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ROBERT T. BOOTH.

*Frontispiece.*

# BOOTH OF HANKOW

A Crowded Hour of Glorious Life

By

W. ARTHUR TATCHELL

M.R.C.S. (LOND.), L.R.C.P. (ENG.), ETC.

*Author of 'Medical Missions in China,' 'Life of Philip Rees.'*

WITH FIVE ILLUSTRATIONS

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TO  
THE MEMBERS OF THE IRISH  
METHODIST CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOUR  
SOCIETIES  
WHO HAD THE HONOUR OF SENDING  
FORTH ROBERT T. BOOTH AS THEIR  
FIRST MEDICAL MISSIONARY  
TO CHINA  
THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY  
DEDICATED

## PREFACE

IT is nearly two years since Robert T. Booth so tragically passed away, and the request to publish this Memoir has been unfortunately delayed. But he will never cease to be remembered by those who were privileged to know him either in China or the home lands.

In describing the many details of a life so crowded with interesting events as was Dr. Booth's, our task has not been an easy one, for he never kept a diary. But we have done our best to portray the man's character as we and others knew it. No claim whatever is made to literary merit, as these pages have been written during odd moments of a very busy life. We sincerely trust that the biography may stimulate fresh interest and sympathy in the great Cause for which Booth lived and died.

To those of us who are left to continue the work, it seems impossible that Booth is no more, or that the 'Leaf hath withered in the green.' In vain we listen for that

firm footstep, and long to see the vanished smile, and hear his cheery voice. But he attained to his life's limit when he had scarcely commenced his great commission. It reminds one very forcibly of a pathetic incident at the siege of Mafeking, which Lady Sarah Wilson describes in her interesting book. 'A young man of an old Leicestershire family was badly shot in the heart when taking a message to the Fort, not knowing that the Boers were in possession of it. Smart and good looking, he had only just been promoted to the post of orderly. When brought to the hospital his case was hopeless. I sat with him several hours brushing the flies away. In the evening, just before he passed into unconsciousness, he repeated more than once, "Tell the Colonel, Lady Sarah, I did my best to give the message, but they got me first." He died at dawn.' Booth also did his best to deliver the message entrusted to him by his Captain, but he too died at dawn.

W. A. T.

*Hankow, 1914.*

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**A**ND I?  
Is there some desert or some pathless sea  
Where Thou, good God of angels, wilt send me?  
Some oak for me to rend; some sod,  
    Some rock for me to break;  
    Some handful of His corn to take  
And scatter far afield,  
Till it, in turn, shall yield  
    Its hundred fold  
    Of grains of gold  
To feed the waiting children of my God?  
Show me the desert, Father, or the sea.  
Is it Thine enterprise? Great God, send me.  
And though this body lie where the ocean rolls,  
Count me among all Faithful Souls.

EDWARD EVERETT HALE.

# BOOTH OF HANKOW

## CHAPTER I

### NURTURE AND ADMONITION

One event is always the child of another, and we must not forget the genealogy.

FROM almost every part of the world, there are records of how the sons of Erin have manfully played their part in whatever particular sphere they have entered. An Irishman refuses to

Hold parley with unmanly fears;  
When duty bids, he confidently steers,  
Faces a thousand dangers at her call,  
And, trusting in his God, surmounts them all.

Not only have Irishmen left their island home to seek for hidden treasure in distant lands, but from the time when St. Patrick founded a Christian Church there, many of his converts and their descendants have carried the gospel to various parts of Europe, including England and Scotland.

Several of these holy men were the honoured guests of Charlemagne, and from that time to the present day Ireland has never ceased to send forth some of her choicest sons as educationalists and evangelists to the uttermost parts of the world.

There is something about an Irishman's temperament peculiarly fitted for life in a foreign country. Whether it be due to his proverbial love for adventure, or his bright and breezy nature, which is ever forceful and energetic, or to his kind and sympathetic character, he certainly succeeds in immediately securing the confidence of those amongst whom he lives. But it is exactly this peculiar characteristic of the Irishman which is so often found wanting in his British neighbours, and which frequently enables him to rise above the members of other nations.

Familiar as we all are with this indescribable 'something' in the Irishman's temperament, it can perhaps never be adequately explained, certainly not in black and white.

But surely, that is no reason why we should attempt to banish by the flourish of the hand something that an Irishman either says or does with the caustic remark, 'He is only an Irishman.' If only the Irishman's vivacity could be blended with the Scotsman's dourness, or the Englishman's self-complacency, all would be the richer.

Who but an Irishman would be capable of exercising such humour and undoubted courage as was shown by Sir Robert Hart during the siege of the Legations in Peking! In the story of the Boxer uprising in 1900, during the two months' siege, whilst daily facing death or worse horrors, these beleaguered foreigners had constantly before them the example of this frail Irishman, steadfast and unmoved. In the midst of surrounding treachery and tragedy, also during the more oppressive suspense, Sir Robert lived amongst those anxious men, nervous women and helpless children, and with consummate *sang-froid*, could be observed 'each day doing the same things

at the same hours,—smoking his afternoon cigarette as he leaned against a favourite pillar, or walking to and fro along a particular path,—thus setting an example of regularity in an irregular and stormy existence.' When all the world was anxious as to the real state of affairs in Peking, when even memorial services were being conducted for those supposed to have been brutally massacred, this quiet Irishman alone could see an element of humour in the situation, and at what he considered the opportune moment sent forth to the world the first message as it were from the grave. 'Addressed to no Foreign Office and to no Commander-in-Chief, it contained neither diplomatic nor military secrets. It was a domestic message pure and simple—yet sent neither to relatives nor intimate friends. His tailor was, in fact, the man who received it. "Send quickly," the wire read, "two autumn office suits and later two winter 'ditto' with morning and evening dress, warm cape and four

pairs of boots and slippers. I have lost everything, but am well. We have still an anxious fortnight to weather." And the high nervous tension at which the world had been waiting for some gleam of hope from Peking was relieved by this order from an Irishman to his tailor.

We frequently find, whether it be in literature, law, art, diplomacy, politics, religion or any other department of life, that for some really unexplained reason, an Irishman is a prominent character.

Is it to be wondered at, that the fair lad who was born in Cork forty years ago, should inherit the highest and noblest traditions of such a race!

The house where he first saw the light on the summer morning of July 14, 1873, was an old building nestling under the shadow of Holy Trinity Church, otherwise known as Father Mathew's Chapel. It seemed quite fitting that he who was destined of God to be a missionary and a doctor should have come into the world

so near to a building erected in honour of one who was himself a noted reformer and a beloved healer of the moral ills of the people. Of an evening as little Robin lay on his bed, the deep musical notes of the organ in the Chapel leading the Gregorian chants would lull him to sleep and mingle with his childish dreams.

The advent of this lad was recognized by his parents to be a gift from God. They immediately consecrated him to the service of the Giver. That sacrifice was real and complete so far as the parents were concerned. As Booth grew up and developed both in body and mind, he himself realized and others did not doubt that he was destined to take a conspicuous and important part somewhere in the world's drama. Later on in life, when he was arrested by a heavenly vision, it did not result in any radical change in his history, but was merely a further stage in the evolution of and preparation for his ordained purpose in life, to become a medical missionary.

When he was about five years old, and in the month of June, Robin with his two elder brothers was taken by a servant to a service in Holy Trinity Chapel. A thunder-storm was raging, and an enormous ball of fire flashed past the windows. The noise was deafening and the flash most startling. This peculiar phenomenon made such an impression upon his young mind that in later life he was wont to refer to it; and when he did so, he would laugh heartily at the explanation vouchsafed by the deaf and acrid old servant, who is reported to have crossly tried to appease his frenzied cries by saying, 'It was only a cart passing down the street.'

Booth was very fortunate in having for his first school-mistress a lady who had a positive genius for teaching children, even in those days when the instruction of the young had not developed into a psychological fine art. Miss Smith's winsomeness of character immediately attracted and secured the love and devotion of her

scholars. And Booth was a most impressionable youth. All through his scholastic career he appears to have been favoured in the schools and colleges at which he studied. The testimony of Mr. John Robinson, who was the Principal of Carmichael School, Cork, the most distinguished government school in Ireland when Booth was in his teens, is a very fair delineation of the lad's character, for he writes: 'He (Robin Booth) was my pupil, along with his talented brothers, for some five or six years. Though nearly thirty years have passed since he left, to enter the Queen's College, Cork, I remember him very distinctly as a bright, healthy, cheery boy, an excellent and assiduous student, with a strong determined will, well able to hold his own with others, both mentally and physically. He was somewhat argumentative and combative, but withal an obedient and loving scholar, and a general favourite with his teachers and co-mates. If he were not the most brilliant

scholar in the school, he had that industrious determined perseverance which eventually leads to success, and without which even genius fails to attain its full fruition.'

At Carmichael School he received a sound classical, mathematical, and scientific training. The scholars were encouraged to think for themselves, and were not taught in a mechanical fashion. This method undoubtedly tends to stimulate a boy's love for knowledge. Many of the lads who were Booth's schoolfellows are now occupying prominent positions in the medical and other professions; and although Booth was not as brilliant as some of them, yet he did accomplish as much, and rendered as useful service to his fellow men, as any of them.

One of his contemporaries states: 'Dr. Booth and I were at the same school and college for some years. . . . Though small, it turned out a large number of men, who, like Robin Booth, have done honour

to it in various parts of the world. . . . At the time when Robin was there the *esprit de corps* of the school was at a very high pitch, and some of the boys won distinctions of which the school was very justly proud. . . . It is no detraction from Robin's merits to say that he was not one of the most brilliant. He was one of the youngest, and it is not always the most brilliant scholar in early years who does the most valuable work in later life. Among the members of his class were —, now Staff Surgeon in the Navy; —, now Engineer Commander in the Navy; —, now a physician in London; —, now a member of the Civil Service.

' My recollection of Robin is that he was a boy of strong character, and good though not brilliant ability. He was self-reliant, determined, perhaps a bit obstinate, and had, I think, a fairly strong temper,—all characteristics which when held in check and mellowed are very useful. They no doubt stood him in good stead many a

time in China. He was a good and earnest worker; and, though we were all very reticent on the subject of religion I believe that I am right in thinking that he had even then formed decided views regarding it, and that the service of Christ had already laid its spell upon him.'

From the National School he passed to a Collegiate School conducted by Mr. Williams, who prepared him for the Matriculation and Intermediate Examinations of the (now defunct) Royal University. He obtained a Literary Scholarship in the old Queen's College. 'As a schoolboy,' writes Mr. Williams, 'he almost reached perfection. His temper was a little hasty, but his principles were so high and his disposition so manly that I do not think I ever had serious cause to reprove him. The boy was indeed "father of the man," true and brave.'

As a lad he was daring even to recklessness. For instance, he would delight to walk along the verge of the quay wall,

much to the horror of his less venturesome elder brothers. But with this characteristic element of daring, which in later years developed into bravery, there was also a straightforwardness verging upon bluntness, coupled with great determination and the grace of perseverance, a combination which is not common in the Southern Irish temperament. This peculiarity may be attributable to the mixture of blood, for whilst there was a Welsh strain in his forbears there was also an admixture of English blood, and in Booth this mixture was well balanced. The defects of his qualities were also obvious, for he frequently called down the wrath of his school chums upon his fair head, as in his mature years he would wound his friends by his outspoken bluntness of speech.

Like many lads who live near to the sea, and who see ocean steamers riding at anchor, Booth conceived the idea of going to sea. A favourite promenade for those living in Cork is the Marina, and as young

Robin was engaged in his daring escapades along the quay wall, or walking quietly—if ever he did—along the quay on his way to the promenade, he would see the fine vessels moored at the South jetties. This sight so impressed his juvenile mind that the idea of going abroad grew upon him. One day his family were astonished by hearing his boyish determination to leave home and enter upon a seafaring life. With great tact and wisdom, his parents did not raise any objections or arbitrarily ban the project. They rather soberly and gravely assented, with the not unnatural result that the project died as speedy a death as its genesis was sudden.

After this and other similar incidents which one generally associates with a lad in his teens, Booth decided to enter the medical profession, for which one of his brothers was already preparing. From the Arts department he crossed over to the Medical classes at the Queen's College. Then he began a brilliant course of study

in the college which has produced men distinguished in many fields of knowledge, but especially in the sphere of medicine.

From the very first day when he commenced the medical curriculum, he threw himself into its fascinating subjects with characteristic whole-heartedness and ardour, and speedily acquired the reputation of being a diligent and gifted student. At each of the session examinations his name invariably appeared at or near to the top of the class list. Having completed the prescribed course of study, he 'walked' the wards and was resident student of the South Infirmary in Cork, and there also he is still remembered by the House Surgeon under whom he worked and by others, for his keenness and brilliancy, and also for his sturdy independence and fearlessness. 'He could always be relied upon,' writes a member of the staff, 'to do the correct thing, and it was a pleasure to leave the patients in his hands. Even to-day I still meet from time to time with former

patients at the Infirmary who came under his care, and the impression their words leave on my mind is, that they must have almost worshipped the bright kindly young student who dressed their wounds so deftly or took their "histories" so tactfully.'

Subsequent University examinations were passed in honours; and in 1899 he finally graduated with first-class honours and an exhibition in the Royal University of Ireland, taking the degrees of M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O.

## CHAPTER II

### THE GROWTH OF A SOUL

We may feel much interest in a Thing, more in a Truth, but most of all only in a Man.

THE home into which Booth was born was one pre-eminently Christian in precept and practice. It was one of those homes which perhaps above all others make for the greatness of a nation.

Rightly to understand the gracious influences under which the character of Booth ripened and developed, we have to go back to beginnings. The old champions of heredity have enunciated many principles which with our present knowledge of science cannot be accepted. For example, it is very doubtful whether disease or immunity from disease can be transmitted from parent to child. That children do come into the world with tendencies which

later on are either atrophied or wakened into vigorous life by their surroundings, is an accepted truism. But much is dependent upon this influence of environment, and there is no place where environment is more effective than in the home. Booth's ancestry was one of which he was justly proud. His father, John Bradly Booth, was a keen man of business, with sterling principles and simple piety. He had been nurtured in the Protestant Episcopal Church of Ireland, where he had received a thorough intellectual training in the tenets of the Church, and also in biblical knowledge, but experimental religion was an unknown experience in his life up to the time that he dissociated himself from that Church. Robin Booth's mother, before her marriage, was named Jane Sunner. She was a woman to whom goodness, gentleness, and piety seemed to be as natural as breathing. She had been brought up under the strict doctrines of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland; but

she revolted against the hard Calvinism which was then rampant. At the time of their marriage, John Bradly Booth would have thrown in his lot with the Presbyterians in Cork had not the minister of that Church, who was a man of noble and saintly character, insisted upon his subscribing to the doctrines of the Westminster Confession, as a condition precedent to his being admitted to the communion. This his conscience would not permit. So it was a very natural sequence that his anti-Calvinistic propensities should have been attracted by the strong Arminianism of Wesley, and that the young married couple should decide to join the Methodist Church, where they found a congenial spiritual home. Thus they became members of Wesley Church, Cork.

It was in this historic Wesley Chapel, without any pretensions whatever to architectural beauty, but like the leaden casket mentioned in the Merchant of Venice, which 'moves more than eloquence,' that

the little fair-headed lad received the whole of his religious training, except that which he was privileged to enjoy in his home. And after all, it was necessary for the development of a strong character such as Booth possessed, that other influences be brought to operate upon his heart, as he advanced in wisdom and grace, and in the favour of God and men.

In the Sunday school, as in the day school, he was singularly fortunate in his teachers. The leader of the senior boys' class appears to have been specially gifted for such a responsible position. To be with his lads just for one hour each week, was not to his mind either the fulfilling of his duty or the utilizing of his opportunities to their fullest extent. So he arranged for them to spend several evenings each month at his own house, where after refreshments there would be a debate, or the reading of a chapter from a wholesome story, and perhaps some music and games. At one of these meetings a mock trial was being

greatly enjoyed, and Robin happened to be the prisoner at the bar. His brother remembers how Robin 'burst into real tears when the punishment of the court was administered in the form of a mild spanking.' Of course one would be able to sympathize more fully with Booth's anguish if the mildness of the spanking were defined, and the physical condition of the operator was known.

Booth always cherished the most kindly memories of this wise and devoted teacher, to whose influence and inspiration he owed not a little, as also of his classmates in both their secular and sacred associations. Neither did Booth forget the good influence which Mr. Richey, the honoured Superintendent of the school, had upon his character. Mr. Richey possessed a magnetic personality, had a lovable disposition, and was no mean scholar. He was a man with strong individuality, deeply spiritual though intensely human, and as keenly interested in those about him as

was John Wesley himself. So tactful was he that the confidence and love of his staff of teachers and numerous scholars were easily gained. Like Horace, to him there was 'nothing that concerned human affairs that was outside his purview.'

In walking through the principal street of the picturesque city of Cork, one is arrested by a plain rectangular church. It is not hidden away in an apologetic manner as are so many Nonconformist churches, nor is it withdrawn from the noise of the perpetual din of traffic, but appears to rejoice in its proximity to all that pertains to the life of the City. Stepping inside, one is impressed by the old-fashioned deep galleries, the platform-like pulpit, and the general appearance of stability and comfort. It was in this church that Booth was converted to God when a youth under the preaching of the Rev. J. Robertson, and heard such powerful and gifted preachers as John Donor Powell, William Guard Price, Wesley Guard, William Nicholas and

William Crawford. In this church had been trained scores of ripe saints, and it was also the nursing mother of the first Irish medical missionary sent out by the Methodist Church in Ireland. The plain non-liturgical services, the hearty hymn singing, and the faithful preaching of the gospel, all contributed towards the spiritual development of Robert Thomas Booth.

If the opinion could be obtained of the ministers and missionaries of the Methodist Church as to the particular means of grace to which they were mostly indebted for their soul growth, there can be very little doubt that the majority of them would mention the class-meeting. It was so with Booth, and his love for the class-meeting and prayer-meeting remained with him to the end. The habit of attending these means of grace was cultivated in very early life, for when he was but a lad his father regularly took him to a class-meeting. His first leader was Robert Humphreys, a man with tact and sufficient imagination

to deal tenderly and wisely with his juvenile members, of whom he had not a few. Robert Humphreys must be numbered amongst those who played a part in the forming of Booth's character. He had a very refined manner, dignified, yet very approachable, but with a tendency to periods of depression as advancing age overshadowed him. It is probable that the vivacious and impulsive young Robin Booth played no small part in chasing away the gloom that threatened to settle down upon his beloved and revered class-leader. Those young lads who were being trained to give, would hand to their leader a penny each week as their contribution towards the support of the ministry. Some members of the class evidently did not live up to the privileges which Methodism affords in the custom of giving, for one day the leader remarked to Robin's father that 'Robin and his brothers were the only authentic Methodists in the class.' They never went away without a word of cheer from the

leader, or a smile to encourage them. During the week they eagerly searched through their hymn-books to select a favourite hymn, for they knew that on the following Sunday morning their beloved leader would ask them to select one and to read a verse.

The city of Cork had the privilege and responsibility of entertaining the Irish Methodist Conference every fourth year. The inspiring public services, and the equally congenial presence in his home of one or more ministerial members of the Conference as guests, increased his love for Christ and deepened and broadened his sympathy for home and foreign missions.

His first effort on behalf of foreign missions was as a juvenile collector. His subscription card was considered to be a sacred trust involving a great commission. He would walk long distances every week, and work most energetically in the collecting of the weekly pennies. He was next promoted to fill the honourable position of

assistant secretary of the Missionary Association in connexion with Wesley Chapel. In this sphere of work, as in all others, Booth gave of his best and to the utmost.

Another influence which materially assisted in the moulding of Booth's character and the growth of his soul was his intimate association with a few others of like mind in commencing and sustaining a branch of the British College Christian Union and its coeval the Student Volunteer Missionary Union in connexion with Queen's College, during the first year of his medical studies. The meetings were held in a small room on the premises of the Cork Tract Shop, as the college authorities, being fearful of sectarian bitterness, would not allow the students to conduct any religious meetings in the College buildings. Booth was not very long before he decided to become a Student Volunteer. The meetings were small and the surroundings depressing,

whilst the attitude of the College authorities threw a considerable damper on their proceedings; yet nevertheless, much genuine work was accomplished by stimulating and fostering enthusiasm for missions, and the watchword, 'The Evangelization of the world in this generation,' which they for ever kept before themselves and others, made a very deep impression upon those both within and without the confines of this small circle of missionary devotees.

The meetings of these Unions also gave the members an opportunity of coming into contact with those belonging to other communions, a very gracious and important element in such small gatherings, and promoted a truly catholic spirit in the minds of the students. Papers were read full of information collected from various missionary magazines and books, whilst intercession for missionary efforts in all parts of the world was a prominent feature of the proceedings. A visit from Mr. Donald Frazer, the general and organizing

secretary of the S.V.M.U.—now a devoted and successful missionary in Central Africa—gave a great impetus to the small band of Student Volunteers, and especially to Booth, who had the pleasure and privilege of entertaining him as a guest at his home. Ever after that visit, Booth entertained the greatest admiration for this fine young Scotchman, to whose timely visit and influence he owed such an increased and deepened enthusiasm for the salvation of the world.

As Booth grew up in such an atmosphere of Christian life and activity, it is not to be wondered at that the Christian Endeavour movement captivated his imagination and enlisted his sympathy. The suggestion that a branch of this worldwide society should be commenced in connexion with Wesley Church, Cork, he most heartily welcomed. He was one of the first members in Cork, and was also the pioneer in establishing a branch at the Central Hall. Into the many activities of this work he entered with

characteristic energy and wholeheartedness.

It was through the instrumentality of the Christian Endeavour officials that Booth commenced to work definitely and publicly for Christ. He, with others, paid frequent and regular visits to the suburbs of Cork, where they conducted cottage services. These visits were much appreciated by the people, and proved to be a splendid training in public speaking, besides focusing his thoughts on home as well as on foreign missionary work. It is impossible to tabulate all that the Christian Endeavour movement did for the development and maturing of Booth's character.

Thus can we trace the gradual evolution of his Christian life, first in his home, next as a scholar in the Sunday school and a member of the Church, then through his intimate connexion with the Christian Endeavour Society and Student Christian Union, all of which were powerful and gracious influences and formative agencies

operating upon his pure heart, and preparing him for the larger opportunities and for the wider exercise of the gifts with which God had endowed him.

## CHAPTER III

### A VISION OF HIS LIFE-WORK

Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness. He has a work, a life-purpose; he has found it, and will follow it!—CARLYLE.

THAT Booth was at a very early age deeply impressed with a desire to be a labourer in Christ's vineyard was well known by many of his class-mates, so that his life-work in China was but the fulfilment of his early choice.

It was during a visit of Mr. Polhill Turner, one of the 'Cambridge Seven,' to the Queen's College in the interests of the Student Volunteer Missionary Union, that he received his first 'call' to enter the mission field. His fellow students were more interested than surprised at his resolve. There were only eleven men

present at the meeting which Mr. Polhill Turner addressed, and of these no less than four 'declared their intention,—provisional,—of becoming foreign missionaries.' Of these four Booth was the only one who carried his purpose into effect.

While these various influences were operating on his heart, the Irish Christian Endeavourers had felt impelled to raise the necessary funds to support a missionary of their own in the regions beyond. How this development in the charter of the Christian Endeavour Society was conceived is related in a small brochure called *Our Own Missionary*, written by the Rev. R. J. Elliott:

'Early in the year 1896, Mr. Alley suggested that the C.E. Societies should raise money for some department of Foreign Mission activity. Here was the essential part of the new programme, and it met with a sufficiently encouraging response from the Societies to warrant further steps being taken. Mr. Alley then wrote

to the authorities at the Wesleyan Mission House in London, asking for suggestions as to how the financial assistance which the Societies would render could be best utilized. The plan first suggested by the Missionary authorities was the support of a number of native evangelists in the Wuchang District, Central China. The Rev. Gilbert G. Warren, a prominent missionary from that district, and now chairman of the Hunan District, was then on furlough in England. He declared the need of the hour to be a strengthening of the European staff, and urged that our Endeavourers should send out an Irish missionary.

'At the Methodist rally of the C.E. convention in Belfast in 1896, this suggestion was submitted by the Rev. J. M. Alley, and received widespread and hearty approval. The man for the post was still to be found. At the moment there was no volunteer either from the ranks of the probationers of the Irish Methodist ministry, or from the Vice-President's list of

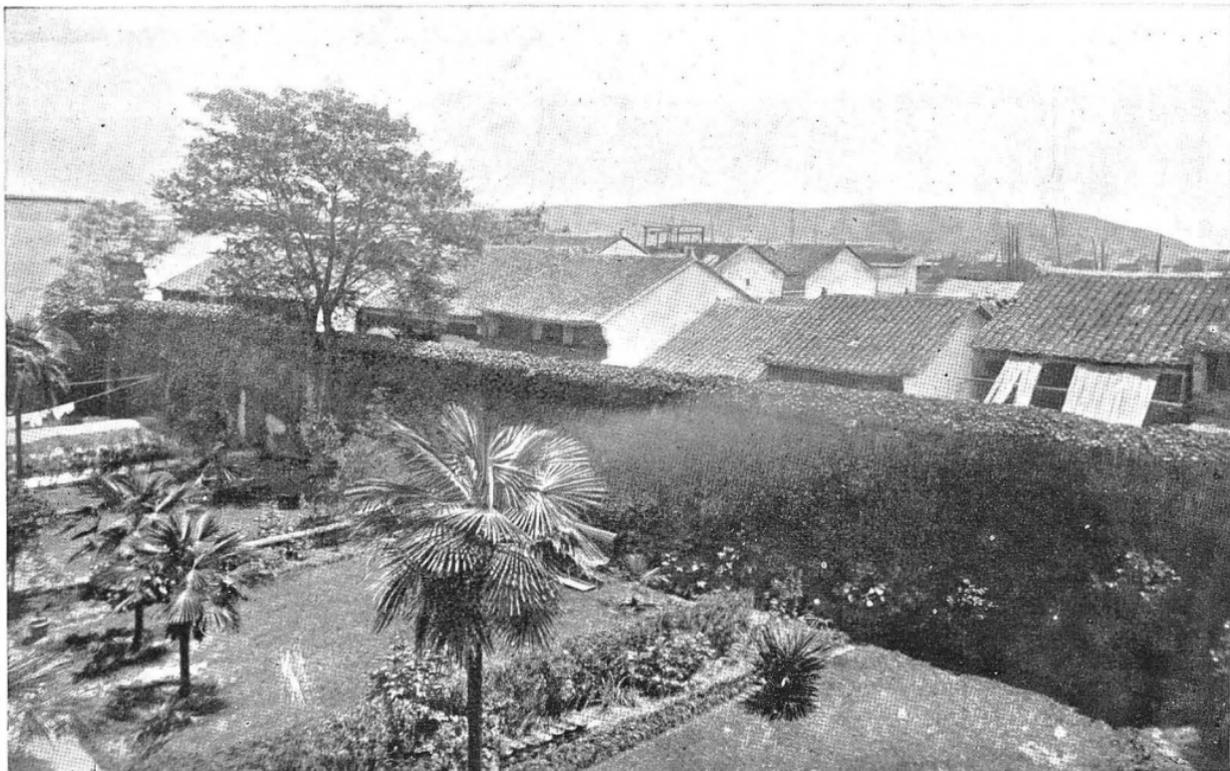
Reserve, and it was necessary to act while the feeling in the matter was so strong and enthusiasm so great. The Missionary Committee of the English Methodist Church was therefore asked to send one of its own men as our missionary, with the stipulation that when a man from our own ranks was forthcoming, he should, when appointed, be considered our missionary, and his predecessor provided for by the Missionary Society. Fortunately, however, before the Missionary Committee had designated a missionary to this position, Mr. Robert T. Booth of Cork, felt constrained to volunteer for Medical Missionary work in China, and it was quickly arranged that he should go as the representative of the Irish Methodist C.E. Societies. Mr. Booth was in the ranks of Irish Endeavourers, having been one of the founders of the now well-known Society at the Central Hall, in Cork. When Mr. Booth volunteered for work in China, he was reading for his final medical examinations in the Royal University of Ireland.

He had seen the great possibilities that were wrapped up in the career of a Medical Missionary, and it was this vision which beckoned him to China.

'At the present time our Missionary Society has on its staff medical men who are not clergymen, but Mr. Booth not only read for his medical examinations, but also became a candidate for the Irish Methodist ministry, and was heartily welcomed into its ranks. Having thus the standing of an Irish Methodist minister, it was made clear that, in the event of his return from China, Mr. Booth's services should be available for the work in Ireland.

'The Irish Methodist C.E. Societies agreed to do their utmost to furnish the funds necessary for the support of their missionary.'

At this juncture the Rev. Dr. S. R. Hodge, of the Wesleyan Methodist Men's Hospital in Hankow, happened to be in England on furlough. He was naturally trying to arouse interest in the work, and



VIEW OF TORTOISE HILL, AS SEEN FROM HANKOW MISSION COMPOUND.

*To face p. 46.*

was using every opportunity to secure financial help for the enlarging of the hospital in that great strategic city of Hankow. In addition to this he was eagerly seeking for a suitable medical man who would be willing to return with him to China as his colleague. The former need at first appeared to be the more easy to meet, whilst the latter was the cause of much anxious thought and earnest prayer. Hodge collected sufficient money to enable him to double the hospital accommodation for patients, besides carrying out other very necessary alterations.

During the latter part of his furlough, Hodge visited Ireland on deputation work, where his sermons and speeches greatly impressed his audiences. When he visited Cork, Robin Booth was in his congregation. He was nearing the completion of his medical curriculum, and his heart was again stirred as he listened to the story of the suffering Chinese, and realized as never before that—

The world's a room of sickness, where each heart  
Knows its own anguish and unrest;  
The truest wisdom there and noblest art  
Is his who skills of comfort best.

That night the heart of Booth was captivated and he heard the definite call of God for service in China. As to that call to go 'heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you,' he never for one moment had the least doubt to the very end of his all-too-short life. During that service Booth felt that the hand of God was

Stretched out to him from out the dark,  
Which grasping without question, he was led  
Where there was work that he must do for God.

No one who knew Hodge and Booth would have the slightest hesitation in affirming that their meeting had been divinely planned. They formed an ideal team. Hodge was a man of experience both in things Chinese and in medical practice, an able administrator, cautious, thorough and consecrated. For many years he had worked alone in Hankow, such an arrange-

ment being inevitable as no other doctor was forthcoming. Year after year he was silently bearing in his weakened body the marks of the malarial fever of which he was a victim. The added burden of financial embarrassment and the strain of being single-handed, impossible to realize for those who have never borne it in a Mission Hospital, were fast ageing him. But he was an optimist of the highest order, believing with all his Christian audacity in the glorious possibilities of the salvation of the Chinese. He once wrote: 'Christianity never ignored any part of man's nature. From the first it was a gospel to the whole man, body and soul. It is in the very nature of Christianity and is the very essence of its message.'

Booth was fresh from his academic triumphs, blessed with a robust constitution and exuberant health. He had great force of character, was very independent, daring, and fearless, yet with a heart as pure as that of a little child and a nature

full of sympathy and love. Fired with enthusiasm for medical missionary work, he was exactly the type of man that was needed to unite with Hodge in the development of the plans for medical work in Hankow. Thus a friendship in the service of God and suffering humanity commenced between these two men that only terminated when Booth assisted to lay his colleague's worn-out body in the silent grave facing the Temple in the Clouds on the Kuling mountain.

Before sailing for China, Booth was ordained a minister of the Irish Methodist Church. The ordination was conducted in the Methodist Church, Cork, where as an infant he had been baptized and whilst a youth converted to God. It was a memorable occasion, for the sacred building, around which clustered so many hallowed memories, was crowded to excess with a congregation composed of representatives of all the Evangelical churches in the city as well as numerous friends. The

ordination charge was delivered by Booth's friend and former pastor the Rev. R. Crawford Johnson, who in language charged with evangelical fervour and human emotion, wished him God-speed. As Professor Charles, of the Queen's College, who had been Booth's teacher in anatomy, was leaving the solemn service he remarked to a friend that in sending Robin Booth abroad they were giving their best to China. To those who knew the character of the Professor and his high ideals, especially in the academic sense, such praise was the highest possible.

Then followed the parting from his home circle—from his father, whom he was destined never to see again in this world, from his mother who was spared to welcome him home in 1906 and also again in 1912 for his second and last furlough, and from his brothers and sister. Such partings cannot be fully realized except by those who are called upon to sacrifice their loved ones for work in distant lands. What

hopes and fears must have welled up in their throbbing breasts, what a sense of loneliness they must have experienced every day as they saw the vacant chair from which the bright presence had been withdrawn! Booth, in going forth, was severing himself from all that had been dear to him through life, and

Still bearing up his lofty brow,  
In the steadfast strength of truth,  
In manhood sealing well the vow  
And promise of his youth.

## CHAPTER IV

### REJOICINGS, PERSECUTIONS, AND SORROWS

We have been willing to give our lives to this enterprise.—*Capt. Scott's Last Diary.*

BOOTH left Cork for China in January 1899. Amongst his fellow passengers were Dr. and Mrs. Hodge, the Rev. and Mrs. Arnold Foster, and Dr. E. C. Peake, who, like himself, was going to the Far East for the first time. The six weeks' voyage to Hankow he thoroughly enjoyed. The route carries one past a series of arresting and interesting places. Each port of call has its own special attractions, its own peculiar sights and sounds which seem to prepare the traveller for what is awaiting at the next port of call. It is doubtful whether the average mind could endure a sudden and uninterrupted transference from London to Shanghai. The gradual approach saves one from mental perturbation. Booth never

ceased to talk about the places he visited or the sights of that voyage.

Dr. Peake has related an incident which is worth recording. 'The ship was lying off Aden, and a number of Somali natives came alongside the vessel in their boats, which were laden with their stock-in-trade, ostrich feathers, necklaces and curios of many kinds. Goods were hauled up in a basket by intending purchasers on deck, and money lowered in a similar manner to the boats. Booth and I were watching this going on, and one young fellow, who after having struck a bargain with a native for a certain article to be sold for a certain price, and after having received the said article, lowered half the amount of the price agreed on to the native in the boat below. The darkie was very indignant and expostulated much, but being so far below and not being allowed on deck, had no means of redress. We both saw this, and of course indignantly took the darkie's side, and told the Englishman

what we thought of him. He then gave the Somali the proper price and stalked away with a sneer, upon which Booth offered to punch his head for him, which invitation, however, I need hardly remark, was declined.'

It was a great day for the medical work in Hankow and also for the whole district when Booth reached China. As Hodge stepped on shore accompanied with a young colleague, his heart must have rejoiced greatly. One wonders what were the thoughts of each. Dr. Hodge was undoubtedly rejoicing in the fact that his professional loneliness had ended, and that the burden which he had so bravely borne for many years was at last to be shared by another. The innumerable plans for necessary extension and development which had been evolving in his mind for several years were now to be realized. He must have been happy as he walked through the narrow, dirty, and offensive streets of Hankow, from the river steamer to the hospital,

with the strong athletic colleague by his side.

But what must have been the thoughts of the young Irish doctor? He had but recently left his home with a brilliant record behind him, his soul had been fired with enthusiasm for the work which he was so rapidly approaching, and for the first time as he walks through the streets he has a glimpse of the conditions of life under which he expected to live for many years. How strange were the sights and sounds on every hand! The dodging of coolies as they carried their loads suspended from either end of a pole, or of sedan chairs as they were being hurried through the idling crowd, hasty glances at the shops with their open fronts, whiffs of the objectionable odours which are so very noticeable to new arrivals: these things would prove quite sufficient to keep Booth's mind occupied and prevent him from thinking about the future. His present would either enchant or repel him.

He immediately began the arduous task of mastering the Chinese language. For two years he was judiciously relieved of any responsibility in the hospital, so that he might apply himself the more assiduously to this study. He passed with credit and distinction, gaining the highest examination marks of his year. Although Booth was never a distinct speaker of Chinese, owing to his Irish brogue, yet his knowledge of the written character was above the average. He wrote a section of a Nursing Manual in Chinese, and had his hospital duties afforded him greater leisure, there is no doubt he would have produced further literary work.

The year after Booth's arrival in Hankow will always be known as the 'Boxer Year.' It was the beginning of a long period of persecution of foreigners, but especially of the Christian Church. For Oriental intrigue and craftiness there is nothing in history to surpass the genesis and rising of this national movement. A

most authentic and fascinating record is given in *China under the Empress Dowager*, so that only the barest reference is necessary here. The Chinese had always been an insulated race. In the early nineties they were not only surprised but greatly humiliated by the defeat received at the hands of Japan, the newest and phenomenal pupil of the East. This created in the hearts of the Chinese a feeling of resentment against all foreigners, and with other subsidiary causes resulted in the murder of two German Roman Catholic missionaries in Shantung. Germany demanded the cession of Kiauchau as compensation. This further embittered the Chinese, and they commenced the formation of secret and patriotic societies with the specific object of exterminating foreigners. The strongest of these societies had for its ambiguous primary object the encouragement of the art of self-defence. But there were also elements of a religious and political movement in the Boxer

Society. One of their banners which was openly displayed bore the following inscription: 'The gods bid us to destroy all foreigners; we invite you to join the patriotic militia.' They certainly put into practice their diabolical principles. 'They condemned and destroyed everything Western, from straw hats and cigarettes to mission houses and railways.' Their religious faith in the movement was wonderful. Gruesome stories are related of their fanaticism. The Rev. Lord William Cecil tells a story almost incredible to those who do not know the Chinese.

'A Boxer prophet assured the village that no works of the West could hurt him, no bullet could harm him, no train could crush him. As a railway ran near the village he and all the inhabitants adjourned thither to put his invulnerability to the test. The daily train came puffing along, as the Boxer, waving his sword, stood right in its path. The driver was a European, and seeing some one on the line, pulled up his

train to avoid running over him. The Boxer pointed to the train triumphantly, and the astonished villagers became Boxers. There was however a sceptic who refused to believe, so next day they repaired again to the line, and the Boxer again made his passes and uttered his charms. Alas for him! this time the driver was a Chinaman, and he was not going to stop his master's train because a coolie fellow got in the way, so he put on full steam and cut him to pieces, and the village deserted the Boxer faith to a man.'

The society with its cruel activities was confined almost exclusively to the northern provinces. The presence of the enlightened and strong Viceroy of Hupeh and Hunan, Chang Chih Tung, secured immunity from murder or attack for all foreigners residing in these two provinces. But every form of work was suspended, women and children were sent for safety to Japan or home, while the men remained at their stations to guard and protect the property. This was during

the very hot months of June, July and August.

The whole situation was dangerous. The land was deluged with blood, and most alarming reports were being daily circulated. Booth was one of the men who held the fort in Hankow and kept the hospital gates open, although most of the in-patients had fled and not many attended the out-patient department.

One day he had a very unpleasant experience. It was the custom of the missionaries to move amongst the natives and thus try to appease their alarms. Whilst walking through the main street of Hankow in company with two other missionaries, the Revs. T. Prothero and W. Rowley, they were attacked by a rowdy mob, who yelled, 'Kill the foreign devils!' Booth and his companions sought refuge in a shop; but the shop-keeper fearing that the infuriated mob might wreck his property, insisted upon turning them out. This was exactly what the mob desired; but fortunately, one

of Booth's comrades happened to be an old missionary, and quite accustomed to manage a Chinese crowd. By his persuasive speech he succeeded in quieting them, whilst Booth and Rowley courageously stood by his side and supported all that was said and done. They escaped with a few cuts and bruises, and were thankful indeed when they reached the hospital compound in safety.

Towards the end of the year, hospital work was resumed and patients began timidly to come for treatment. Booth was now able to throw the whole of his energies into the hospital work. The new wards capable of accommodating twenty extra patients, with an operating-theatre and research laboratory, besides other additions, were formally opened in June, 1901. The building operations had been interrupted during the Boxer troubles. These alterations and enlargements enabled Hodge and Booth to do their work more satisfactorily than before. The

hospital was better arranged and conducted, and the number of patients speedily increased. But the two still had to bear the burden of meeting the annual deficiency of the hospital. One of the methods by which funds were raised was by the doctors giving up their annual holiday and engaging in private practice among the Europeans who visit the sanatorium at Kuling. Every cent of the fees thus obtained was put into the coffers of the hospital. Booth was a great favourite and his professional services were always in great demand. After the death of Dr. Hodge he well sustained the reputation which the hospital had for many years enjoyed at Kuling.

When Booth left Ireland he also left his heart behind in the capital, but he looked forward to the time when Miss Edith Perrott, the daughter of Richard William Perrott, one of the most beloved laymen in Irish Methodism, would become his wife. The marriage took place in November,

1901, at Shanghai Cathedral. After their return to Hankow they lived for several months with Dr. and Mrs. Hodge until their own house was completed.

If ever a man had a true help-meet it was Booth. His wife's great aim in life appeared to be that her brilliant husband might remain unfettered and unimpeded in performing the work he loved so dearly. But such men are not always the most thoughtful concerning things domestic, and Booth was no exception. He would come into meals at most irregular hours and frequently take with him one or more friends who happened to be visiting the hospital. Mrs. Booth was never known to murmur or complain under what is probably the most severe test of a woman's complacency. The one possible exception was her attitude towards her husband's study. It is an interesting psychological phenomenon that a man like Booth, who was a most careful and neat surgeon, should entirely relax in these points when it concerned the

order of his study or bedroom. Whenever a colleague's conscience was in the least degree troubled, or he received the slightest reproof in regard to the condition of his study, a visit to Booth's den would suffice to restore the perturbed conscience to perfect peace. *His* was the most chaotic and hopeless study it has ever been our misfortune to visit. But his good wife knew of his innocent failings, which she both excused and graciously smiled at.

Booth's first real sorrow came with his first child. A boy was born towards the end of 1902, and at first their hearts were filled with joy. But later it was discovered that all was not well with the child. Mrs. Booth was obliged to take her baby to England to obtain expert advice in London. The further light thrown by the specialists on the case only made the darkness and helplessness greater, whilst the anxiety regarding the operation and the disappointment when it failed to effect any improvement, caused the iron to enter more

deeply into the parents' souls. The separation was intolerable to both, and the suspense terrible. Those twelve months of isolation and sorrow were probably the darkest period of his life. I lived with him and knew something of the depth of his sorrow and his darkness. He never cared to refer to those twelve months. It was a season of severe testing for his faith and patience. His friends and acquaintances would often pity him in those days, but one is not very certain whether such sympathy was justifiable. God was, as it has been said, shifting the whole bases of Booth's thinking, and planning, and hoping, from the human to the divine. That sorrow, for one with Booth's proud, independent and not too sympathetic spirit, had a divine purpose and sequel. The chastening hand of God was refining his nature as with fire, and he came forth from that ordeal a changed and better man, with a deeper sympathy with all suffering childhood.

## CHAPTER V

### A MAN OF MANY PARTS

Every great and commanding movement in the world is the triumph of enthusiasm.—EMERSON.

BOOTH reached Cork in October 1905 for his first furlough. He had the double joy of rejoining his wife and also of seeing his family circle once more. Since leaving home for China six years before, that circle had been broken, as his loved father had passed away early in the year.

A missionary's furlough is not a season of 'sweet repose,' but generally a time of strenuous activity. Booth was soon busily engaged in addressing meetings throughout Ireland and England. Everywhere he infected his hearers with something of his own enthusiasm for medical missions. In addition to his deputation duties he undertook a course of study at the School of

Tropical Medicine, where he was known among the students as 'The General.' 'It was fine to see his fearless witness for Christ,' writes one of his fellow students, 'while at the same time, he was always hearty and "hail fellow well met," with all the men there.' Then he passed the examination at Cambridge for the diploma in Tropical Medicine and Hygiene. But in spite of his enthusiastic advocacy of the cause he had so much at heart, and despite his ardent studies, he chafed at the length of his furlough, and with most missionaries, excited the amazement and indignation of his relatives and friends by declaring that he was weary of the 'rest at home' with the separation from his work in Hankow.

Early in 1907 Booth, with his wife, left for China. He had been appointed to start medical work at one of the country stations, but at the special request of the Irish Christian Endeavour Society, he returned to Hankow. There he found the hospital in full swing, and with Hodge as colleague,

it appeared as though the hospital was about to enjoy a long period of successful enterprise. But such an ideal team was not long to be harnessed together. When the warm weather began Hodge showed unmistakable signs of fatigue and had frequent symptoms of disease. The twenty years of arduous and exhausting labours in this trying climate had wrecked his strong constitution, but he would not give in. Booth had the sad ordeal of seeing his colleague getting gradually weaker, and at last, had to assist in laying his worn-out body to rest in the Kuling cemetery. 'The body of humiliation was laid in a grave facing the Temple in the Clouds, but it was with the sure and certain hope that in yonder Temple in the Heavens the glorified spirit had entered upon that service when His servants see His face and do Him service without weariness and without cessation.'

When Dr. Hodge, who was one of the strongest of personalities, wisest of admin-

istrators, and kindest of friends was laid to rest, it was a sad day for most of the people, both native and foreign, who lived in Central China; but especially for Booth. Hodge had played no small part in the development of Booth's character, and in the guiding of his impulsive and aggressive nature. Although Booth did not agree with everything that Hodge did and said,—what man did?—yet in his presence Booth invariably appeared to be in the attitude of reverence. Although a giant himself, he was wise and of a sufficiently magnanimous spirit to recognize one even greater than himself. I never heard Booth address Hodge otherwise than 'Doctor,' even after years of companionship. Although in scientific and technical medical knowledge Booth was in many respects more brilliant than was his colleague, yet Booth's reverence for Hodge was never found wanting.

After the death of Dr. Hodge, the responsibility of the hospital passed into

the hands of Booth. Hodge had brought everything up to a state of efficiency, so that Booth was free to exercise his gifts to their fullest extent. This new responsibility tended to develop his powers as leader, organizer, and statesman. The first thing which he did on his return to Hankow from Kuling was to gather all the hospital staff into the prayer-room. The mantle of Elijah had fallen upon Elisha, and the fitting was good, for no more suitable man could have been appointed as Hodge's immediate successor. His strong assertiveness had been held in abeyance for years, and at times he longed to break free from the traces and go faster than had been possible whilst in harness. But it was well that with his early inexperience some restraining influences had been exercised upon him, else some calamity might have overtaken him and the work, as it has befallen so many others. Now that he was 'in charge' of the important hospital henceforth known as the Hodge Memorial, the

cautious, practical, and restraining spirit of his late colleague was ever present with him, to subdue, suggest, and stimulate.

Booth only carried the double burden for a few months. With a completed plant and well-trained staff of assistants under an English matron, and with an increasing income from various sources, he was able to throw his whole strength into performing a most magnificent work.

The burden of responsibility was carried with apparent ease. He abhorred to be confined to any particular place or sphere. His social temperament needed scope for exercise. It was fortunate for all concerned that Booth was never sent into the country to work. His nature would have revolted against the quiet and intensely lonely life. He craved for change, and that is the reason why he enjoyed acquaintance with such a large circle of business men in the Concessions, which are over three miles away. He was known outside of mission confines probably better than any other



DR. R. T. BOOTH.  
MRS. BOOTH.

SISTER BESSIE.

DR. W. A. TATCHELL.  
MRS. TATCHELL.

*To face p. 72.*

member of our mission. But he never concealed or relaxed his principles. To visit the Union Medical College, which is situated in the English concession, and deliver a lecture once or twice a week, was to him a form of recreation; to attend the meetings and committees of the Central China Religious Tract Society—of which he was for twelve months the Treasurer—was real relaxation from his hospital practice. He loved to be a member of committee, and being so versatile and able, played his part well in whatever he undertook.

The services conducted by the Rev. J. Goforth in Hankow made a very gracious and lasting impression upon him. I remember standing next to him at one of the afternoon services. The service was wonderful for the manifestation of power. Native after native rose up and either made a full and contrite confession of sin, or else burst forth in a prayer of repentance. The missionary did not need to speak a

word during the whole of that three hours service. Every one was conscious of a supernatural power. Booth put his hand on my shoulder as though to steady himself, and as I looked into his face I saw that tears were flowing down his cheeks. He leaned down and whispered, 'This is a wonderful sight, I've never seen anything like it. I never thought it possible for the Chinese to be so markedly moved.' No, and I never thought it possible for Booth to be so moved either. We stole quietly out from the meeting and walked about on the compound in silence. After a time he said, 'Let's have a prayer-meeting together.' So a few foreigners gathered together, and I never thought it possible for Booth to pray so passionately or fervently as he did that afternoon. He had seen a new vision of God, and was never again the same man.

Booth was always ready when an emergency arose, and during a crisis he did not fail. A sick lady unable to climb

on board a river steamer in mid-stream from a surf-boat, would be picked up in his powerful arms and carried up the gang-way, or a patient lying upon a stretcher which was unable to turn a corner on the stairs, would be lifted as though he were a child, and carried to his bed. If an urgent message came from a country station that a missionary had met with an accident, Booth would be found by the injured man's side in the shortest possible time. A little child might be lying critically ill with one of the weird diseases prevalent in China, and as the anxious parents heard the footsteps of the doctor approaching, their fears would be scattered and fresh hope arise in their hearts, for they knew that if the disease was to be diagnosed and successfully treated, Booth would be the man to do it. He was the kind of man that one rejoiced to have near at hand in an emergency.

Booth was a true sportsman, scrupulously honest in his play, and ever ready

graciously to acknowledge a defeat. At college he was a brilliant if over-confident hockey player, 'and it was an open secret that he would have been put on the team for the International but for this cock-sureness, for he scorned to stop a ball and then play it, but "swiped" at it without stopping it, and this, which might have been allowed in a "forward," was rashness in a "full-back." He hit the ball 99 times out of a 100, but for a "full-back" to miss even once was fatal.'

In referring to their voyage to China Dr. Peake writes: 'Booth was always keen on sport and was himself a splendid athlete. Many a physical encounter did we have, in mere boyish exuberance, so I have reason to know something of his muscular development. And he was as sound and robust in his Christian character as he was "fit" from a physical point of view.' In China he was only able to enjoy an occasional game of tennis, except while at Kuling. There, when he was not attending

to patients, you would nearly always find him in the swimming-pool, or on the tennis-courts. He was one of the most brilliant players on the hill. Every season a tournament is arranged, in which some of the best players in China compete, so that the play is of a very high order. For several years Booth was in the finals of the doubles and singles. One year he withdrew when half way through the final set, as his opponent did not practise, if he understood, the principles of sport.

For two years Booth was assistant editor of the *China Medical Journal*. The editor resided in Shanghai where the *Journal* was published, nearly seven hundred miles away. It was impossible for Booth either to devote the time or supply the material that he might have done if the distance had not been so great; but what he did contribute was of a very high order and greatly appreciated. This official connexion with the *China Medical Journal*, and the original medical articles which

frequently appeared from his pen, brought him into close association with medical men in all parts of China. His fame as a young and intrepid surgeon had spread far and wide; in fact, he was considered to be one of the rising surgeons in the Far East.

Not only was Booth a brilliant surgeon, but he was also an astute physician and a skilled microscopist and laboratory worker. During the triennial conference of the China Medical Missionary Association which was held in Hankow early in 1910, when representatives attended from all parts of China, Booth took a prominent part and was the heart and soul of the sessions. It did not matter whether he was rushing around the Concessions making arrangements for the accommodation of the delegates, contracting for meals at a local hotel, reading a treatise upon a medical subject, or engaging in the various debates, he put his whole strength into whatever he was doing. At the next Conference, held at Peking in January 1913, the genial,

stimulating, and enlightening presence of Booth was greatly missed.

The ministerial side of Booth's dual professional character was not so pronounced as was the medical. To him, so far as preaching was concerned, the great gift with which he was entrusted was the coveted gift of healing. The 'good tidings' which he brought to the Chinese was in the form of practical Christianity. He tried to exemplify the sympathy of Christ to those who had fallen in the keen battle of life as it is so cruelly waged in China. Thus it was that he subordinated the work of the ministry to that of the doctor.

Booth was not gifted either in English or Chinese with the eloquence which so often characterizes his fellow countrymen. The language which Lord Beaconsfield once used when describing the public speaking of Lord John Russell might with a certain degree of reservation be applied to Booth. Lord Beaconsfield wrote in 1844: 'He is not a natural orator, and labours

under physical deficiencies which even a Demosthenic impulse could scarcely overcome. But he is experienced in debate, quick in reply, fertile in resource, takes large views, and frequently compensates for a dry and hesitating manner by the expression of those noble truths that flash across the fancy and rise spontaneously to the lip of men of poetic temperament when addressing popular assemblies.' Twenty years earlier Moore had described Lord John Russell's public speaking in a peculiarly happy image:

An eloquence, not like those rills from a height,  
Which sparkling and foaming in vapour are o'er;  
But a current that works out its way into light  
Through the filtering recesses of thought and of lore.

Although Booth was dry and hesitating, yet his addresses in English were helpful, simple, and stimulating. But they lacked grip. This was partly due to want of that time for preparation which his ministerial brethren enjoyed. Whenever Booth had to conduct the small English service which

is held in one of the houses on the compound every Sunday afternoon, he had an appreciable loss of appetite during the day, and would invariably remark that a whole morning in the operating-theatre would be far more congenial to himself, if not to the patients, than the conducting of a service. And many have great sympathy with such sentiments.

## CHAPTER VI

### UNDER THE RED CROSS

The world's final judgement would be, 'He was a man,' and the church would add, 'of God.'

BOOTH passed through two political cataclysms; one during 1900, to which we have referred, and another in 1911. The first was a futile attempt to exterminate all foreigners from China by a designing woman, the latter was a revolution planned and successfully engineered by the populace to overthrow the reigning dynasty of which the Empress Dowager was the most prominent figure. October 10, 1911, will ever remain a notable day in the history of China, for it witnessed the commencement of the rebellion which was destined in a few short weeks to overthrow the Manchu reign in Peking, and liberate China from the great Manchu Parasite

which had been drinking her best blood for nearly three centuries. It was late in the evening of that day that foreigners living in the concessions of Hankow saw the first flames of Revolution leaping skywards from several points in the city of Wuchang, which is situated on the other side of the river Yangtse. The booming of cannons and the rattle of rifle fire could be faintly heard awakening the Chinese nation from its sleep and oppression of centuries; and at the same time, the now indolent, parasitic but once powerful, active, and warlike Manchu made his last feeble effort to retain a hold upon the country which his ancestors had so boldly conquered.

During the early hours of the following morning, foreigners in Hankow were rudely awakened from their slumbers by the ringing of the Concessions bells, clanging out the alarm signal for volunteers to assemble. Then they learned that revolutionaries were in control of Wuchang city,

that the Viceroy of the Manchu Emperor with his chief officials had all fled, that law and order were in abeyance, and that all foreigners had to look after their own safety. At this stage of uncertainty, the foreigners might well have been excused any fears and misgivings, for none knew just what this new power in Wuchang really stood for. Was it going to be anti-foreign, like so many other upheavals in China? Was Hankow about to witness another furious, insensate outburst of native fanaticism similar to the Boxer episode? These and many other questions were being asked as the foreigners gathered on the Bund early that morning. But their fears were fortunately soon allayed by the General of 'The People's Army,' now Vice-President of the Chinese Republic, Li Yuan Hung, who issued a proclamation in which he assured the people that the uprising was of a purely anti-dynastic character; and also by his determined friendliness towards and care for both foreigners and natives

alike. Two days later Hanyang, with its large and well stocked arsenal, fell an easy prize to the Revolutionary troops, and on the following day the native city of Hankow was overrun by the white-badged soldiers of the future Republic.

These and similar surprises were evidence that the uprising was neither of a local nor minor character, but of a formidable nature. About this time the Chinese officials in Wuchang and the prominent merchants of Hankow determined to form a Red Cross Society. The merchants approached Dr. Booth desiring his help in organizing the society. This he readily agreed to give, and after considerable discussion a meeting for organization was held in the Chinese Chamber of Commerce. Dr. Booth was requested to be the President of the society, but this he declined, and strongly urged that through some official source the Wuchang societies should be amalgamated. This was done, and Dr. MacWillie accepted the

Presidency whilst Dr. Booth and Dr. Patterson acted as Vice-Presidents. Booth was Chairman of the Medical Committee.

Never before had the Medical Missions in China such a grand opportunity to identify themselves with the public life of the people, and the doctors were not slow to seize it. Their only stipulation was that the Red Cross Society which they would form and control must be carried on in strict accordance with the rules and regulations of the Geneva Convention.

In response to the order of H.B.M. Consul-General, all British subjects were obliged to leave the native cities and go to the Concession. As Booth with his family lived in the native city he was compelled to obey the order; but the Consul gave him permission to visit and work in the hospital during the day. This he continued to do as long as the fighting remained on the outskirts, and even after that, when street-fighting became the order of the day. 'During this period,' writes

Dr. Thomson, 'Booth became a frequent visitor at my house, and I shall always be grateful to the revolution for one thing,—that it gave me the opportunity to see more of Booth and learn to know him better than I had ever done before. He was an enthusiast on his profession; our evening dinner-hour and often many hours afterwards were spent almost entirely in discussing professional matters; in these conversations Booth's day's work was all lived over again, his cases were reviewed and his operations repeated, details described and reconsidered, and lessons learnt from them by which the patients of the following day would benefit. Patients at that time were plentiful; there were far too many in the long lines of stretchers for the limited helpers available; yet we had all to struggle through and do our best. Booth pegged away single-handed in his Hospital, doing for the wounded the work of many, and in addition he had to give his attention to the hundred and one things daily

requiring attention in connexion with the organizing of the Red Cross Society. Almost every morning before our day's work commenced, we would climb the tower of the British Municipal Building to see for ourselves the dispositions of the contending armies, and never shall I forget that morning November 1, when our sight and senses were horrified at what was obviously the commencement of the previously-rumoured tactics of the Commander of the Imperial Forces to destroy the native city by fire. Rumours of this had been current during the evening of the day preceding, but few thought that it would be carried out, few thought that the Manchu government would dare to do an act which would horrify all China and cause countless thousands of wavering adherents to withdraw their support from its already tottering sway; yet there it was progressing before our eyes. Apparently specially constructed shells were coming from the Imperial batteries; a report, then

a puff of smoke, would attract our attention to some particular spot, and soon afterwards a building in flames would only too truly indicate the terrible character of the shell. Shells like this were literally raining upon the doomed city, and by mid-day three square miles of the once prosperous trading city of Hankow became a raging blazing furnace surmounted by a cloud of smoke darkening the country for miles around, and through which the eclipsed sun, like a dull red globe, could be looked at with the naked eye as it slowly during the afternoon sank from zenith to horizon.'

At night the burning of the city was a scene full of violent Rembrandtesque effects of light and darkness, and with all the gloomy horrors of a masterpiece of Doré.

For Booth to have entered the city during the burning would have been madness. So he had to give up the hospital work for the first day, and remain in the

Concession. But he took up his stand on the roof of the highest building, where his heart was cheered by the occasional glimpses between wafts of smoke of the Red Cross flag hoisted over his Hospital which assured him that at least for the present it and its inmates were safe. 'But what a dreadful inferno it all was,' is the description of Dr. Thomson; 'the blazing city, the roar of cannon, the rattle of rifles, and the constant rat-tat-tat of Maxims, and the knowledge that in it all, some helpless human creatures, unable to escape, must have been undergoing unspeakable tortures. Dismay and anxiety would have paralysed a will less strong than Booth's, for the hospital with patients and his Mission's "School for the Blind" and its unfortunate blind inmates were in the midst of it all, and for these helpless people Booth, like the strong man he was, assumed a sense of personal responsibility. How to save them was his one desire and determination. Happily he had the sound

common sense to be persuaded from what would have been a futile and disastrous attempt to reach them through burning and bullet-swept streets; but his fertile mind quickly thought out a plan. The hospital and mission buildings lay close to the Han River, and if he could only get a steam launch up the Han it might be possible to reach his charges by that route. His plan was no sooner thought of than acted upon; first a visit to the Commander of the Imperial troops and two promises obtained from him, viz.—to protect the hospital and mission property, and to cease all gun-firing for two hours, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. the next day; then a call for volunteers, which was readily responded to, to accompany him on the launch and assist in getting the maimed and blind on board.

‘Next morning the Red Cross flag still flew, the buildings still stood, and Booth’s hopes rose high; but what a faint hope it seemed to us, only a flag sadly floating over a city in flames and only occasionally

seen when a breeze of wind happened to clear away for a second or two the smoke that enveloped it. Yet it buoyed Booth up, and as he stepped on board the launch he seemed to us to be not only hopeful but even confident of success. Away we steamed, with a lighter in tow, Booth at the wheel, Mr. Lockwood Jones on the bridge superintending navigation, Messrs. Palmer and Fippard looking after the engines, Drs. Cox and Wong of the Shanghai Red Cross Society and their bearers stowed away in the hold, Major Willoughby, Mr. Upward, and myself looking after ourselves. All went pleasantly until we reached the entrance to the Han River, where we encountered a sight that was indeed formidable; smoke from the burning city had drifted over towards the Hanyang hill, forming as it were a tunnel through which the river flowed and along which we had to steer our course. The sight recalled to our minds some of those fanciful pictures depicting the approach to the nether

regions, and a veritable Hades it was, as we were to find out later on. As we steamed up, the Hanyang bank appeared to be alive with revolutionary soldiers, some of whom would occasionally point their rifles at us either from a grim sense of humour or from uncertainty whether we were friends or foes. We were, however, confident that the Red Cross flags which we had flying from several points on our launch would assure us of safety, for by this time the Red Cross had become perfectly familiar to and was respected by the belligerents of both sides. We got up nearly as far as the Hospital, the Red Cross flag of which we could see distinctly at no great distance from the river; but to our great disappointment it was obvious that we could get at it only with great difficulty, owing to burning streets intervening between it and the river's bank; we could not proceed further up river in order to get at the Hospital from above, owing to the presence and continued activity of a battery

of Maxims firing across the river a little way in front of our bows. We hesitated, not knowing what to do; Booth got out in a small sampan we had taken with us and tried to row himself to the shore in the hope of finding a possible landing and approach to the Hospital; but he had not proceeded far when to our astonishment and dismay shells began to come down around us from the revolutionists' guns posted on the Tortoise Hill, Hanyang, and almost simultaneously, rifle bullets began to whizz past us, several hitting the launch. Booth under these circumstances had to make a hurried retreat, and immediately we got him on board we started to get the launch round and run for the open Yangtse. This turning process was not easy and gave us several anxious moments owing to the current and narrowness of the river. To make matters worse, just as we had got her broadside on to the current, one of the many burning houses we had seen crashed into the river at our stern, scattering its

débris all about us; but once round and headed down stream and with full steam up and everybody volunteering in the stokehold, we ran a race of which few would have thought the old launch capable and for which her builders certainly never designed her. Bullets hit the launch frequently during this passage down stream, but fortunately no one was hit and still more fortunately no shells found their mark.

‘ It was a crestfallen and sorrowful return to the Concession, and Booth wept like a child. But he had this to reward him and keep up his spirits, that he had seen the Hospital standing and apparently undamaged. He had one other hope to sustain him; the Commander of the Imperial Forces had promised him to protect the Hospital and prevent it being burned down. Booth did not mistrust this promise, but we scarcely thought it possible that the Commander could carry out what he had promised, for after all the Hospital and

Blind School buildings together made only an island speck in an ocean of flame.'

That heroic though futile dash up the river Han was on the Wednesday. Those brave men who had formed that party and had witnessed some of the horrors of the burning city and what it must mean for those poor souls inside, did not have much sleep that night. Poor Booth was beside himself with distress for the patients and blind boys. But another route was suggested by which the hospital might be approached. The most graphic description of the second attempt at rescue appeared in the *Central China Post*: 'Yesterday forenoon, through the energies of Dr. Booth, a strong body of foreigners and native Red Cross men carrying stretchers started to walk along the Malu<sup>1</sup> to the Hospital to see how matters really stood, and if possible to get the patients into Hankow. An Imperialist guard, which marched in a straggling line in the rear, also accompanied the party.

<sup>1</sup> The *Malu* is a road constructed on the old city wall.



RIVER-BANK NEAR HOSPITAL, WHERE DR. BOOTH  
MADE THE BRAVE ATTEMPT TO LAND



A GROUP OF PATIENTS, WITH MATRON AND  
HEAD ASSISTANT.

*To face p. 96.*

The scenes along the Malu were pitiful. Desolation reigned supreme. Where once had been thriving thoroughfares, now nothing but a heap of smouldering ruins. Where once were to be seen crowds of people, now nothing but a few wretches grovelling amongst the ashes of what used to be their homes. To add to the ghastliness of the scene were the corpses, corpses of men, women, and children, many of them charred to a cinder, and all of them showing signs of having been preyed upon by the pariah dogs of the neighbourhood.

'Upon turning a corner of the road, a full view of the flag was seen. That part of the compound at any rate was still standing. A little further on a coolie was met carrying a letter from the hospital to the Concession. According to him the buildings were all safe with the exception of the kitchen of one which had caught fire and collapsed. All along the road were to be seen squads of Imperialist soldiers, sleeping or polishing up their bayonets. No

picket was on duty; they all seemed confident that they were safe from the attack of the Revolutionaries. Not a Revolutionary soldier was to be seen. The only signs of them were their rifles captured by the grey coats, and of these there seemed to be no end.

'The compounds showed that the inmates had passed a sleepless night. Boxes and bedding were piled on the lawn in front of the houses. The little blind boys were also there. Their plight was pitiful indeed. All night they had stood huddled together on the patch of grass, turning their sightless eyes to the on-coming flames. One of them said: "We could hear the fire coming ever nearer, the flames hissing and cracking when they first caught hold of a building, and then the crash of roof and the walls falling in. We could feel the heat of the flames becoming more intense every minute, until it became so fierce that we had to turn our heads away to keep our faces from being scorched. We should

have liked to run away to safety, but we could not. We could not see and did not know where to run; all we could do was to stand and wait for death."

'The removing of the wounded from the hospital itself did not take long. Willing hands soon had the stretchers rigged up on which they were carried to the Malu, where a number of carriages were waiting to take them to the Concession.'

That long procession of unfortunates started upon its weary three miles to the Concession, where all were comfortably and safely placed in Red Cross hospitals, Mission churches, and godowns, kindly lent by foreign merchants for the purpose.

In recognition of the gallant part Dr. Booth took in the Revolution in connexion with the Red Cross Society, the Vice-President of the Republic—General Li Yuan Hung—presented him with a gold medal and an illuminated address.

Thus ended in triumph one of the most humane acts of a man whose whole life

had been devoted to acts of humanity, a man whose ability, skill and personality would have carried him to the highest heights of his profession at home, but whose noble sense of charity and Christian duty compelled him to enter and fight upon the great mission field of China.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE LEAF HAD WITHERED IN THE GREEN

*Vixit, vivit, nec unquam moriturus est.*

WHEN the fighting had ceased and the services of the Red Cross workers were not further required, Dr. Booth's furlough was fortunately due. Early in February, 1912, he left Hankow with his family for Ireland for a well earned holiday. Although the strain and stress of the previous few months had been very severe he looked very fit, and himself remarked that he 'felt as though he had only just returned from home.' When saying 'good-bye' to a friend who had worked by his side during the Revolution, he suggested that as they would probably meet in London during the year, they would lunch together off something better than

Revolution Pie. But alas, that lunch never took place.

Booth reached Cork at the end of March, and immediately commenced deputation work, frequently travelling great distances through both Ireland and England. His fame had preceded him, so that his services in the pulpit and on the platform were in great demand. As a lecturer in the Medical Court at several of the Orient Exhibitions he was highly appreciated. He also took a prominent part in the 'May' meetings held in London, speaking with effect at the annual meeting of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in the Queen's Hall, and the Medical Meeting in Wesley's Chapel, City Road.

Being anxious to be present at the Irish Methodist Conference at the end of June, Dr. Booth elected to undergo a minor operation early in that month. 'It will necessitate my being in bed for several days, and the rest will do me good,' he wrote. So on Tuesday, June 4, he entered

a Nursing Home in Cork, and two days after his old Chief operated upon him, being assisted by Dr. John Booth. Everything appeared to be very satisfactory for a few days; then untoward symptoms began to appear. At first it was thought that he might have contracted measles, as he had been in contact with a person who developed the disease the day after they met. But alas, his condition became so alarming that in spite of all that medical and surgical skill could do, he sank rapidly, exchanging mortality for life on Saturday morning June 22, 1912. It is probable that the malaria which he had contracted whilst in China took advantage of his weakened condition as it so often does, and claimed another life for its long roll of victims.

During Booth's last hours he had intervals of consciousness, and was able to recognize his dear wife and little children, and to express his wishes about various personal matters. Then at times he would imagine that his Hankow colleagues were

standing by his bedside, and the poor fellow complained bitterly because they refused to help him. His thoughts to the very end were about his work in China. At times he would be lecturing to the students on ligatures and antiseptics; then again he was sending messages of love to the hospital staff. Shortly after his return home, he received information that his cook had yielded to the habit of drinking native wine. To this unfortunate fellow he sent a special message expressing his sorrow and beseeching him to reform. At the very last he made an almost frantic effort to frame a message to his fellow Christian Endeavourers in Ireland, but his strength was not equal to such a strain. His message to them consisted of deeds performed by his unselfish and heroic life, which he confessed was marred by unfaithfulness; but he had always desired that his friends should look beyond such human frailties to the great Pattern and Inspirer, and in His name and strength go forward and

secure greater victories than had been his privilege either to achieve or witness.

During his last hours he was tenderly asked by his brother whether he was at peace, and he replied, 'Yes, perfectly.' Then after an interval of some minutes he was again asked whether he was trusting in his Saviour. His blue eyes opened and his countenance brightened as he replied, 'Yes, I am trusting, but I have not been very faithful.'

He was laid to rest in the beautiful Cemetery of St. Finbarre on Monday, June 24. The following account of the funeral is extracted from the *Cork Constitution*:

'The funeral cortège was of very large proportions, and of a most representative character, testifying to the universal esteem and deep regard in which this brilliant medical missionary had been held in his native city. Notwithstanding that Dr. Booth had made his home in China for the past fifteen years, he was not forgotten by those who were associated

with him during his medical course at the then Queen's College, now the University College, and though the funeral was held at an hour when the majority of the physicians and surgeons of the city were most busily engaged in visiting the hospitals, &c., all the branches of the medical profession were represented at the funeral. Prior to his leaving for China Dr. Booth was an active worker in the Christian Endeavour Movement in the city, and the two Methodist Christian Endeavour Societies were present in large numbers to pay their last tribute of respect to the memory of one who was loved and revered by them. The Irish Conference was represented by the Rev. Wesley Guard (Vice-President) and the Rev. William Crawford, M.A.

'The funeral service took place in the open at the graveside, and was of a very impressive and touching character, and while an address was being delivered by the Rev. William Crawford, M.A., there were indeed few dry eyes amongst those

congregated at the grave. The service was opened by the Rev. J. A. Duke reading the 90th Psalm, and the Rev. C. A. Williams the 15th chapter of First Corinthians. Then followed the singing of the hymn, "Give me the wings of faith," which was joined in by the company present. At its conclusion, the Rev. Wesley Guard having read the committal portion of the service, the Rev. William Crawford, M.A., addressing those present, said he was privileged to attend there in company with the Vice-President of the Methodist Conference to express to them and to the bereaved family, on behalf of the Methodist Conference, now sitting in Dublin, their feelings of affectionate sympathy and high appreciation of their departed brother. It was hard to express such sentiments fitly. One felt on an occasion like that almost overcome. They came there to leave all that remained on earth of Robin Booth, a brave young soldier of Jesus Christ, a stalwart Christian, a man equipped as few men had been for

a life of usefulness and service to mankind, of service to God—a successful surgeon, a devoted minister of Christ, a father of dear little children, the son of a widowed mother, a man physically, mentally, spiritually, professionally and in every way fitted for life. They now laid his body in the dust. He thought their first feelings—if he might speak for himself, and he imagined he could speak for those around him too—in the face of such an event were those of dismay—of consternation. Was it a mistake? Had something untoward happened? What was the meaning of it? They were creatures that lived under a law; the reign of that law was supreme—it was universal. The Christian was no more delivered from it than the world. The most devoted earnest soldier of Jesus Christ was to bow to that inscrutable and to the working of that inevitable law. As the stars moved in their courses, as the summer came and then autumn, with its decline, so human life was under the law of God, the law of

nature. That brave soldier was cut down just as well as some of them who had lived long years, and who wondered why God spared them and took the young. They lived under a reign of grace—it was the grace that ruled in heaven. Jesus Christ had brought in that grace. Look how it was exemplified in their dear brother. Grace made him the man he was, grace won his heart. He remembered Robin Booth many years ago when he was an earnest, hard-working medical student. He had been the same during these years of responsibility in China. He was a successful student, one who, by hard work and energy, fought that battle of unbelief which came to every young man. He kept his life pure, and came out a firm simple believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. He took that life of his and laid it on the altar of the Lord Jesus Christ, and went to the heathen who wanted help, to tell them of God and His love. They knew the story of his life and work while in China—the work that he did

in that hospital at Hankow and in other spheres, showing an example to the world of what Christ can do for the heathen world and the civilized world. They might think that that work was dead or was going to die. It would live. Their president yesterday spoke beautifully of the life of their brother. Robin Booth did not love his life, nor did he care about it; he took it and laid it down. He did not mean that he laid it down by dying, he laid it down in going to China and caring for the poor blind children, in healing the sick, and he, like every devoted surgeon, took his life in his hands every day. Robert Booth's life had been sacrificed. He did not love his life; he spent it unselfishly, giving it away for the good of his fellow men and for the glory of his blessed Lord. Let that be the closing word that morning, because it came home to every one of them. What was the secret of his life? It was, as St. Paul put it, "for me to live is Christ." So it was with Robert Booth. Christ was the secret

of his life. He made him what he was. Such an event sometimes looked like a loss or disaster, but it was not a loss. The work in China would go on—it would go on better than ever. They remembered how Dr. Booth took up Dr. Hodge's work. Another would step into the breach for him; the work would spread and China would be saved. What had made China what it was to-day? It was the awful Boxer Rebellion of—he was going to say—a few days ago. The church in China had more than doubled, because the Boxer Rebellion had been made by God a means of blessing. Robert Booth's death would be a blessing. It would be a blessing for China, it would be one for the little children. The love of Christian friends and many a father would watch over those children. God would be the husband of the widow, and would comfort the mother's heart. They lived under grace; grace reigned; it did not struggle; grace was reigning throughout the whole universe, grace reigned in eternal life, and

in that glorious home there must be a sphere for Robert Booth. The qualities he developed, the character he formed here God was not going to waste. Might God help them so to live that when they die they would go to be with Him for ever.'

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE FAME IS QUENCHED WHICH I FORESAW

He was Irish and not Scots, but none the less a 'grand man.'

DR. BOOTH'S relatives received many loving tributes from his friends and colleagues, of which we may quote two. Dr. W. H. Graham Aspland, of the S.P.G., in Peking, had just returned home when he learned the sad news of Booth's death. Writing from Nottingham he says:

'Having returned from China but two or three days, I cannot express the great shock I felt, on reading the fact of the death of Dr. Robert Booth, of Hankow; and as Vice-President of the North China Medical Association I would like to pay tribute to his memory here in England, such as, I am sure, will be paid by every medical missionary in China. It seems but a few

days since I shook hands with him when we separated after our Red Cross work in Hankow and Wuchang. On that occasion it fell to my lot to reply to a toast given by the Central China Red Cross Society to myself, as representing the Northern Branch, and to all time no mention can be made of Red Cross work in China without associating with it the name of Robert T. Booth. We cannot imagine what would have been the results had he not been the life, spirit, and impulse of that work. I can see him now rushing from one centre to another on his old bicycle, which had but one pedal—the other being a pedal rod only—arranging with merchants and others for empty warehouses and buildings to be converted into hospitals. When I remember that four hospitals had to be opened in one day in order to accommodate the wounded arriving in hundreds, only those who work in China can understand the work devolving upon Booth and his chief, MacWillie.

Beyond organization he had his own hospital full, and yet he was always the man to fill the gap when one was made.

'I venture to assert that no man in Central China will be more missed, and I am equally certain none was more loved and revered. I can imagine the horror and grief which will fill the hearts of all medical missionaries on the Central River when they hear the terrible news of his death. He was Irish, and not Scots, but none the less a "grand man." Booth was an ideal "medical missionary." Medically, nothing but the best would satisfy him. His hospital and dispensaries were not run on loose, slipshod lines, merely making medicine the bait to catch converts; he was up to the latest standards in his own attainments, and his hospital was in keeping with them. His abhorrence was a medical missionary who in fulfilling the Missionary side of his work, allowed the medical to become rusty and out of date. Yet he was a true missionary. He prayed as earnestly

as he talked when urging some of his principles upon a Medical Conference. I live in Peking, and have not had the opportunity of witnessing the effect of Booth's intimate life upon the Chinese, but I doubt not it differed little to that upon foreigners. There was no cant, no humbug about Booth, his religious life was his only life, he had not two. Scathing was he in the denunciation of wrong, yet tremendous in his efforts to remedy it, and he feared man as little as he feared work.

'I only knew him as the "General" on the Field, or the Secretary of the China Medical Association, but by his love for children, and theirs for him I judge he had as much of the St. John as we all know he had of the St. Peter nature. In taking up Hodge's work, he followed a great man, and his "glory was not dimmed." His loss to Hankow, the Chinese, and the Medical College is enormous, and we in the field know we have lost a champion, and a brother.

Now that he is with the "warriors victorious," there is but one way by which his loss can be mitigated, and that is by bringing to full issue the scheme of medical education for which he was working and living.'

During his many years of residence in Hankow, Booth took a very active part in the deliberations of the Central China Medical Missionary Association. The following letter of sympathy was sent to Mrs. Booth by the Association:

'It is in no merely official sense that we wish to convey to you, on behalf of the Central China Medical Missionary Association, our deep sympathy with you in the unexpected removal of your beloved husband, Dr. Booth. We have no news beyond the bare cable message which came to us with startling suddenness. We had hoped to have him with us for many years to come, for he was respected and loved by us all.

'His medical and surgical skill were of

an exceptionally high order, and we shall sorely miss his counsel and advice in our gatherings. He was a worthy successor to Dr. Hodge, and well upheld the reputation of the Wesleyan Mission Hospital. Like Dr. Hodge he not only strove to give his patients the best that medical and surgical aid could provide, but was ever mindful of their spiritual interests and wellbeing. In both these departments God was pleased to grant him no small measure of success, a fact which will serve at this time to bring comfort and consolation to you.

‘ Dr. Booth’s Christian heroism, in securing at great personal risk the rescue of his patients and of the blind boys from the burning city of Hankow during the war, was typical of the man as we knew him. His thoroughness and conscientiousness will long remain an inspiration to each one of us. To not a few of us he has been a friend in need when we or our loved ones have been laid low. Those who have

experienced his unremitting care, his ever capable and tender ministry in these circumstances will cherish such as a precious memory.

‘God had need of him for higher service where his untiring energy and devotion will find their fuller and wider scope. He who in His wisdom and love has felt it wise to take your dear husband from you will not leave you comfortless. He will be with you in the days of waiting. He will be a Husband to the widow and a Father to the three little ones. We cannot forget also his bereaved parents and yours, and we desire to assure you all of a continued interest in our sympathy and prayers.’

Every witness to the beauty of Booth’s life and work only leaves the mystery of his death deeper than before. Our only source of comfort is by lifting our dim eyes from the ‘maze of things’ to the face of God, who is Light, and in whom there is no darkness at all, until our bereaved hearts grow confident that even the deep dark

shadow of Booth's death will grow radiant in the light of perfect wisdom, perfect love. We now see in a mirror darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part, but then shall we know even as also we have been known.

In the meantime we wonder *why* the bullets missed him when he made that heroic dash up the Han to rescue the patients and blind boys from the inferno; *why* the cruel stroke of death stayed its hand until a comparatively simple operation was performed and the most unusual fatal symptoms ensue! God alone knows. The Chinese and European friends to whom he ministered in China during his thirteen years of manly and consecrated service, must for ever be debtors to the skill and self-forgetting devotion of this true Son of Ireland.

Bright and breezy, filled with energy and forcefulness, sympathetic and kind, his Christianity was of the robust type which commended itself to one and all. Surely he

has made a place for himself in all our hearts. We shall never again hear his voice, never enjoy his company, never see him bending over the bedside of a poor helpless patient, never see him in the operating-theatre! The medical missionary work in China has been bereft of one of its ablest, strongest, and most devoted members. In the medical missionary meeting at City Road where Booth spoke a day or two before his operation, he told the audience that he had 'been given when yet a child to the Mission Field by his mother.' God has accepted the sacrifice, and as long as such mothers live, the missionary fire will never be extinguished.

Booth's last service in China, as we have seen, was done under the banner of the Red Cross. The sight of that Cross flying over the camps of Chinese armies was to him a sure and certain sign that the wedge of many years of missionary endeavour had been driven home, and that the principle of Christ's teaching had been surely planted

in the very heart and conscience of that great Empire. As Booth would point to the Red Cross, he gloried to think that, during the dark and despairing days when the new Republic was struggling for its very existence, the cry of humanity, which had never before been prominently associated with the leaders of Chinese public life, should have gone up from the small and threatened band of liberators who appealed to foreigners for help. The appeal for assistance was not for their own cause but for humane personal aid to those of their countrymen stricken in the cause. The Chinese amongst whom Booth had laboured and lived knew him, and had faith in the man and all that he stood for. He was one of the first to whom the appeal for help was carried, and no man can lay down his life's work and leave a better testimony to his real worth than did Booth, who deservedly earned the trust and confidence of his fellow men.

John Stuart Mill once said that 'A man

with a conviction is worth twelve with interests'; and Booth held very strong convictions as to the importance of Christian medical work in hospitals, and the medical education of the young men of China. For many years a quiet work in medical education had been carried on in Hankow by one of the London Mission doctors. That small 'one man' school so developed, that during the past eight years the American Baptist Missionary Union, with the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, joined with the London Missionary Society, in forming a Union Medical College in Hankow, of which Dr. Booth was our first representative on the teaching staff.

If his life had been spared, he intended to devote a much larger portion of his time and energies to this College, for he was convinced that medical education in a Christian atmosphere, was the best discipline and most desirable life for Chinese students. A 'Friend of Missions,' who knew of Booth's keen interest in the

further development of this Union Medical College, gave £1,000 to the College in his memory.

Booth's enthusiasm for this important work was not misdirected. It has been said that 'Education without religion is the world's expedient for converting farthings into guineas by scouring.' The present is the Church's glorious opportunity for training educated Chinese youths to become Christian doctors. For many years to come missionary surgeons and physicians will be needed in China, but the time is not far distant, when their number must diminish. What type of man is to take their places? At the present time medical education in China is almost entirely in the hands of missions, but it is of a very feeble character, and altogether inadequate for the needs of this great Empire. There is not a more important work for the Mission Boards to undertake in China than the establishing, thoroughly equipping, and adequate staffing of Union Medical Col-

leges. By this means we shall be preparing men of Christian character and good medical qualifications to man our hospitals, or for private practice, and thus shall we solve in part many of the problems which at the present day are ever before us.

Booth's passing has been an irreparable loss to all—to the whole mission field, to his great profession, and to those who are more particularly interested in the future of medical work and medical education in China.

For can I doubt who knew thee keen  
In intellect, with force and skill,  
To strive, to fashion, to fulfil—  
I doubt not what thou wouldst have been.