<sup>12</sup> Rosalind Goforth, *Goforth of China: By His Wife* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1937), p. 206.

the cream of Toronto society, where her father was a prominent artist and founder of the Royal Academy of Art. By 1910, the Goforths had six children – five more had died – aged 4 to 19; presumably, they left the eldest, Paul, in Toronto for his education and were traveling with the five younger ones.

In 1888, as a student at Knox College, Goforth had been such a charismatic revivalist that he convinced the Presbyterian Foreign Missions Committee to send him and Rosalind, and Donald MacGillivray, a gold medalist in Classics, as their first missionaries to mainland China. (The Presbyterian Church already had a mission in Taiwan, founded in 1872 by the redoubtable Rev. George Leslie Mackay, but Mackay was a loner who did not want any missionary helpers.) The Goforths left Toronto a few weeks before Hudson Taylor came through the city and recruited the first “North American band” of CIM missionaries. When Taylor heard that Goforth was leading a group of untrained missionaries, including several women, with no language, into the dangerous province of Henan [then spelled Honan], he was horrified and claimed the whole province for the CIM, which had made pioneering itinerations of the district. However, when Taylor met Goforth in Shanghai, he sensed a kindred spirit and granted North Henan to the Canadians. But, he warned, “you must go forward on your knees.”

The Canadians, who called themselves “the Honan Seven,” spent six years with their American colleagues in Shandong province before they could get a

foothold in a wretched village just inside the border of Henan. Their first city station was Zhangde (then spelled Changte, now called Anyang), the northernmost walled city, which was so isolated it took two weeks to travel by cart and wheelbarrow from Tianjin. When the railway was built after 1900, Zhangde became a major station on the line from Beijing to Hankou. The mission claimed the triangle of Henan province that extends north of the Yellow River, North Henan, and eventually established six stations, three large and three small.

In the terror year of 1900, although there were no official Boxers in Henan, the missionaries bore the brunt of the Boxer Uprising. A party of twenty, plus some mining engineers, fled from Zhangde in the heat of a pestilential summer; the Goforths had four children and had just buried a baby one week earlier. They were beset by armed mobs and driven from one village to the next. Goforth became the target for the fiercest onslaught and was left for dead at the side of the road. The sword that neared severed his head is now on display in the Goforth room at Tyndale University (formerly Toronto Bible College).

The Boxer Uprising was the most searing event in the mission's early history. It made the survivors suspicious of any mass movements among the Chinese populace, including the "mass movement to Christianity" after 1905, when the mission schools were flooded with young men who wanted to learn English. During the Chinese revolution of 1911, they distrusted Sun Yat-sen, even though he was a Christian, because he was a southerner and a revolutionary.

Instead they supported Yuan Shikai, the usurper, whose ancestral mansion was in Zhangde, and who protected the mission from the turmoil of the Revolution. As late as the 1920s, the North Henan missionaries feared that Chiang Kai-shek's Guomintang party (Kuomintang or Nationalists) was a "recrudescence of Boxerism."

The Goforths returned to Canada after the Boxer flight. During this furlough, he felt that "the Church's interest in foreign missions had sadly waned. He saw, too, the great increase in worldliness in the church, some of the highest church leaders being swept in to this tide, and, with great sorrow and concern, he sensed the danger of the 'Higher Criticism' then coming to the fore." As soon as possible, he returned to North Henan leaving Rosalind and the children in Toronto. When she and the children arrived in China, there was only a cryptic telegraph: "Goforth Typhoid Changte." For a month she waited with no news, until he staggered in, having walked two weeks from Henan. He was emaciated but as "buoyantly happy and optimistic as ever."

He explained his plan to her. The personnel at Zhangde had changed and the field had been divided into three districts. He was responsible for the area northwest of the city, which contained countless villages in the North China Plain. Before 1900, he had always left her behind when he went on evangelistic tours, which would sometimes last a week or two. Now, he proposed that she and the children join him. They would rent a place in each center, where "we, as a family,

[will] stay a month... I will go with my men to villages or on the street in the daytime, while you receive and preach to the women in the courtyard. The evenings will be given to a joint meeting with you at the organ and with plenty of gospel hymns.” After a month, they would move on to the next center, an endless circuit with no fixed abode, wandering as “gospel nomads.”<sup>13</sup>

Rosalind, with a babe in arms born in Canada, in one of her few “personal stories,” wrote, “my heart went like lead!” But, he pleaded, “Rose, I am so sure this plan is of God, that I fear for the children if you refuse to obey His call. *The safest place for you and the children is the path of duty.*” [Italics in original.] When one child fell sick of dysentery and baby Constance died, Rosalind realized in a vision that “the Heavenly Father could be trusted to keep my children!”

About 1904 a “strange restlessness seemed to take possession of [Goforth].” Reading of the revival in Wales, he came to believe in Charles Finney’s “scientific revivals,” that through prayer and fasting – and preparation and organization – “the spiritual laws governing a spiritual harvest are as real and tangible as the laws governing the natural harvest.” In other words, revivals could be “got up” by human effort, which could happen like clockwork and be repeated by experimentation; the older hope was that “awakenings” were “brought down” by the Holy Spirit, which might happen once in a lifetime.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 155-60.

In 1907 Goforth accompanied the foreign mission secretary, R.P. MacKay, an old friend and supporter, on a tour of the Presbyterian (Canadian, American, Scottish and Irish) fields in China, Korea and Manchuria, where Goforth held impromptu meetings in each center. He was invited back to Manchuria, which he accepted the following year after he sent Rosalind and the children to Canada. There he ignited what came to be called the Manchurian revival, which took as its watchword: “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit.” Rosalind stated: “Jonathan Goforth went up to Manchuria an unknown missionary, except to his own narrow circle. He returned a few weeks later with the limelight of the Christian world upon him.”<sup>14</sup> With 20th-century mass communications, that was only a slight exaggeration.

Goforth’s “Holy Ghost revivals” were one of the small unnoticed currents troubling China missions in the years leading up to the Edinburgh conference. China was in turmoil, the Qing (or Manchu) dynasty was tottering, half a dozen political parties – a new phenomenon – were preaching revolution, and the student class was no longer studying Confucius. Among the Chinese churches, some “native churches” claimed independence from missionary imperialism, especially the parsimonious way the missions held the purse strings. These were mostly independent congregations not yet united into a national denomination.

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pp. 187-88.

Among the missionary led revivals, Goforth's distinctive characteristics were extreme emotionalism, weeping and confession of sin. Other revivalists went further, with manifestations of faith healing and speaking in tongues. The Pentecostal movement reached China from Azusa Street (1906) almost instantaneously, directly and through intermediaries such as the Pentecostal Missionary Union for Great Britain and Ireland, which planted itself far beyond conventional missions, at the border of Tibet. Invariably, as Daniel Bays noted, "most of the first Pentecostals who felt called to foreign lands fully believed they had been or would be given instant fluency of speech... This claim or expectation of language was a typical and general one among early Pentecostals, as far as I can tell. That the disappointment which inevitably ensued did not totally discourage them all is a tribute to their adaptability and stubbornness, as well as to their strength of conviction in the new creed."<sup>15</sup>

Unfortunately, once they realized that their celestial tongues did not translate into intelligible Chinese and that their healing did not attract an audience, the charismatic missionaries shifted their sights to Chinese Christians, especially the church leaders (who perhaps spoke English), and to foreign missionaries.

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<sup>15</sup> Daniel H. Bays, "The Protestant Missionary Establishment and the Pentecostal Movement," in Edith Blumhofer, Russell Spittler, and Grant Wacker, editors, *Pentecostal Currents in American Protestantism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), pp. 53, 60.

When the most enthusiastic converts were swept up into the movement and congregations were split, most missionaries reacted with hostility and accused the revivalists of “sheep stealing.”

That’s what happened when Goforth brought his Manchurian revival back to his own mission in North Henan, with startling results. His fellow missionaries were as suspicious of Goforth’s revivals as they were of all mass emotionalism. But when the Chinese Christians gathered at Zhangde, the meetings were like “the suddenness and violence of a thunderstorm.” Dr Leslie, one of the older men, agreed that the Chinese church needed revival, “But how explain the missionaries praying; some in Chinese and some in English, men and women, strictly Presbyterian, ordinarily restrained, with Scottish reserve sticking out at all points, raising their voices with the multitude.”<sup>16</sup>

Goforth became an increasingly stormy presence within the mission when he offered to tour the district, holding revivals in every station and outstation. The younger, more liberal missionaries felt he was looking over their shoulders like a schoolmaster checking their work. In particular, they resented being told that they themselves needed to repent and confess their sins publicly, and that their apathy was grieving the Holy Spirit. Among the Chinese, the continuous

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<sup>16</sup> Alwyn Austin, *Saving China: Canadian Missionaries in the Middle Kingdom 1888-1959* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), pp. 116-17.

revival did not last. A year later, one missionary noted, the Chinese “continued to confess but it was the other man’s sins they confessed.”

### **The Goforths at Edinburgh**

That brings us to Jonathan Goforth’s furlough in 1909 when he returned to Toronto to join Rosalind and the children. He traveled via London, England, where he held a week’s meetings under the auspices of the China Inland Mission (CIM) on the subject of “Prayer,” and arrived in Toronto a few days before the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church was meeting. He was well known through the stories in the *Presbyterian Record* about the Manchurian revival, and his address was eagerly anticipated. One need not wonder at the “marked stillness [that] reigned throughout his address. His plea was for them as leaders, teachers, and professors, to humble themselves before the Lord and seek the Holy Spirit’s outpouring as did the Korean missionaries. This he held out as the Church’s only hope if retrogression and disaster were to be avoided.”<sup>17</sup>

Unfortunately, this address set the tone for Goforth’s furlough, as he continued to accuse several professors at Knox College of teaching higher criticism. Goforth’s attacks within the Presbyterian hierarchy happened to coincide with a similar movement that was to split the Canadian Baptist church

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<sup>17</sup> *Goforth of China*, pp. 204-05.

not once, but several times. This was led by Rev. T.T. Shields, Toronto's leading Fundamentalist, and Rev. Elmore Harris, founder and principal of Toronto Bible Training School (later Toronto Bible College, now Tyndale University and College). Harris, who was independently wealthy (of the Massey-Harris farm implement company), had built the largest Baptist edifice in Canada, Walmer Road church, and established TBTS in the Sunday school rooms until he built a school near the University of Toronto. He died in 1912, while on a tour of India, and the Baptist agitation subsided until after the First World War. In the background, too, coming from the United States, was the publication of *The Fundamentals*, in which Harris was one of the Canadian contributors.

Within the Presbyterian church, Goforth was confronted by deep-seated opposition and "a few, but very few, churches opened their doors" to him. "While many were the bright glints of hope and cheer during the 1909-10 furlough, it must be said it was, on the whole, a period to Goforth of great disappointment."<sup>18</sup> R.P. MacKay, the mission secretary, confided, "I do not remember another man who came home with such an asset, and who made so little of it."<sup>19</sup>

Goforth did not realize why he was shunned until the incident described above, on the steps after the Edinburgh conference. He did find some congenial

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., pp. 204-07.

<sup>19</sup> Austin, *Saving China*, pp. 116-17.

spirits at Edinburgh, however, for he led a meeting for intercessory prayer and his revivals were mentioned in the report of Commission I (“Carrying the Gospel to All the Non-Christian World”) as signs of the spiritual awakening of New China. Describing the Manchurian revival, he testified that “the sense of God’s presence was overwhelming and soon became unbearable. Others, Chinese as well as foreigners, who have passed through scenes of judgment have afterwards carried the fire to other centres where the same Divine results have followed.”<sup>20</sup>

The Goforths always had friendly relations with the China Inland Mission, and had conducted revivals in CIM stations throughout China, particularly in Shanxi, where the remarkable work of God started by Pastor Hsi was still going strong.<sup>21</sup> The CIM monthly *China’s Millions*, published in different editions in England, Canada and Australia, publicized his revivals: “Nor would we omit to mention that God’s instrument . . . has been a worker from another mission – the Rev. J. Goforth of the Canadian Presbyterian Church.” One CIM worker (Margaret King, a Canadian Presbyterian) wrote, “I simply cannot describe the

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<sup>20</sup> For mentions of Goforth see World Missionary Conference’s *Report of Commission I* (Edinburgh, etc: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), pp. 37, 94, 355-56; and Volume 9, *The History and Records of the Conference*, p. 123, for prayer meeting.

<sup>21</sup> For Goforth in Shanxi, see Alwyn Austin, *China’s Millions: The China Inland Mission and Late Qing Society, 1832-1905* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), pp. 430-31; and Rosalind Goforth, “*By My Spirit*” (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1929), pp. 64-73.

scene; it makes one think of the Day of Judgment. God had come among us. All knew it, and every heart was open before Him. For myself, I had the most intense realization of the holiness of God, and of my uncleanness in His sight.”<sup>22</sup>

Now, after Goforth’s disappointment at Edinburgh, William B. Sloan, Secretary of the CIM in London, organized something of a triumphal tour for him. They remained four months after the conference so he could speak at summer conferences for the higher spiritual life in Scotland, Ireland, England and Wales. The highlights were a week at Spurgeon’s Tabernacle in London and a week at Keswick. Goforth felt “on trial” because “the Keswick leaders have always stood solid against emotionalism or undue excitement of any kind.” With the CIM’s imprimatur, he passed the probation and doors were opened to him in the highest evangelical circles.

### **The China Inland Mission at Edinburgh**

The China Inland Mission, meanwhile, had its own reservations about the Edinburgh conference, but this was more of a family dispute than public criticism. The CIM had been present at the creation of many institutions in Britain and

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<sup>22</sup> *China’s Millions*, North American edition (Toronto), June 1909, pp. 63-64; and Margaret King, “The Revival in Changte, a Presbyterian Station in Honan,” February 1909, p. 30. Miss King, of a prominent Canadian Presbyterian family, was later on the executive committee of the Bible Union of China.

North America, and it was involved with the Edinburgh conference from the beginning. In 1905 W.H. Grant, secretary of the American Foreign Missions Conference, floated the idea to W.B. Sloan, when he wrote, inquiring “whether it is proposed to hold an Ecumenical Missionary Conference in London on the lines of the one held in New York in 1900.” According to Brian Stanley, Grant “appears to have regarded [Sloan] as in some way representative of the English missionary secretaries.”<sup>23</sup> Perhaps, because of its North American base, the CIM was the only interdenominational British society that the Americans knew about.

Hudson Taylor had always believed in “attending Missionary Conferences and sitting on Committees arising out of them.”<sup>24</sup> He would arrange his schedule a year in advance in order to be in Shanghai or London at the appointed time, where he presided as a benevolent elder statesman. His last public appearance had been at the New York Ecumenical Conference of 1900, where he had a heart attack and was invalided to England. He used these conferences as a platform to press his views on theological orthodoxy and direct evangelism.

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<sup>23</sup> Stanley, *World Missionary Conference*, p. 19.

<sup>24</sup> “Relationship of the Mission to the CONTINUATION COMMITTEE of the WORLD MISSIONARY CONFERENCE, EDINBURGH, 1910,” no date [c1916], in CIM Collection 215, box 4, file 103, in Billy Graham Center Archives [BGCA], Wheaton College.

By 1910 Hudson Taylor had passed away but his ecumenical spirit lived on. Marshall Broomhall, the London Editorial Secretary (Benjamin Broomhall's son and Hudson Taylor's nephew), was a member of Commission I (Carrying the Gospel), which included a broad spectrum from Britain, North America and Europe, including Timothy Richard as a correspondent from Shanghai.

Dixon E. Hoste, Hudson Taylor's successor as General Director of the CIM, traveled all the way from Shanghai to attend the Edinburgh conference, even though he was an invalid at the time. Hoste had been one of the famous "Cambridge Seven" (1885) and, incidentally, was Taylor's nephew by marriage, when he married Marshall Broomhall's sister. Although he was more militant than Taylor in some ways, he remained ecumenical in the British sense, an alliance of low-church Anglicans and Plymouth Brethren, the YMCA and Keswick. He recommended that CIM people participate in the Edinburgh conference, and many did. About thirty CIM missionaries (including three women) were listed as "correspondents" with various commissions gathering "scientific statistics" prior to the conference; they represented every part of China, from Shanghai to Urumchi to Sichuan and Guizhou.

The CIM was well represented at Edinburgh, with 14 official delegates from the British branch and three from North America; in addition, there were another dozen representatives of CIM associate missions, such as the Scandinavian Alliance (based in Chicago) and the Liebenzell Mission (Germany).

The British contingent included Hoste, Broomhall, Sloan and the Australian director, Rev. J. Southey. Because of the CIM policy that home staff should be former missionaries, they had a practical, hands-on knowledge of mission work compared with most delegates, who were arm-chair mission executives.

The only CIM director who did not attend was Henry Frost, the North American Home Director in Philadelphia. Instead, Frost sent three North American delegates who were not part of the CIM inner circle. Two were Canadians connected with Toronto Bible Training School, one trustee and a teacher, Rev. John McNicol, who was at the beginning of a long and distinguished career. In 1913, when Elmore Harris died, McNicol, a Presbyterian minister, was appointed principal of the renamed Toronto Bible College, where he remained for forty years. He was an ecumenical in the Canadian mold, irenic and interdenominational. Because of his “pleasing personality” and his almost magical teaching style, which he called *Thinking Through the Bible*, McNicol – as much as any one man – held the evangelical coalition in Canada – or at least in Toronto – together until the 1950s, long after it had dissolved in the United States. He retained friendships across the religious spectrum from fundamentalist Fellowship Baptists and Convention Baptists, who did not speak to each other, as well as with Pentecostals, Salvation Army, and the United Church of Canada. He also ensured that Canada – or at Toronto – did not go “fundamentalist.”

The third delegate was a young American, William Whiting Borden, who had been appointed to the Philadelphia council at the age of 22. He was heir to the milk company fortune, and every description of him seems excessive. “William had a prepossessing appearance,” wrote Henry Frost, quite smitten, “with a strong and attractive face and a well-developed and athletic body. He was besides, rugged of character, consecrated of spirit, generous of disposition and lofty of aim and purpose – a unique man even if compared with unusual personalities.”<sup>25</sup> Borden died three years later, in April 1913, in Cairo, where he was learning Arabic preparatory to mission work among Muslims in China. His life was memorialized by Mrs Howard Taylor in *Borden of Yale, '09*.<sup>26</sup>

Prior to the Edinburgh conference, the North American edition of *China's Millions* contained a brief announcement with an odd codicil: “It is significant that the Boxer and other persecutions broke out after the last Conference [New York 1900], and that new persecutions have broken out in China just before the present Conference. This seems that Satan is alert to the possibilities bound up

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<sup>25</sup> Henry Weston Frost, *The Days that Are Past* (typescript memoirs, no date), p. 737. [Cited as Frost, *Memoirs*.] Copies in Toronto China Inland Mission / Overseas Missionary Fellowship Archives and in BGCA, CIM collection. This was the basis for Dr and Mrs Howard Taylor's biography, “*By Faith*”: *Henry Weston Frost and the China Inland Mission*.

<sup>26</sup> Mrs Howard Taylor, *Borden of Yale, '09* (London: CIM, 1926, with many reprints).

with such gatherings of the Lord's people, and that he is intent upon doing all that he can to prevent spiritual advancement and enlarged blessing."<sup>27</sup> This is CIM code language, since those who were preventing spiritual advancement were not just the persecutors in China but the apathetic, liberal missionaries that Goforth was attacking.

After the conference, the "Editorial Notes" sounded a different note: There was much in connection with the Edinburgh Conference for which God's children may be devoutly thankful... But we confess that there were certain developments which took place in connection with the Conference which we cannot but regard with deep concern. It is evident that the dominant note throughout the sessions was that of mission and church union, and that this note was finally sounded so frequently and loudly that it came to mean to some minds nothing short of a union among all bodies bearing the name of "Christian," including the Roman and Greek Churches... To propose union with such, therefore, seems to some of us as nothing short of an exceedingly grave departure from God's truth, and we should regard any real action in this direction as apostacy of the most serious sort."<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> *China's Millions* (NA), "Editorial Notes," June 1910, p. 71.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, "Editorial Notes," August 1910, p. 100.

This was strong language, but again, it was directed not just against other, ecumenical missions but against the CIM representatives who sat on the Continuation Committee and cooperated with these ecumenical movements, i.e. the London Council. There are two accounts of this controversy, which dragged on until 1916: Frost's *Memoirs* present his arguments for fundamentalist separation; and a memorandum written by the London Council in 1916 on the "Relationship of the Mission to the Continuation Committee," outlined Hoste's British inclusiveness.

Henry Frost, a patrician Presbyterian from Attica, New York, was Home Director of the North American CIM in Toronto from 1888 to 1901, and then in Philadelphia. When he moved back Stateside, he was appalled that the "standard of doctrine and life in the States is much lower than that which prevails in Canada... It is apparent that the great apostacy which the scripture connects with the last days is advancing upon us, and I feel that we are going to find it more and more difficult to determine just what our source of life should be."<sup>29</sup> By 1910

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<sup>29</sup> Frost to J. Stevenson, Deputy China Director, 15 August 1902, quoted in Frost, *Memoirs*, pp. 689-90.

Frost was a leader of the nascent Fundamentalist movement and contributor to *The Fundamentals*, volume XII, “What Missionary Motives Should Prevail?”<sup>30</sup>

Frost’s *Memoirs* are fulsome in recording his fifty-year career with the CIM, but in this situation, he was very reticent about “a controversy which I had with Mr. Hoste. It was, of course, in words and not in spirit; but even so, it was a cause of much distress... I had had enough controversy with beloved Mr. Taylor to last me a lifetime and no one ever knew what it cost me to renew such with his successor.” By the end of 1911, “the matters in [Frost’s] mind were too serious and complicated to allow of letter writing,” and since Hoste was still an invalid in England, Frost decided to go there to meet him and the London Council. This trip took two months, December 1911 to February 1912. He was warmly welcomed by the council, where it came as a surprise, his “new discovery that the leaders of the Mission in Great Britain were as anxious as those in North America to maintain the traditions of the past and preserve the work in truth and righteousness.” After that, Frost went to Bath, where Mr and Mrs Hoste were invalids, and remained with them over Christmas. (Frost felt at home in Bath

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<sup>30</sup> Henry W. Frost, “What Missionary Motives Should Prevail?” in *The Fundamentals: A Testimony*, volume 12 (Chicago: Testimony Publishing Company, c1914). Articles by Charles Trumball, Robert Speer and R.A. Torrey appear in the same volume.

because Benjamin Franklin, a distant cousin, once lived next door.) Hoste was so ill that “we talked about everything, which meant about nothing.”<sup>31</sup>

The CIM’s relationship with the Edinburgh conference simmered until October 1912 when Hoste stopped in Philadelphia on his way to China. “On that occasion, the attention of Mr. Frost was drawn to the serious consequences to the Mission, of becoming isolated from the rest of the Missionary Body.”<sup>32</sup> But that, in retrospect, was exactly what Frost wanted.

Hoste summarized Frost’s concerns:

Frost told [Hoste] of the difficulty felt by himself and others connected with, or interested in, the work of the Mission on that Continent about our relationship to the Continuation Committee. He referred to the attitude of the Continuation Committee towards the Roman Catholic Church as shown by the exclusion of Protestant Missionaries in South America from the Edinburgh Conference, and also to the cooperation in some of the work of the Committee of men widely known in North America as teachers of modernist views.<sup>33</sup>

Although Hoste agreed they needed “watchfulness,” he consented to the appointment of Walter Sloan, the British Secretary, to the Continuation

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<sup>31</sup> Frost, *Memoirs*, pp. 791-92, 766-71 (trip to England).

<sup>32</sup> “Relationship of the Mission,” pp. 2-3.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

Committee.<sup>34</sup> “Through a misapprehension,” however, “Mr. Hoste then received the impression that Mr. Frost and those he represented, were prepared to acquiesce in the above conclusion, even though not in accord with their own judgment.”<sup>35</sup> But Frost was never one to acquiesce on a matter of principle; on several occasions, he had threatened to separate and take the North American work with him, and now he threatened again. “In saying, ‘we,’” he said, “I refer to our North American officials, Councils, influential friends and, of course, myself.”<sup>36</sup>

After this meeting, Frost initiated what Hoste called a “lengthened correspondence.” During this period, Frost retired from active work with the mission and moved to a town aptly called Summit, New Jersey, close to his alma mater, Princeton University. This was another black period of Frost’s life: “I seemed to enter a long tunnel, under a massive mountain, in which there was no light and to which there might be no end... This was darkness.”<sup>37</sup> And so, in June 1915 Hoste, Sloan and Dr Stuart Holden, the Home Director for Britain, came to Summit “for special conference on the whole subject.” Frost made a distinction between individuals of the CIM speaking at interdenominational

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<sup>34</sup> Minutes of China Council, 20 March 1913, p. 3, copy in BGC Archives.

<sup>35</sup> “Relationship of the Mission,” p. 2.

<sup>36</sup> Frost, *Memoirs*, p. 792.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 790, 791.

conferences or sitting on committees, but objected to the “holding of a seat on the Central Committee which was ultimately responsible for all the actions of its various branches.”<sup>38</sup>

Finally, Hoste acquiesced and asked Sloan to resign from the Continuation Committee “rather than imperil the International unity of the work and expose the Mission to the dangers of internal division – thereby greatly impairing its strength and efficiency.” Sloan’s resignation, Frost wrote, “gave us in North America a new sense of spiritual freedom.”<sup>39</sup> Over the next few years Frost withdrew the CIM from ecumenical alliances it had formerly supported. Its membership in the Associated Boards of Foreign Mission Societies of North America was replaced by a new conservative evangelical network of faith missions, the Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association of North America, of which Frost was a co-founder, along with R.V. Bingham of the Sudan Interior Mission and others, in 1917.

Interestingly, and as significant in the long run, the British CIM was engaged at this time (1910-15) in another internal controversy at the other end of the ecumenical spectrum, against the Pentecostal movement. Cecil Polhill-Turner, another of the Cambridge Seven, had tried to gain the language supernaturally when he arrived in China (1885), one of the first instances of such expectations,

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<sup>38</sup> “Relationship of the Mission,” p. 3.

<sup>39</sup> Frost, *Memoirs*, p. 793.

and twenty years later, still searching, he experienced the blessing at Azusa Street.<sup>40</sup> In 1909 he founded the Pentecostal Missionary Union of Great Britain (PMU), which he intended to “plant” on the Tibetan border. He brought out nine workers, English and Swedes, under some sort of arrangement with the CIM, but not a formal associate relationship.<sup>41</sup> The CIM adopted a cautious, conciliatory policy, that “we do not favour refusing to retain in or admit to the Mission anyone merely because he claims to possess the gift of tongues,” but that the candidate must submit to the CIM’s *Principles and Practice*.

This arrangement worked until 1914 when a lady missionary in Yunnan threatened to resign because the PMU was holding “waiting meetings” in the CIM premises. In Shanxi, the hotbed, all the members of the Norwegian Mission in China, with one exception, “and a few of the Christians, including the Linhsien Evangelist,” received the gift of tongues.<sup>42</sup> As a result of consultation with the home directors, superintendents and missionaries, the CIM ended its relationship with the Norwegian Mission and issued a strong statement that the Mission should not “undertake any responsibility for carrying on of [the PMU’s] work.”

Whilst we recognize the value of meetings for special prayer and meditation on God’s Word, both in regard to the personal Christian life

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<sup>40</sup> Austin, *China’s Millions*,

<sup>41</sup> China Council minutes, 14 April 1909, p. 3.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 3 December 1914, p. 17.

and to the extension of the Lord's work, and without denying that there is blessing in some cases in what are termed "waiting" meetings in connection with the P.M.U., we feel that these are accompanied by proceedings which tend to consequences of a dangerous character. For one thing, the strain upon the brain occasionally is such that in some cases insanity has ensued, etc.<sup>43</sup>

### **Goforth's Special Work, 1910-17**

We left Jonathan Goforth – and Rosalind and the children – standing on the steps after the disappointment of Edinburgh and watched the CIM open doors to him in Britain, even to Spurgeon's tabernacle. We will leave the CIM for the moment, but for the rest of this paper it was always in the background, opening doors for Goforth in China and, later, in the United States. There was a crucial distinction between Henry Frost and Jonathan Goforth, though perhaps national traits. Frost was an American, impatient, unbending, with a dark theology. As director of an international, interdenominational voluntary society, he had less loyalty to the mainline denominations and thus became a come-out separatist. Goforth, the Canadian, "had heartfelt sympathies toward all denominations,"<sup>44</sup> and never separated from the Presbyterian Church. On the contrary, the

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 2 September 1914, pp. 7-8.

<sup>44</sup> Goforth, *Goforth of China*, p. 262.

Presbyterian Church separated itself from him, when in 1925 two-thirds of its members joined the United Church of Canada, leaving a much smaller Continuing Presbyterian church.

Arriving back in North Henan, the Presbyterian mission was still dominated by the survivors of the Boxer Uprising, whose suspicion of mass emotionalism among the Chinese has been mentioned. But this conservatism was being challenged. One old-timer wrote: “There seems to be a distinct cleavage between the type of missionary previous sent to China previous to 1900 [interestingly, “1910” is crossed out] and those who have come since.”

The preaching of the Gospel is at a discount. We are all called upon to be “missionary statesmen” who have something better to do than spend their time in preaching. The more indirect the method of work, the more it seems to find approval by the modern missionary. But I trust you will always know that though the older missionaries who are strongly evangelical or evangelistic in their methods may be outvoted on questions of mission policy, that they are still true to the methods God has blessed in past years... The remedy lies with you at home. Send us out evangelistic workers and we will have evangelistic work... If they say “we have not

got any of that kind,” then stay your hand and send no more men out here till you get them.<sup>45</sup>

It was into this volatile situation that the Goforths inserted themselves. After “wanderings and feastings in Europe,” wrote R.P. MacKay, the mission secretary, to Rosalind sympathetically, “where you must have met many delightful people . . . you have however very soon after arriving been plunged into a Gethsemane.”<sup>46</sup> When the Goforths arrived in Zhangde, they discovered that “a young, inexperienced missionary, *who had not learned the value of locks in China*, stored many of the loose things, as dishes, kitchen utensils, beds, small furniture, etc., in a leaking, thatched cowshed.” [Italics in original.] Perhaps there’s a metaphor there, that a missionary’s treasures had to be locked away from the Chinese. When Rosalind – the “weaker vessel,” she called herself – broke down, Jonathan comforted her by saying, “My dear, after all, they’re only *things* and the Word says, ‘Take joyfully the spoiling of your goods.’”<sup>47</sup> That was to be the

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<sup>45</sup> J.A. Slimmon, Hwaiking [now Huaiqing], to R.P. MacKay [cited as RPM], 26 May 1913, in Presbyterian Church in Canada, North Henan Mission correspondence, box 4 / file 47, in United Church of Canada Archives. [Cited as NHM box/file.] Slimmon was a Scotsman and former CIM.

<sup>46</sup> RPM to Rosalind, Weihwei, 26 January 1911, NHM 3/33.

<sup>47</sup> *Goforth of China*, p. 211.

theme of this period in China: giving up things – health, fellowship, even a settled abode – because of Jonathan’s “special work.”

As he wrote to MacKay, “you know how I was led out into this special work. I never liked it and never expect to like it as well as the direct soul-saving work in Honan, but since it was to me so manifestly the Lord’s will that I do the special work I had no option but to follow His leading.”<sup>48</sup>

At the first meeting of Presbytery, Goforth told them he wanted to be released from mission’s control “for several years and probably for life to carry on special evangelistic work ... in a much wider, it may be, a world-wide field.” Presbytery disagreed and demanded that “Mr. Goforth must give more time to the work in Honan and less to revival work.” They threatened to cut him off from membership in order “to compel me to take up a field in the ordinary way.” Goforth stormed and pleaded. He threatened to resign. Sadly, realizing that their control over Goforth “can only be nominal and never real,” Presbytery voted to “release him ... and would wish him a hearty God-speed.”<sup>49</sup> However, the Presbyterian / Continuing Presbyterian church continued to pay the Goforths’ salary right up to the end of his life, whatever the arrangements.

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<sup>48</sup> Goforth, Changte, to RPM, 13 December 1912, NHM 4/44.

<sup>49</sup> Goforth, Changte, to RPM, 1 February 1912, NHM 4/39.

Meanwhile, Goforth seemed “to consider it his duty to hunt for heresy” among the members of his own mission.<sup>50</sup> Reportedly, he told the CIM missionaries in Shanxi that “none of the young men the Board was now sending out are sound in the faith,” and that their preaching of higher criticism was “detrimental to the cause of Christ among the Chinese.”<sup>51</sup> Eventually three missionaries were brought before Presbytery to account for their beliefs; one resigned, but two remained on the field to the continuing suspicion of the older folks.

When Goforth offered to spend two years going over every one of the mission’s stations and outstations, “as far as I could discern,” he wrote, “there was not the slightest enthusiasm over the proposal... The only inference I could draw from explanations made was that they blamed the meetings I held in 1908 and the Chinese who made vows then for not keeping them... I hinted that we should drop everything and falling on our faces before God should plead for the restoration of His presence, but there was no apparent response.”<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Austin, *Saving China*, pp. 116-17.

<sup>51</sup> A.E. Armstrong, Assistant Secretary of FMB, to R.V. Gonder, CIM missionary on furlough, who made that statement in Goforth’s home church, 21 October 1912, NHM 4/43.

<sup>52</sup> Goforth, Weihwei, to RPM, 19 February 1912, NHM 4/39.

For the next several years the Goforths were half in, half out of the mission. He and Rosalind visited each of the villages around Zhangde for a week or two of “aggressive evangelism.” (The children were by now at the CIM’s Chefoo Schools.) Leaving the established churches to their pastors, his work focused on non-Christians: there was an “unmistakable consensus from among the baser classes, robbers, highwaymen, gamblers, opium slaves, men of vicious and vile habits, fortune tellers, witches and such like have been among those won to Christ.”<sup>53</sup> His larger revival meetings, however, focused on Chinese Christians and missionaries. He had purchased a cottage at Beidaihe, the most exclusive of the summer resorts, an ocean beach on the salubrious northern coast of Shandong, and held annual campaigns among the missionaries gathered there, sort of an oriental Chautauqua-by-the-Sea.

By 1916 Goforth was burning the candle at both ends and his health was deteriorating. For three years he suffered a “siege of twenty-five carbuncles and abscesses” on his neck and the doctor ordered him to return to Canada. On board ship, he was so weak that the physician feared he would never reach port. Interestingly, he shared a cabin with D.E. Hoste, General Director of the CIM, who was profoundly impressed by Goforth’s patience and cheerfulness. “Truly a

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<sup>53</sup> Goforth, Li Chien T’an (village 90 li northeast of Zhangde), to RPM, 23 April 1914, NHM 4/52.

man to love, admire and learn from, quite apart from his outstanding gifts and far-reaching public ministry. He was a ‘winner’ in more senses than one.”<sup>54</sup>

During this furlough, 1916-17, which was spent mostly in recuperation, Jonathan and Rosalind were introduced to leading American fundamentalists, particularly Dr Charles G. Trumbull, editor of *The Sunday School Times*. Trumbull was a speaker at the prophetic conference at Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario; this conference had dissolved acrimoniously concerning prophetic dispensationalism but was revived briefly by the CIM. The Goforths were also invited to American Keswick, which was their first prolonged contact with Christians “across the line.” Following the CIM example of living on faith, they established a network of “intercessors” who supported them with prayers and gifts of money.<sup>55</sup>

### **Sharpening the Tools 1917-20**

By the fall of 1917, when Jonathan and Rosalind Goforth returned to China (without the children), the North Henan mission had changed again. When they left in 1916, China still had some semblance of a central government, and Yuan Shikai, the president and would-be emperor, protected the mission. But, during their absence Yuan Shikai had died and the Republic of China had

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<sup>54</sup> *Goforth of China*, pp. 227-29.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 229-31.

fragmented into warlord regimes. Over the next ten years Henan was occupied by half a dozen different warlords as it became a strategic area in the civil wars between the various northern and southern cliques.

More immediately, the North Henan mission had been depopulated when all the younger male missionaries – sixteen men – joined the Chinese Labour Corps and went to the battlefields of France; their wives returned to Canada with the children. Although China was still neutral in the First World War, it made a secret arrangement with the British government to raise a battalion of Chinese workers – nicknamed “the coolie corps” – to go to France as non-combatants to relieve the Allied soldiers by cleaning the camps and digging the trenches. The departure of so many young missionaries, leaving only the older people – the Boxer survivors – was a “tragedy” for the mission, forcing the cancellation of a forward movement and all medical work except among the women. Evangelistic work was “practically suspended.”<sup>56</sup>

The mission “drifted into institutionalism to the neglect of more important things.” Institutionalism, of course, was one marker of modernist theology. Looking back, one of the younger heretics wrote that when the men went to France “it almost impossible to attempt any work except the superintendence of

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

the ‘institutions’ of the mission... Such a situation was inevitable, and was not a matter of ‘drifting,’ we were simply thrust into it whether we would or not.”<sup>57</sup>

Theological attitudes hardened after the First World War, and the church wars increased in intensity throughout the 1920s, both at home and in China. Goforth brought things to a crisis, when Presbytery tried to work out a compromise whereby “both sides, fundamentalists and modernists, be allowed to preach and teach as they felt led.” He would never tolerate anyone teaching Higher Criticism, so he felt, “There was but one thing for him to do – send in his resignation.”<sup>58</sup> The mission accepted his resignation with a sigh of relief.

The only reason the Goforths did not sever their connection with the Presbyterian church was because of the generosity – a generosity of the purse and of the spirit – of R.P. MacKay and the Foreign Mission Board. They continued to pay his salary but he was responsible for all other expenses, such as travel within China and furloughs. As MacKay wrote to Rosalind, whom he liked and supported, “I am quite unwilling that Dr. Goforth and yourself should be separated from the Board and the Canadian Church. After thirty years of such service as you have rendered... I cannot say I am fully in accord with your choice of ministry. It seems to me a higher and more appropriate type of service to lay foundations than to build on the foundations other men have laid... Saying that

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<sup>57</sup> J.G.G. Bompas, Changte, to RPM, 8 September 1919, NHM 6/85.

<sup>58</sup> *Goforth of China*, pp. 232-33.

much, however, does not imply that the evangelistic work is not important.”<sup>59</sup>

Rosalind replied, “My heart often sank this past year of waiting at the very thought of complete severance from the Mission of which God used us as the Founders so many years ago. But now that fear is gone.” And in another letter, their mission of reviving the churches “is just what you have said, ‘sharpening the tools for others.’ Is that not important?”<sup>60</sup>

As part of its agreement, Presbytery stated tersely that the Goforths’ “place of residence when not travelling from place to place be at some health-resort or other convenient center outside our field.”<sup>61</sup> This meant giving up the mission house in Zhangde where they had lived for 25 years and finding a new home. They sold the cottage at Beidaihe, which covered the cost of building a new bungalow at Jigongshan (then spelled Kikungshan), a mountain resort several hundred miles south of Zhangde, at the border of Henan and Hunan.

The choice of Jigongshan was strategic. There were four major resorts in eastern China where each summer hundreds of missionaries would gather to escape the heat, and each played its role in the unfolding story. The seaside resorts of Beidaihe and Chefoo, where the CIM had its schools for missionaries’ children, were cosmopolitan, attracting the diplomatic crowd and liberal

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<sup>59</sup> RPM to Rosalind, 25 February 1919, NHM 6/81.

<sup>60</sup> Rosalind to RPM, 27 and 23 June 1919, NHM 6/83.

<sup>61</sup> “Report of Committee on Dr. Goforth’s Release,” no date [June 1919], NHM 6/83.

missionaries from Beijing and Tianjin. Guling (where Chiang Kai-shek later had his summer palace), in central China, was ethereally beautiful but expensive. It was near the Yangtze and had easy transportation to Shanghai and Hankou. Among the missionaries, it had an interdenominational reputation, and seems to have been a CIM and American Presbyterian enclave. Jigongshan was the least fashionable, an isolated mountain plateau inaccessible by train, but suitable for year-round living. It attracted missionaries from the far northwest, i. e. Shanxi, Gansu and Mongolia. Since these areas were mainly CIM and the various Alliance missions, mostly Scandinavians prone to emotionalism, Jigongshan was an important center for the dissemination of Pentecostal teachings.

Leaving North Henan was a wrenching experience. During the next two years, “we changed our resting-place ... *on an average of every five days.*” [Italics in original.] This severely affected the health of both of them until, as Rosalind put it, “Dr. Goforth no longer had his wife to take care of him, as she had been forced to return to Canada in broken health.”<sup>62</sup>

Several opportunities for sharpening the tools presented themselves almost immediately, which brought the Goforths into a new prominence. Rosalind, living alone at Jigongshan while Jonathan traveled throughout China, started to write her first book, *Chinese Diamonds for the King of Kings*. She had always been a gifted writer – influenced by Mrs Howard Taylor (Geraldine Guinness) of

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<sup>62</sup> *Goforth of China*, pp. 234, 237.

the CIM – and when she got her first typewriter, she found her true vocation. Also at this time, they were involved in distributing famine relief during the terrible North China famine of 1920-21: \$120,000 passed through their hands.

Another opportunity was Goforth's remarkable friendship with Feng Yuxiang [Feng Yü-hsiang], the so-called "Christian warlord." Feng was one of the out-sized, colorful characters of early twentieth-century China, a giant of 6'8" who was warlord of Henan several times during the 1920s. In August 1919, he invited Goforth to hold meetings among his soldiers. "His manner is a curious and striking mixture of humility, dignity, and quiet power," wrote Rosalind; "he had a striking and good face. He at once impresses one as true and sincere, a man to be trusted."<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid., pp. 239-41.



*Chaplain to the Christian General: Jonathan Goforth and Mrs. Goforth around 1922 with Gen. Feng Yu-hsiang and Mrs. Feng (Li Te-chuan who was to become Minister of Health in the People's Republic), and the Fengs' children. (Courtesy Mrs. Mary Goforth Moynan)*

The general wanted Bible teachers, Goforth wrote to MacKay enthusiastically. “The singing of hymns around that encampment was as familiar a sound as the bugle.”

All vile women were ordered to be off within three days. All gambling dens and theatres were closed. The theatres were turned into schools, workshops and preaching halls. The opium and morphia halls were all closed, and the owners fined... These are some reasons why we believe the Christianity of the General and his men to be genuine. He supplies his men with religious books. He has bought as many as 500 New Testaments at a time... He has made a catechism on military morale, with many Bible thoughts in it.<sup>64</sup>

Just as the 19th-century missionary Karl Gützlaff was remembered for distributing Christian tracts from the back of opium ships, Goforth is saddled with the legend, whether true or not, that he baptized General Feng's troops with fire hoses. In any event, that would have satisfied the Presbyterian sacrament of "sprinkling" – if he had to been a full-immersion Baptist, he would have had a hard time baptizing 500 men a day.

I baptized 275 at Tao Yuan including 39 officers. After singing, Mr. Carswell led in prayer... Then the General read out about fifteen names and they came and stood before the platform and I baptized them, praying that their savior would baptize them with the Holy Ghost and Fire. As soon as the last one was baptized, Colonel Chang at the organ with his

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<sup>64</sup> Goforth, "General Feng Yu Hsiang" (13 page typescript) enclosed in Goforth, Chefoo, to RPM, 2 October 1919, NHM 6/85.

choir started a verse, “Oh happy day that fixed my choice...” Next day at Changte I baptized 232, all officers and non-commissioned officers.<sup>65</sup>

The story of Goforth and the Christian General had a sad sequel. In 1926 and again in 1927, Henan was occupied by Marshal Feng’s army. He had gone communist; after re-education in Moscow he had remodeled his army on the Russian model and renamed it the Kuominjun [Kuominchün], the People’s Army. The North Henan missionaries tried to warn the church at home about Feng’s change of allegiance, but years of Goforth’s pro-Feng propaganda had left too deep an impression. “The first thought at home was to keep the knowledge from the Church and the general public, lest it affect the budget.” After defecting to join Chiang Kai-shek’s Northern Expedition (1927), Feng allowed his troops to loot the mission premises.<sup>66</sup>

### **The Bible Union and Church Union, 1920-25**

1920 was the year that everything exploded. Or, to put it another way, “it was through the establishment of the Bible Union of China in 1920 that the sparse fundamentalist movement became a loosely organized and coordinated campaign against the modernists in the mission field.” The Bible Union was an alliance of conservative / fundamentalist missionaries whose goal, according to its prospectus,

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Austin, *Saving China*, p. 209.

was “to take definite steps towards strengthening the position, in mission work, of Christian fundamentals.” It was founded at Guling and grew rapidly; within two years it had 2000 members, one-third of the Protestant missionary force in China.

One North Henan missionary, writing in 1920, described how suddenly the controversy erupted:

I heard very little about the Millennial question before coming to China, but here, especially at Ki Kung Shan where there are every summer very many missionaries of the CIM and the C&MA, it is harped on all the time. Also its advocated are very much to the fore in publishing articles in religious papers. Three years ago this summer [i.e. 1917, while the Goforths were still in Canada] at Ki Kung Shan there was considerable excitement. All the announcements at the church services were made conditionally – “if the Lord tarry.” Some expected His return that Autumn. Efforts were made to fit the symbolic figures of Daniel into the various world powers then at war... The address to me was a conglomeration of crudities and absurdities.

“Yet,” he concluded, “I believe that premellianism [sic] is on the wane.”<sup>67</sup> Little did he know that this was just the beginning.

The best history of the Bible Union is Kevin Xiyi Yao’s *The Fundamentalist Movement among Protestant Missionaries in China, 1920-1937*,

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<sup>67</sup> Andrew Thomson, Tao Kou, to RPM, 10 June 1920, NHM 6/90.

which is “the first full-length historical study of so-called fundamentalist missionaries in early twentieth-century China.” Unfortunately, because Yao’s narrow focus on American Presbyterians – the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (North) and the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (South) – he misses the transatlantic, transdenominational nature of the Bible Union and the fundamentalist movement in general.

A case in point is W.H. Griffith Thomas, who illustrates the progress from English Keswick to American fundamentalism via Canadian interdenominationalism. In the summer of 1920 he and Charles Trumbull visited China, where he gave a series of addresses on “Modernism in China” at Guling, which culminated in the formation of the Bible Union the next day. Griffith Thomas was an English Anglican cleric who went to Canada as a Keswick delegate and stayed on as professor at Wycliffe College, the low-church Anglican seminary in Toronto. Wycliffe, which had close ties to the Toronto CIM, had a dispensational tinge, and Griffith Thomas became a prominent speaker on prophetic subjects throughout North America. By 1920 he helped found Dallas Theological Seminary, the hardest of hard-line dispensationalist schools, although he died before it was opened.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Griffith Thomas stated: “I had nothing to do with the formation of the Bible Union, except in so far as my address seem to have been the immediate occasion for it.” Quoted

Yao's dismissal of the CIM, however, seems more willful than blind: like the *Laymen's Report*, Yao wrote a large segment of "so-called fundamentalists" out of his narrative because they were not "fundamentalist" – i.e. not American, not militant – enough. "The CIM is always claimed as the champion of the fundamentalist cause," he wrote. "In many ways this claim is correct." He goes on to note – which is also correct – that the CIM as a mission did not enter the Bible Union, even though many "CIM missionaries joined the fundamentalist camp and fought as individual members... Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, the CIM never lost its focus on evangelization [of the Chinese] and thus, as some scholars suggest, was able to 'ignore the ethical and theological issues about which other Protestants earnestly contended.'" (This came naturally to the CIM because of its interdenominational character; during the nineteenth-century it included Baptists who believed in immersion and Presbyterians who sprinkled, as well as Anglicans and Brethren who could not share communion.)

"Therefore," Yao concludes, "in my opinion, the CIM's contribution to fundamentalism in China is undeniable but indirect and hidden. Based on this judgment, I only discuss the CIM's withdrawal from the National Christian Council [in 1926] in this study and do not give the CIM more special treatment,

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in Kevin Xiyi Yao, *The Fundamentalist Movement Among Protestant Missionaries in China, 1920-1937* (Lanham MD: University Press of America, 2003), p. 56.

even though the individual CIM missionaries' activities on behalf of the fundamentalist cause are mentioned from time to time."<sup>69</sup>

The day after the Bible Union was founded on 1 August 1920 at Guling, and a "Tentative Statement" was signed by 150 missionaries, they sent a delegation to Jigongshan to win support and set up a local committee there. Trumbull and his wife were part of this delegation and they stayed with the Goforths for nine days. The Jigongshan group endorsed the statement, and Goforth was elected co-vice-president of the Bible Union.<sup>70</sup>

D.E. Hoste's reaction was more nuanced. When a local committee was formed in Shanghai, he was elected co-president with J.W. Lowrie (Presbyterian North). According to Yao, Hoste represented the moderate wing of the Bible Union and he revised the statement to remove the most belligerent statements. His testimony, "Why I Have Joined the Bible Union of China," harked back to the compromise with Henry Frost and the American branch: the CIM could not join any organization whose primary focus was militancy, whether militant modernism of the Edinburgh Continuation Committee, militant pentecostalism, or militant fundamentalism, because that would cause dissention within the CIM itself.

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<sup>69</sup> pp. 14-15.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. 57. Goforth was not listed on the Executive Committee in an open letter of December 1921. For Trumbull's visit with Goforth, see Goforth to RPM, 30 August 1920, NHM 6/91. *Goforth of China* does not mention Trumbull or the Bible Union.

It must frankly be confessed that the first news of the Bible Union was received by me with a measure of doubt, almost amounting to disapproval. Not that one questioned the character and motives of those starting it, or was without sympathy with their aim; for my own views regarding the Holy Scriptures and the doctrines referred to in the Tentative Statement of the Union, were substantially the same as those of its authors. On the other hand I dreaded the possibility of a campaign of denunciation of fellow-missionaries, conducted in a harsh, acrimonious spirit, that would tend to excite similar sentiments in the minds of those attacked, and do far more harm than good. It is obviously most desirable that, so far as possible, we as a missionary body in this country, should present a united front in the face of prevailing materialism, moral evil, and erroneous beliefs... Again, ought time and strength to be diverted from the positive work of propagating the Christian faith, to action that might lead to results such as those mentioned?<sup>71</sup>

Goforth seems to have had no such qualms, as he wrote enthusiastically to the church at home.<sup>72</sup> R.P. MacKay responded, questioning “the wisdom of the

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<sup>71</sup> D.E. Hoste, “Why I Have Joined the Bible Union of China,” *The Bulletin of the Bible Union of China*, April 1921, in Yao, p. 67.

<sup>72</sup> Newspaper clipping, re. Goforth, “Mission Circles Stirred By Manifesto of Theological Conservatives” dated Shanghai, 26 August 1920, NHM.

Bible Union that you have organized apparently under the leadership of Dr. Thomas and Mr. Trumbull... It means controversy, and who ever heard of any person being changed in life by controversy? ... A report came from South China which I discredit, namely that you took into one of your meetings a Bible and slit it in two with your knife, stating that that is what the higher critics do with the Bible. I think that report comes from an unfriendly critic.” MacKay concluded that ‘the trend of the time is toward union – an all comprehensive union which gives latitude to all varieties within one fold.’<sup>73</sup>

Church union was much on MacKay’s mind, as the Presbyterian Church was moving inexorably toward corporate union with the Methodists and Congregationalists to form the United Church of Canada, which took place on 10 June 1925. The Methodists and Congregationalists joined the United Church as corporate entities, but because of Presbyterian governance, each congregation and each individual voted whether to join or not. As a result, 150,000 individuals and hundreds of congregations refused to join and formed the Continuing Presbyterian Church in Canada. As Keith Clifford pointed out, the resistance to Church Union was a conservative movement that was trying to maintain an ethnic, Scottish Presbyterian presence in Canada; it was not a fundamentalist / modernist

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<sup>73</sup> RPM to Goforth, 22 October 1920. See also RPM to J.W. Lowrie, 23 February 1924, in reply to letter from Executive Committee, Bible Union of China, to Home Boards, dated Shanghai, December 1921.

split. It was led by laymen, elders who had vowed to uphold the Westminster Catechism, so they “approached the problem from a legal rather than a theological perspective.... For the majority of these laymen, however, fundamentalism was not the central issue... Thus they did not bind their church to any theory of biblical inerrancy, premillennialism, or dispensationalism, and they did not insist that their church adopt an anti-ecumenical stance.”<sup>74</sup>

When Goforth returned to Canada on furlough in 1924, “the whole church was in the throes of the Union crisis.”<sup>75</sup> While still in China, he had written to MacKay, “I resolved that I would know neither unionist or antiunionist but try and weld the disunited sections by proclaiming the need for a Holy Ghost revival.”<sup>76</sup> The controversy was so dominant that he could not undertake deputation work for foreign missions, so he spent the summer in the United States, where the church wars were at their fiercest, just before the great rupture. When he returned to Canada, he was true to his word, for he does not seem to have taken an active role in the union debate; he is not mentioned in Clifford’s study, for example. However, he did make one public statement that made him a one-day wonder in the press. He claimed that “he had smelled whiskey at the Presbyterian

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<sup>74</sup> N. Keith Clifford, *The Resistance to Church Union in Canada, 1904-1939* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1985), pp. 2-4.

<sup>75</sup> *Goforth of China*, p. 261.

<sup>76</sup> Goforth, Lin Ching Hsien, Honan, to RPM, 8 March 1924, NHM 8/124.

General Assembly, a thing he had never smelled in months of association with the soldiers of the Christian army of China.” Moreover, they had designated a special “Smoking Room” for the laymen who could not forego their guilty pleasure.<sup>77</sup>

When the vote came in January 1925, Jonathan and Rosalind Goforth voted against union, and remained members of the Continuing Presbyterian Church in Canada.

### **Between the Wars**

By 1925 the Goforths’ battles seemed to be over. Surprisingly, at least from his own point of view, he had won. He had lost the North Henan mission, of course, which went to the United Church, despite a few dissenting votes from the older, Boxer generation. But, he (and 150,000 others) had saved the Presbyterian Church. The new Presbyterian Church was more theologically inclusive than the United Church, which marched inexorably into *The New Era* (the name of the denominational magazine) of the social gospel and left-wing political action – “the C.C.F. at prayer,” as it was derided. The Continuing Presbyterian Church, while mainly liberal, also included an enclave of “fundamentalists” – centered around Knox Church (Toronto), the CIM and Toronto Bible College – that had a place for Goforth’s Holy Ghost revivals.

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<sup>77</sup> Owen Sound *Sun Times*, 15 September 1924, and other correspondence, NHM 8/130.

In China, the Bible Union shed its militant, confrontational anti-modernism and adopted a positive attitude: “the Bible Union rejected a purely negative attack on the modernists in favor of a positive presentation of the orthodox beliefs.” As Kevin Xiyi Yao stated: “Over and over again, it was said that the Bible Union’s statement was ‘fair’ and ‘inclusive’ and its program was ‘constructive;’ ‘The Bible Union is getting more and more to be a Bible movement and a Prayer Movement.’” In line with this amicable spirit, *The Bulletin of the Bible Union of China* was revamped into a comprehensive magazine entitled *The Bible for China* that was “to emphasize the constructive aim of the Bible Union.” However, “the second half of the 1920s and 1930s witnessed a steady decline of the Bible Union’s influence, and the Union could no longer attract any significant attention from major missionary or church publications except its own magazine.”<sup>78</sup>

The CIM and Goforth represented the more moderate wing of the Bible Union, while the American Presbyterians (including, within its own ranks, Henry Frost) constituted the more militant, “belligerent” wing. In other words, the CIM model won the battle for the Bible Union. As Dixon Hoste stated in his article, “Why I Have Joined the Bible Union of China”: “I feel satisfied that those promoting the Union are animated by a spirit of charity and courtesy toward those

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<sup>78</sup>Yao, *Fundamentalist Movement*, pp. 86, 77-78, 84.

from whom they differ.”<sup>79</sup> In 1927, the militant wing of the Bible Union split, and formed a new organization, The Christian Fundamentals League for China.

Interestingly, at the same time as the CIM was promoting the Bible Union, in 1922, it joined the National Christian Council of China, an ecumenical “church union” comprising several denominations, including Presbyterians, Baptists and the United Church of Canada. (The other church union was the Church of Christ in China, which was predominantly Anglican.) In 1926, at the height of the civil war (Chiang Kai-shek’s Northern Expedition to unite China), the CIM withdrew from the NCC, just as fifteen years earlier they had withdrawn from the Continuation Committee of the Edinburgh Conference, and for the same reasons: to maintain harmony within its own ranks.<sup>80</sup>

Like an old war-horse hearing the bugle, when the Continuing Presbyterian Church decided to establish a new mission in China to replace those it had lost to the United Church, he answered, “ready, aye, ready.” At that moment, Rosalind, in declining health, was resting on a sofa waiting for an ambulance to take her to the hospital. She rose from her bed and said, “I am going with you.” And she did. One week later, they left Toronto for China, accompanied by their daughter and her husband, Mary and Rev. Robert Moynan.

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p. 78.

<sup>80</sup> Yao, *Fundamentalist Movement*, pp. 195-205.

They arrived in China in the spring of 1926. Those were dark days. There seemed to be no room for them anywhere in China. The next year “proved to be the most prolonged period of unbroken testing in sickness, separation and repeated disappointments the Goforths ever experienced.” The Goforths and Rev. Allan Reoch, a recent Knox College graduate, lived at Jigongshan, while Jonathan made his usual evangelistic tours. Finally, in the spring of 1927, the Irish Presbyterian mission in Manchuria – which had unleashed his Holy Ghost revivals back in ’07 – urged him to come and open a new mission in the remote northwest corner of Manchuria, near the Russian border, at Szepingkai.

This was “some mission,” Rosalind described themselves. “The leader, an old man nearing seventy, with a semi-invalid wife; a ‘Salvation Army lassie’ – Miss Graham, from New Zealand; a Dutch lady – Miss Annie Kok; and one young recruit – Rev. Allan Reoch, as yet struggling with the language.”<sup>81</sup>

In April 1927, as the Northern Expedition moved into Central China, the British and other foreign consuls ordered all their nationals to leave inland China, which went down in missionary history as the Great Evacuation. They streamed from the farthest corners of China, some 8000 missionaries and tens of thousands of other foreigners, often under harrowing conditions, to the safety of the treaty

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<sup>81</sup> *Goforth of China*, p. 270. Annie Kok was the daughter of Arie Kok, Chancellor of the Netherlands Legation, one of the key people in the Christian Fundamentals League; see Yao, *Fundamentalist Movement*, p. 88.

ports like Shanghai and Tianjin. The Goforths' party, precariously lodged in Szepingkai, were bypassed by the evacuation, even though foreigners in other parts of Manchuria were forced to leave their stations.

Manchuria was “*a pioneer field* – the only field which now appealed to Jonathan Goforth’s spirit.” Like the North American West a generation earlier – “the last, best West” – Manchuria was opened up for settlement after 1910 and millions of Chinese migrated to the empty grasslands. Szepingkai was itself only ten years old, and the South Manchurian Railway (built by the Russians) was completed but a few months before the Goforths arrived.

This paper is already too long. I do not have world enough or time to describe their work. In any event, Rosalind recounted the story in fulsome detail in *Goforth of China*. They remained at Szepingkai from 1927 to 1930, while Jonathan continued his vast revival tours as far as Vietnam (where their daughter Ruth Goforth and her husband Rev. D.I. Jaffray were missionaries under the Christian and Missionary Alliance) and Hong Kong. During this whole period, both Jonathan and Rosalind were in declining health, and the fierce winters in an unheated “upper room” above the street chapel took their toll. By 1930 Rosalind was losing her sight from double cataracts and during their 1930-31 furlough, Jonathan also went blind from a detached retina, which necessitated lying in a dark room for several months with his eyes bandaged. Ever busy, he redeemed the time by dictating his stories that were published as *Miracle Lives of China*.

There is a strange lacunae in *Goforth of China*, which was Rosalind's decision that "comments on the political struggle going on, in and around our field, she be avoided." There is no mention of the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931, which caused an international crisis; if one did not know better, her account suggests that Manchuria was still part of China and that the struggle was against "bandits" who were tearing up the railway lines. There is certainly not one hint that Manchukuo was a Japanese colony. She mentions the searchlights and the electrified barbed-wire that surrounded the city, but politically, the most she could say was: "I learned a lively battle was raging along the road between the chapel and the railway station; bandits had broken through the lines. Manchukuo troops engaged them, but Japanese soldiers had to finish the job."<sup>82</sup> As a result, her story exists in a vacuum, in a landscape as timeless as *Pilgrim's Progress*.

After their furlough, the Goforths remained in Manchuria from 1931 to November 1934, when Jonathan was aged 75. He was completely blind and had to be led around by a companion / evangelist, whose duty was to read him the Bible in Chinese. Yet, he managed to conduct "a full campaign of revival missions throughout the field." He contracted pneumonia, then had a sudden and serious collapse, which necessitated their return to Canada. There, after his recovery, he continued a full schedule of deputation work, including eight or ten

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<sup>82</sup> *Goforth of China*, p. 307-08.

meetings a week at strategic centers in Ontario and Quebec; in eighteen months, he gave 481 addresses. In June 1936, he gave his last address to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church to “awaken the Church from its terrible lethargy. Like his address back in 1909, he was listened to “with marked attention, but as far as anyone could tell, with no special signs of spiritual awakening.”<sup>83</sup>

Jonathan Goforth died in his sleep on 8 October 1936, at the home of his son Frederick, a Presbyterian minister in Wallaceburg, Ontario. That evening he had given one of old war-horse sermons, “How the Spirit’s Fire Swept Korea.” At his funeral in Knox Church, Toronto, Dr. A.E. Armstrong, long-time secretary of the Presbyterian Foreign Mission Board (now United Church), said, “I think of today as being Jonathan Goforth’s *Coronation!*” Tributes were sent from all parts of the world, none more heartfelt than the China Inland Mission, which noted: “No missionary not actually a member of the mission was ever more akin to it in spirit or more closely associated with it in actual service.”<sup>84</sup>

Rosalind lived long enough to write *Goforth of China*, which belongs on the same shelf as *Hudson Taylor’s Spiritual Secret*, until she, too, slipped away in 1940.

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p. 341.

<sup>84</sup> *China’s Millions* (NA), March 1938, pp. 43-44.

## The End

This brings us back to the question raised at the beginning of this paper, whether (in the words of the *Laymen's Report*) foreign missions and good-will among the nations would cease to exist. In the short term, the answer was yes, in a double-negative sort of way, that foreign missions – supported by foreign funds and directed by foreign missionaries – did cease to exist. In the long term, of course, Christianity did not die in China, during the long anti-Japanese War and the present communist government (People's Republic of China).

Five years after the *Laymen's Report* and less than a year after Jonathan Goforth's death, the forces of hell broke loose. In July 1937, the Japanese armies invaded China in a scorched earth war of terror. The North Henan Mission, on the strategic railway, was one of the first casualties. The missionaries were forced to evacuate to Beidaihe for the summer, and on their return they held an emotional meeting and voted to disband for the duration. Except for a brief hiatus in 1946-47, before the communist takeover, this was the end of the mission.

Indirectly, the Bible Union, too, was a casualty of the war. According to Yao, the Bible Union limped along through the 1930s, but its efforts were too little, too late. The Sino-Japanese war “finally shattered any hope of revitalizing the Bible Union, and the Bible Union of China eventually faded from the scene.” The militant Christian Fundamentals League continued at least until 1939, when its journal, *The China Fundamentalist*, ceased publication.

## **Bibliographical Note Regarding Jonathan and Rosalind Goforth**

Surprisingly, no one has written a full length study of the Goforths, but there are many primary and secondary sources.

Rosalind's biography / autobiography, *Goforth of China: By His Wife* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1937, with many reprints), was written after his death and has become, like the life of Hudson Taylor, required reading in many Bible schools. Her autobiography is *Climbing: Memoirs of a Missionary's Wife* (Toronto: Evangelical Publishers, 1940). Their daughter, Mary Goforth Moynan, reprinted six of Rosalind's books in the 1980s, and (at age 91) wrote her own memoirs, *God Brought Us Through!* (Toronto: private, 1994). Ruth Goforth Jaffrey published a pamphlet, *Amazing Grace: A Brief Account of my Life in China and Vietnam* (c1975, copy in United Church of Canada Archives).

The personal papers of Jonathan and Rosalind (Bell-Smith) Goforth are in the Billy Graham Centre Archives, Wheaton College, Collection 188; finding aid is online at: <http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/GUIDES/188.htm>.

Mary Goforth Moynan's papers are also in the BGC, Collection 189; finding aid: <http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/GUIDES/189.htm>.

There is a Goforth collection at Tyndale University, Toronto (formerly Toronto Bible College).

The most significant archival collection I consulted for this paper, which has not been used by previous historians, is the correspondence of the

Presbyterian Church in Canada, North Henan Mission, in the United Church of Canada Archives, fonds 79.191 C. Jonathan and Rosalind (who both had beautiful copper-plate handwriting) were regular correspondents with R.P. MacKay, five or six times a year through this whole period.

Secondary sources include: Alwyn Austin, *Saving China: Canadian Missionaries in the Middle Kingdom* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), and *China's Millions: The China Inland Mission and Late Qing Society, 1832-1905*; *China's Millions*, March 1938, 43-44, Daniel Bays, "Christian Revival in China, 1900-1937," in Edith Blumhofer and Randall Balmer, editors, *Modern Christian Revivals* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989); and Kevin Xiyi Yao, *The Fundamentalist Movement among Protestant Missionaries in China, 1920-1937* (Dallas, etc: University Press of America, 2003).