



DOCTOR JOHN SUNG

By Robert Gillies

In Formosa, Indonesia, Bangkok, Singapore, the New Villages of Malaya, and other places in Southeast Asia the missionaries of the China Inland Mission are meeting Chinese who were saved through Dr. John Sung, and are having fellowship in churches that were revived through his ministry.

John Sung was dedicated to the gospel ministry at birth. His father was pastor of a church in Hinghwa, Fukien. So earnest were John's parents in soul-winning that the church membership reached three thousand. Family worship was an essential part of every day in their home, and when thirteen, John took some share with his father in village evangelism. The brilliant intellectual powers of this lad could not remain long unobserved, and the way opened for him to go to a Wesleyan college in the central United States. Before long, however, Bible and theology were laid aside, for he was induced to take up secular studies. He was a star student, carrying all before him in science and philosophy in the Wesleyan college and Ohio State University.

One day in 1926 John Sung received three letters calling for immediate reply. Germany bid for his great brain for scientific research work. Peking offered him the chair of Science in China's foremost university. And America gave a generous invitation to accept a professorship in a state university. Who could predict what other offers might follow these? But John had to give immediate replies by telegraph and cable. Alone that night, he heard God's voice: "Why did you come to America? Who so wondrously prepared the way? And why did He do it? Was it not that you might preach My gospel? And where is your Bible now?"

Such were the questions John Sung heard in the stillness of that night. The next day his refusals of those three magnificent offers were sent off. His neglected Bible was restored as his constant companion. Immediately he applied for admission into a popular theological seminary as a new student.

It was not very long before his keen faculties discovered that destructive criticism of the Bible was the basic teaching of the New York institution. "The great professors," he says, "questioned the virgin birth of Jesus, His resurrection, and other fundamental doctrines." He was surprised and conscience-stricken. Neglect of God's Word was a sin, but to study educational theories leading to definite unbelief was far worse. On the closing night of the year 1926, while praying, he again heard the voice of God in his heart saying, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise."

With great contrition he sought restoration of his early faith. Very soon he was again proclaiming with power the faith he had in his boy-hood preached with his father. The corridors of the college dormitories rang with his hallelujahs. This roused the hostility of professors and agnostic associates, and for 193 days he was confined in a mental hospital. He was, however, permitted to have his Bible, which he read through many times.

Released from the hospital, he made his way across the continent and sailed for China. The Pacific Ocean was the scene of his great renunciation, for one day as he neared the end of the voyage he threw overboard six diplomas and other credentials. (Among other things he was a Doctor of Philosophy.) As his testimonials floated

away on the waves he exclaimed, "There goes my pride! No more temptation on that score!" Christ and Him crucified was henceforth his only theme.

Back at his old town, now as a scholar of high repute, Dr. Sung was invited to teach chemistry in a local school. His first lecture took the form of a discourse on five loaves and two fishes being made by the Creator into a meal for five thousand! Boys and girls were led to Christ, and a beginning was made in the great evangelistic labours which for nearly twenty years took this unique preacher all over China and beyond.

For some years, associated with Dr. May Stone (China's first lady medical doctor) and her colleague Miss Jennie Hughes, he travelled widely with other evangelists of the Bethel Band, taking new vision and life into hundreds of churches. The fame of his scholarship attracted the intelligentsia of China, and from the scholarly class great numbers responded to his appeals.

No full records is at present available of his apostolic travels and toil. Nor can those he led to Christ be numbered or the influence of his message and example among the Christians be exaggerated. A burning and shining light, he passed away (in 1944, at the age of forty-two), physically worn out in his prime, shortly before the present troubles engulfed China.

Worldly wisdom is appraised in I Corinthians 1:20: "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" But Daniel 12:3 states, "They that be wise (after God's order) shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Such must be John Sung's eternal position. —China's Millions

FROM COUNTRY TO TOWN

Mary Campbell Sanders

Gone are the days when all mission work necessitates travelling weary miles by bicycle, horse, mule, or on foot. The motor car is a wonderful invention and is a necessity where the big native townships on the Reef are so far apart, yet very accessible by car. In these days, if missionaries are to reach the MULTITUDES of heathen, they must follow the heathen to the towns.

Note the following statistics:

The number of natives on "The Reef", which is 60 miles long, is 1,064,000.

This is almost 1/3 the natives in the whole of the province of Transvaal.

In the whole province of Natal there are 1,935,000 — just a few more thousand than those on "The Reef". And how many missionaries are there on "The Reef"? Only 104 missionaries to minister to 1,064,000 natives!! And, of this 1,064,000 natives, how many are Christians? — only 250,000!!! leaving from 750,000 to 1,000,000 who have absolutely NO connection with ANY church.

Do not these statistics speak for themselves? Do not they signify that the natives are gravitating to towns? And, if the natives gravitate to towns, do not the missionaries of necessity follow those to whom they are called to minister? And should not even these few figures suffice to arouse a real keen interest in "The Reef" field?

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At the end of life we shall not be asked how much pleasure we had in it, but how much service we gave in it; not how full it was of success, but how full it was of sacrifice; not how happy we were, but how helpful we were; not how ambition was gratified but how love served.—Hugh Black.