

# Reverend Hugh Park McClurkin, D.D. on Slavery

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Page 282 of Volume 40 is a story about Dr. Lowery, a missionary in China for over 50 years, and how he was led to his calling after hearing a lecture on slavery by Dr. H. P. McClurkin. The story is written by the Rev. J. K. Robb, D. D.

Page 55 of Volume 66 is another recounting of this story and provides some additional details of the slavery lecture by Dr. McClurkin.

The following two pages were extracted from the  
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form. He was not a suitable man for the office, uneducated, and with very few of the polite forms which characterize the Chinese upper class people. He was told my name, and I made a few bows, and that was about all there was to it. So that whatever may have been accomplished in the way of planting the seeds of truth was through the interview with Mr. Koo.

I have wondered many times since then what ever became of the petition. Many and sensational changes have taken place since 1914. Among them were two changes of location of the capital, from Peking to Nanking, and from there to the present capital, Kun Ming. That the petition should have survived all the turmoil and confusion incident to such shifting from one part of the country to another, could scarcely be imagined, and much less hoped for. And yet God's ancient promise still holds. "My Word shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

One of the very pleasurable features of the trip to Peking was hearing Dr. Lowrey, whose name appears in the earlier part of this paper, relating the story of how he had been led to come to China as a missionary, forty-seven years before. He stated that he was led into the ministry through a lecture on Slavery given in a country school house in eastern Ohio. This was just a short time before the outbreak of the Civil War, and the lecturer was none other than a Covenanter minister, Dr. H. P. McClurkin, at that time pastor of the New Concord Covenanter congregation. Dr. Lowrey said he had forgotten the name of the lecturer, but not the man himself. And he went on to express his wonder and amazement that a man could speak on such an inflammable topic as Slavery in such a spirit as to lead a young man still in his teens to begin to consider the claims of the Christian ministry, and to eventually make China his field of labor. Needless to say that Dr. Lowrey had an attentive listener, for Dr. McClurkin was the only preacher I ever knew until I was on into my teens. When going out to China the last time, Dr. and Mrs. Lowrey and myself were fellow passengers. The journey was made all the more pleasant by their presence and companionship. Just about two years later, when the Lowreys were just rounding out a half century of service in China, his long years as a servant of God on earth came to a close. He was a great and good man. One thing that he said he regretted was that he had never been able to tell Dr. McClurkin what a service he had rendered him.

Another case somewhat similar in character, in which one of our Covenanter ministers figured, has come to my knowledge. Some years before leaving the Mission field my brother A. I. spent some time in a Hong Kong hospital. While there he formed the acquaintance of another missionary, a medical man, who had been laboring in Burma or Siam, I do not recall which. While these two men were recuperating they discovered that they had a number of interests in common, not only in their work, but also, as it turned out, in their acquaintances as well. One day this doctor, (I cannot recall his name) on learning that A. I. was a Covenanter, asked him if he had known a Covenanter minister by the name of D. H. Coulter. On

being told that he did the doctor went on to say that while he was a student in Lenox College at Hopkinton, Iowa, he had gone occasionally to hear Dr. Coulter preach, as he was pastor of the Hopkinton congregation at the time, and that one of his sermons had so impressed the young man as to lead him to go as a missionary to a foreign land. One marked difference between his case and that of Dr. Lowrey was that this man told Dr. Coulter what the sermon had done for him. We cannot but wonder what surprises may be in store for others of our ministers and laymen as well, when the things that are now hidden will be revealed, and when we shall know even as also we are known.

## Appeal for Prayer

BY JOSEPH M. STEELE

The Board of Foreign Missions comes to the Reformed Presbyterin Church with

### AN APPEAL FOR PRAYER

"Lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto life eternal." "But the laborers are few. Pray ye, therefore."

Profoundly convinced that prayer is, of all missionary factors, the greatest and most effective, we ask you to unite with us in employing it to the utmost.

After transacting the business at a recent meeting in New York City, the Board, feeling the great burden of responsibility resting on it and on the representatives of the Church in the several foreign fields, realizing, also, our common dependence upon our Lord and Master for success, engaged in a season of earnest prayer and supplication. The burden of those prayers was that God, who alone is adequate to the task, would work mightily for the salvation of the lost to whom we are bearing His gospel. When we had concluded, it was discovered that in the hearts of not a few the convictions had deepened that God would work if the missionaries abroad and His people at home could be enlisted in united earnest prayer to that definite end.

Considerations are not wanting why we should agree together to pray. Our missionaries deserve to be remembered in our prayers. Having consecrated their hearts and lives to the Master's work, these brethren are making great sacrifices in leaving home and friends and going out into heathen countries to live, in many instances among hostile strangers, and in every case with very little of the comforts we enjoy in our homes. Not only are they subject to these privations, but to many temptations and trials of which we know nothing. Baffled with difficulties, they are continually in the midst of a very hard and strenuous battle, and their burdens are all the while increasing. Shall we not increasingly bear them up before God in the arms of prayer?

Also, God has clearly revealed that His ordained purposes will be fulfilled only in answer to prayer. In the prophecy of Ezekiel, after the most positive statement of what God will do for Israel in the days of her restoration from Baby-

remarked that he, too, was a native of Ohio. Then he inquired as to what part of the State I was from, and I replied that New Concord was my birthplace. He then said: "Why I was born within a few miles of New Concord." On the strength of the situation he invited me to take dinner with him. In the course of our conversation he asked me if I could tell him the name of the Covenanter minister who was preaching at New Concord during the years just before the civil war. My reply was that to the best of my knowledge, the minister in question was Dr. H. P. McClurkin. Dr. Lowrey at once said: "That is the name." He went on to say something like this: "It was Dr. McClurkin, more than any other man, who was the means of my coming to China." It should have been mentioned before that Dr. Lowrey went to China in 1867, and at the time of this conversation he had been in China for 47 years. And he lived to spend a few years over the 50 year mark, before he was called to his reward. I was, of course, greatly interested in knowing the story of Dr. McClurkin, since he was the first pastor whom I ever knew. As nearly as I can recall Dr. Lowrey's story, it was as follows:

"I was a young fellow yet in my teens, perhaps two or three years before the outbreak of the civil war, and without anything at all definite in my mind as to my life's work, though greatly interested in the public questions of the day. During those times the slave question was being constantly agitated, both pro and con, and with ever-increasing bitterness. One night there was to be a lecture on slavery in our school house. The place was packed, so that the speaker could scarcely find room to stand. We cannot in these days, realize how men's passions were aroused by the agitation of slavery. But the speaker of the evening, who was none other than Dr. McClurkin, handled without gloves this question about which men were ready to fly at each others' throats. He denounced slavery as a sin against both God and man, and declared that the nation, as such, was guilty of the traffic in human beings. But he spoke with a rare gentleness of spirit of the persons engaged in the slave trade, and prayed that they might be turned from their sin. Up to that time in my life I had scarcely given a thought to what my future was to be. But as I, a boy yet, sat and listened to the speaker as he denounced the sin of slavery, and yet spoke of, and prayed for those engaged in the slave traffic, showing so much of the Spirit of the Master, I was suddenly impelled by what must have been the Spirit of God, to think of the ministry as my life's work. I went to school, the way opened for me to come to China, and here I have been for almost a half century. And it was Dr. McClurkin, more than any other human agency, who, speaking against human slavery, aroused in me the desire to work for God. I have often regretted that I could not recall his name, and even more have I regretted that I was never able to thank him in person for his great service to me."

Dr. Lowrey then said to me: "I suppose he has been dead for a good many years, has he not?" I replied that he had been dead for nearly 20 years. "In that case," said Dr. Lowrey, "he doubtless knows more of what he did for me than I do."

"None of us liveth to himself."

But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth. Psalm 86:15

January 25, 1961

## Winter Meeting of the Board of Christian Education

The Board of Christian Education met for its winter meeting on Wednesday and Thursday, December 28 and 29, 1960, in the church in Bloomington, Indiana. At 9 A.M. sharp, the meeting started.

The Board with members from the East, Middlewest, and West were brought to order by the President, Rev. Bruce Stewart, of Greeley, Colorado. The Devotional period was led by Rev. E. Clark Copeland, of Old Bethel, Illinois.

Despite the severe weather and busy season, 13 of the Board's 15 members were present. Illness prevented others from attending. In addition to the members and the Director, Miss Lois Hinman of the Board's office attended the meeting. Miss Hinman was busy the entire meeting handling reports, correspondence, and generally keeping things moving smoothly.

Devotions on Thursday morning were conducted by Rev. Milton Harrington, of Idana, Kansas.

The Board of Christian Education is organized into Committees. There are eight standing committees, and two special committees.

The Committees presented their mimeographed reports of accomplishments together with recommendations for future efforts.

The Committee on Organization presented plans for Congregational Committees on Christian Education. The purpose is to coordinate and integrate a plan of Christian Education with the total church program on the local level. As part of its report, this Committee proposed a number of other items for the Board's consideration.

The Promotion Committee presented a new bulletin cover for use by the church to announce D.V.B.S. materials. A submitted design to be incorporated on all material to be produced by the Board was accepted. However, the Board asked that the design be adjusted to meet a more general need. Other avenues of promotion were presented by this Committee for Board consideration.

The Committee on Conferences reported with general plans and recommendations for the 1962 National Conference. The Chairman of this Committee, W. A. "Mac" McElroy of Topeka, Kansas, says that Carlton College, Northfield, Minn. has, adequate facilities for all our groups. Further, there is ample sleeping accommodations in modern buildings.

The Board appointed Mr. McElroy to be Chief of the National Conference Administration, which Administration will handle all arrangements and details for this National. It was revealed that much progress has already been made in areas of registration, meeting places, counselors, site personnel, dining, finances, etc. Soon, there will be available more specific information regarding the 1962 National, August 8 through 15, 1962, Northfield, Minn. Northfield is approximately 50 miles south of Minneapolis.

The Committee on Bible Readers and Bible Mastery reported that the Readers are available. The Daily Bible Reader, Bible Mastery Folder, and Bible Reading notes are drilled for use in your 6 hole notebook. Future plans for these Readers may include some revision of the existing format.

The Committee on Instructional Materials pre-