



# John Leighton Stuart **FIFTY YEARS IN CHINA**

—The Memoirs of John Leighton Stuart



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# A PREFATORY NOTE ON JOHN LEIGHTON STUART

It is a great pleasure for me and a compliment to be permitted to introduce Dr. John Leighton Stuart.

I met Dr. Stuart for the first time at Nanking, China, in the late Spring, as I recall, of 1946. He was returning from a lengthy visit to the United States, recuperating from his years of imprisonment by the Japanese.

We talked over the current situation, and I was so impressed by his reactions that, later on, I proposed to the Department of State that he be appointed Ambassador to China—I was only an Ambassadorial Representative of the President. I took this action because of Dr. Stuart's fifty-odd years' experience in China, and his character, his personality and his temperament. With Dr. Stuart beside me, I had more than fifty years of vast experience unprejudiced by personal involvements in Chinese partisanship. On his appointment, I found his advice and leading assistance of invaluable help to me.

I doubt if there is anyone whose understanding of Chinese character, history, and political complications equals that of Dr. Stuart. His high standard of integrity made his opinions all the more important.

It is the man, the character and the general range of his experience which appealed to me.

GEORGE CATLETT MARSHALL



# INTRODUCTION

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John Leighton Stuart, who was born and brought up in Hangchow, China, where both his father and mother were leading missionaries, tells us that in his boyhood he always had “an aversion for missionary life” Even after his graduation from Hampden-Sydney College, he still confessed his “lack of enthusiasm for missionary service.”

It is difficult to exaggerate the aversion I had developed against going to China as a missionary...haranguing crowds of idle, curious people in street chapels or temple fairs, selling tracts for almost nothing, being regarded with amused or angry contempt by the native population, physical discomforts or hardships, etc., no chance for intellectual or studious interests, a sort of living death or modern equivalent for retirement from the world.

But, after prolonged inner struggle, Dr. Stuart finally decided “to put my religious belief to what was for me then the ultimate test.” He became a missionary to China and, as such, lived and worked in China for nearly half a century!

It was his good fortune that he did not have to remain an evangelistic missionary for more than two years. He was called to teach in the newly founded Theological Seminary at Nanking where he soon distinguished himself as a teacher of the New Testament and of New Testament Greek. After eleven years in Nanking, he was invited to Peking to undertake the great work of organizing a group of “little missionary colleges”—the Huei Wen University, the North China Union College, and later the North China Union Women’s College—into a great union university.

Thus for nearly forty years he worked as a successful “educational missionary” And he confesses to us: “Whether or not I could have spent my life happily and successfully as a typical evangelistic missionary is a

question about which I have more than once whimsically speculated."

In these memoirs he pays a hearty tribute to "the earnestness, high purpose, untiring efforts and unselfish devotion...of missionaries as a class" But, as a Chinese reader, I do hope that Dr. Stuart's frank records of his early impressions of the evangelistic missionary, of his long years of strong aversion against such life and work, of his mature judgment of the crude methods of the evangelistic missions in seeking, however unconsciously, numerical increase of converts and church membership—these records, I do hope, will not be lightly ignored by future leaders of Christian churches and mission boards when they have occasion to rethink the question of foreign missions.

Historically, the influence of the educational missionary—whether he be an astronomer or mathematician from the Society of Jesus in the sixteenth or seventeenth century, or a learned scientist, scholar or physician from a Protestant Mission in the nineteenth century—has always been greater and more lasting and far-reaching than that of the evangelistic missionary of whatever church or denomination. It was said of Robert Morrison, the first Protestant missionary in China, that after twenty-seven years in the East he had baptized only ten Chinese converts. But what a lasting influence Morrison's scholarly work—his Chinese translation of the Bible, his Chinese dictionary, and his first Chinese printing press with modern metal movable type—left on the entire Protestant missionary world in the East! Indeed, Robert Morrison inaugurated in China that one great century of illustrious Protestant missionary educators—the century of Alexander Wylic, Joseph Edkins, Alexander Williamson, S. Wells Williams, Young J. Allen, Calvin W. Mateer, W. A. P. Martin, John Fryer, Timothy Richard and a host of others equally deserving to be remembered. It was that galaxy of scholarly missionaries who, overcoming tremendous difficulties of language and culture, translated into Chinese the best works of contemporary Western science, technology, law and international law, and the geography and history of the modern world, as well as the religious literature of the Christian faith; and who, by preaching against such native customs as foot-binding and neglect of women's education, by advocating social, educational, and even political reforms, and by founding new schools and colleges, did so much in bringing about a gradual awakening in China.





Dr. Stuart will undoubtedly be remembered as one of the great representatives of that historic line of educational missionaries in China.

He came back to China in 1904, six years after the Reform Movement of 1898 and eight years before the founding of the Chinese Republic. China was at long last being aroused from her medieval slumbers. When he was called to Peking in 1919, it was already the eve of the Chinese intellectual renaissance and nationalistic revolution. The National Peking University was becoming, in the words of Dr. Stuart, "the intellectual dynamo of the nation" The Tsing Hua College, next-door neighbor to the future Yenching University, was soon to develop into one of the best and most influential national universities. The Peking Union Medical College was already being planned by the Rockefeller Foundation and was soon to rise up in that ancient capital as the most modern and best-equipped medical school and hospital in the entire Orient.

It was, therefore, not easy for the Christian missionary groups relying solely on the limited financial support of their home boards to hope to build up a real university at that late date and in Peking, the intellectual center of the nation.

Dr. Stuart's great achievement as the founder and builder of Yenching University must be judged against that background. "Dreams cost money," as he tells us. And his vivid descriptions of the successes and failures of the fund-raising campaign which he and Dr. Henry Winters Luce carried on for many years throughout the United States not only are valuable records but also often make the most interesting and most thrilling reading in this autobiography.

At last Yenching University became a dream that came true. As a friend and neighbor of Yenching who watched its growth with keen interest, I would like to say that Dr. Stuart's great success as a university builder lay chiefly in two directions. First, he and his colleagues planned and built up, literally *from scratch*, a full-sized university—the greatest of all the thirteen Christian colleges in China—with one of the most beautiful university campuses in the world. And, secondly, this university of his dreams became in the course of time more and more a Chinese university, which, with the help of the Harvard-Yenching Institute of Chinese Studies, was the first of all the Protestant missionary colleges to develop an excellent department of Chinese studies.





“Among many other advantages to Yenching,” says Dr. Stuart, “the Harvard-Yenching Institute of Chinese Studies has enabled us—and through us several other Christian colleges in China—to develop Chinese studies fully up to the best standards of any purely Chinese institution.”

I would like to pay a tribute to the Chinese scholars of Yenching, notably to Dr. William Hung (Flung Yeh), who deserves special credit for building up a very good Chinese library at Yenching, for editing and publishing the excellent *Yenching Journal of Chinese Studies* and that most useful series—the *Harvard-Yenching Sinological Index Series*.

Dr. Stuart’s seventieth birthday was celebrated on June 24, 1946. Ten days later, he was urged by General George C. Marshall, Special Representative of President Truman in China, to serve as the American Ambassador to the Republic of China and to assist him in the work of the Marshall Mission. On July 10, President Truman sent his name to the United States Senate where it was unanimously approved. Dr. Stuart’s ambassadorship lasted six and a half years (July, 1946—December, 1952). In August, 1949, three months after the fall of Nanking to the Communists, he returned to the United States. In December, he had a severe stroke, and on December 11, 1952, President Truman accepted his resignation.

Dr. Stuart’s memoirs of these years occupy nearly one half of the book and fall into two main parts: part one (Chapters 9-12) records the political and military events of the years 1946-49 and his own impressions and comments about those events; part two (Chapters 13-15) contains the thoughts and reflections on the Department of State’s “White Paper” on *United States Relations with China*, on the tragedy of the loss of the Chinese mainland to World Communism, on his own life and life ideals, and finally on “what policy the United States should pursue in regard to China.”

I must confess that I have found the chapters of part one (Chapters 9-12) rather oversimplified and often difficult to follow as a summary report of the enormously complex events from the early months of General Marshall’s Mission to China down to the fall of the Nanking-Shanghai area to the Communists. For instance, here is what he says about the early months of the work of the Marshall Mission:

I shall attempt in the light of subsequent events to reconstruct what



happened in Chungking during and following the Political Consultative Conference called by the Chinese Government after General Marshall's arrival early in January. His personality and prestige and the lofty yet reasonable ideals which had brought the delegates together created an atmosphere of good feeling and high endeavor which made possible the five resolutions which, if put into effect, would have ended the controversy, formed a coalition government on a democratic basis and led to a reorganization and training of troops on both sides under American advice....

What was the nature and object of the Marshall Mission? What was the Political Consultative Conference? What were the "five resolutions?" What was "the controversy" that would have ended if those resolutions had been put into effect? What was the form of the proposed "coalition government on a democratic basis?" What was the proposed "reorganization and training of the troops on both sides under American advice?"

Dr. Stuart has given no full explanation for any one of these questions in the body of the text. However, to make the record more understandable for the reader, there is a selection of documents in the Appendix. These include:

The Directives of the Marshall Mission (December, 1945).

The Five Resolutions of the Political Consultative Conference (January 31, 1946).

The Statement by President Truman on U.S. Policy (December, 1946).

General Marshall's Personal Statement (January 7, 1947).

With the help of these documents, we can hope to understand the objectives of the Marshall Mission and, at least in part, of the ambassadorship of Dr. Stuart. In the light of subsequent events, we can also understand how difficult, and how inherently impossible, those objectives were. Such an understanding is necessary to a sympathetic appreciation of Dr. Stuart's personal reporting of the earnest endeavors and the heart-rending failures of the Marshall Mission and his own ambassadorship.

The objectives of the Marshall Mission were summed up in these directives as "the unification of China by peaceful, democratic methods...as soon as possible." Specifically, they were twofold:



*First, "the United States is cognizant that the present National Government of China is a 'one-party government' and believes that peace, unity and democratic reform in China will be furthered if the basis of this Government is broadened to include other political elements in the country. Hence, the United States strongly advocates that the national conference of representatives of major political elements in the country agree upon arrangements which will give those elements a fair and effective representation in the Chinese National Government."*

*And secondly, "the existence of autonomous armies such as that of the Communist army is inconsistent with, and actually makes impossible, political unity in China. With the institution of a broadly representative government, autonomous armies should be eliminated as such and all armed forces in China integrated effectively into the Chinese National Army."*

The first objective was to cause the Chinese to form a coalition government with the Chinese Communists fairly and effectively represented; the second was to cause them to "eliminate" the autonomous armies of the Chinese Communist Party and "integrate" them into the National Army.

As Secretary of State Byrnes states in one of the directives:

*This problem is not an easy one....It will not be solved by the Chinese themselves.* To the extent that our influence is a factor, success will depend upon our capacity to exercise that influence in the light of shifting conditions in such a way as to encourage concessions by the Central Government, by the so-called Communists, and by the other factions. The President has asked General Marshall to go to China as his Special Representative for the purpose of bringing to bear in an appropriate and practicable manner the influence of the United States for the achievement of the ends set forth above. (*Italics mine.*)

Such was the inherently impossible dual task of the Marshall Mission. The Chinese Communists wanted to get into a coalition government: that was the Yalta formula deviously devised by Stalin for Poland and for all "Liberated Europe"; that was what Mao Tse-tung openly demanded on April 24, 1945, in his fiftythousand-word report to the Seventh Congress of the Chinese Communist Party held in Yenan—a report entitled "On Coalition Government." But they had absolutely no intention of having



their autonomous armies “eliminated” or “integrated” into the National Army: on the contrary, the Communist Army, which Mao Tse-tung on April 24, 1945, claimed to number 910,000 men in regular units and 2,200,000 men in the “people’s militia force” was expanding during the first six months of General Marshall’s stay in China into 1,200,000 men in its regular formations.

And what were to be the ways and means by which the Marshall Mission was to “bring to bear the influence of the United States for the achievement of the ends set forth above”? President Truman directed General Marshall:

In your conversations with Chiang Kai-shek and other Chinese leaders you are authorized to speak with the utmost frankness. Particularly, you may state, in connection with the Chinese desire for credits, technical assistance in the economic field, and military assistance... that a China disunited and torn by civil strife could not be considered realistically as a proper place for American assistance.

In plain language, the weapon was to be not military pressure or intervention, but the withholding of American aid to China.

But this weapon could only checkmate the Chinese Government and had no effect whatever on the Chinese Communists, whose armies had been racing by land and by sea to Manchuria where they could obtain unlimited aid from the Soviet Occupation Forces and from the Soviet Union, now the contiguous, strongest base of revolution for the Chinese Communists. So, during the entire period of the Marshall Mission, the Chinese Communist delegation was constantly and successfully pressing General Marshall to stop or suspend American aid to China! And General Marshall and the United States Government did many times stop and suspend all American aid to China because of the loud protests of the Chinese Communists.

So the Marshall Mission failed because of its inherently impossible objectives, which neither Secretary Byrnes, nor President Truman, nor General Marshall, nor Mr. John Carter Vincent (who more than anyone else was largely responsible for drafting the Marshall directives) ever fully understood.

And the ambassadorship of Dr. Stuart failed too, because, in his own words, he was “a tyro in diplomacy”; and because, again in his own



words:

General Marshall had originally brought me into his efforts to form a coalition government because of my reputation as a liberal American, friendly to the Chinese people as a whole, and with no pronounced sympathy for any one faction or school of thought. This included the Communists, several of whose leaders I had known fairly well.

All these seemingly harsh words I have said without the slightest intention of ridiculing the naivete of those idealistic statesmen of an idealistic age. In fact I, too, was just as naive a tyro in national and international politics in those days of expansive idealism. So naive, indeed, was I that shortly after V-J Day I sent a lengthy radiogram to Chungking to be forwarded to my former student Mao Tse-tung, solemnly and earnestly pleading with him that, now that Japan had surrendered, there was no more justification for the Chinese Communists to continue to maintain a huge private army, and that his Party should now emulate the good example of the British Labor Party which, without a single soldier of its own, had just won an overwhelming victory at the recent election and acquired undisputed political power for the next five years. On August 28, 1945, Mao Tse-tung arrived at Chungking accompanied by the American Ambassador, General Patrick Hurley, another tyro in diplomacy, and my Chungking friend radioed me that my message had been duly forwarded to Mr. Mao in person. Of course, to this day I have never received a reply.



In conclusion, I want sincerely to voice my hearty agreement with the reflections of my old friend Dr. Stuart on the China "White Paper" and on what policy his great country should pursue in regard to China. And, since this is an introduction written by an unreconstructed, heathen Chinese to a book of memoirs by a great Christian leader, I would like to conclude with a quotation from his beloved New Testament. When in 1949 I read Secretary Dean Acheson's Letter of Transmittal of the China "White Paper" and came to these sentences: "...the ominous result of the civil war in China was beyond the control of the government of the United States. Nothing that this country did or could have done within the reasonable limits of its capabilities could have changed that result; nothing that was left undone by this country has contributed to it."—when I read those sentences, I wrote on the margin: "Matthew 27:24."

This is the text:

*When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just man: see ye to it.*

Because of the betrayal of China at Yalta, because of its withholding of effective aid to China at crucial times, and, above all, because of its great power and undisputed world leadership, the United States was not "innocent of the blood" of fallen China.

And I agree with Dr. Stuart that the least the United States can do to redeem itself is to continue in its refusal to recognize the Communist Government and continue to oppose admission of that government to China's place in the United Nations. That is at least in line with the great tradition of the historic Doctrine of Non-recognition upheld by Henry L. Stimson and Herbert Hoover and written into the Atlantic Charter by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill.

Hu SHIH

Hu SHIH, *professor of Chinese philosophy and later of Chinese literature at the National Peking University, 1917-1937; Dean of College of Letters at the same University, 1931-37; President of the same University, 1946-49. Chinese Ambassador to the United States, 1938-1942. He is usually known as the founder of the Chinese literary renaissance which has brought about the recognition and general adoption of the living spoken tongue (pai hua) as the tool of literature and education in place of the dead classical Chinese.*



# Fifty Years in China







# FOREWORD

I have felt acutely the irony of my having been my country's Ambassador to China at a time when all that I had previously accomplished in the country to which I was accredited was apparently being destroyed. But my sense of frustration, my disappointments and anxieties have been only mental, whereas I know of many of my countrymen and other "foreigners" who, trapped in China when this happened—most of them voluntarily—have been roughly treated, some insulted, some imprisoned, some tortured in mind or body or both, some denied contact with their Chinese or other friends, and nearly all subjected to loss of all their property. A few died under this treatment. The treatment accorded to many millions of Chinese has been far more distressing. Many have been executed and many starved to death. I have recently been informed that no less than forty million have been condemned to forced labor. Many have preferred to leave their homes and go into exile despite the hardships involved. Many others have wished that they might take that course but have been unable to make their escape.

There was in China before the Communists came to power much that was good and much that was not good. There is, since they took over, less of the former and more of the latter. My lifetime effort and that of my missionary and educational collaborators was devoted to making better that which was good and making less that which was not good. The visible evidence of that effort has been in considerable part liquidated: plants and equipment, churches, schools, buildings and hospitals have in some cases been destroyed and in more cases appropriated by the Communists for their own purposes. I feel, however, that the major part of the investment made by the patrons of missionary and educational and

