PIONEER MEDICAL
MISSIONARY WORK IN KOREA

By Sherwood Hall, M. D. (much shortened)

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By Sherwood Hall M. D.

“There’s no use in going further,—it’s the end of cultivation”;—
So they said, and I believed it; broke my land and sowed my crops,
Built my barns and strung my fences in the little border station,
Tucked away below the foothills where the trails run out and stop.
Till a voice as bad as Conscience, rang in-terminable changes,
On one everlasting whisper, day and night repeated so—"Something hidden, go and find it, go and look beyond the ranges,—
Something lost behind the ranges, lost and waiting for you! Go!"

In obedience to the voice medical missionaries have answered the call and have gone where the trails run out and stop. It seems that Korea, the Land of the Morning Calm, the one-time Hermit Nation, has especially attracted the pioneer medical missionary.

I—Pioneering in the Capital

While Dr. Maclay was securing permission from His Majesty the King of Korea to open medical and educational work the first pioneer medical missionary was already preparing to enter the country. Dr. Horace N. Allen of the Northern Presbyterian Mission had been in China for a year, rather discouraged about the prospects of opening medical work. In Shanghai Dr. Allen met a Dr. Henderson who gave him a letter of introduction to friends in Korea and urged him to go to Seoul where a doctor was needed.

Dr. Allen decided to go Seoul and grow up with the country. He wrote to the Board of Foreign Missions, and they cabled him to go. The pioneer spirit of the man is revealed in his significant comment,—"I should have resigned and gone anyway had they not given permission."

Dr. Allen arrived in Seoul late in September and was
officially designated as physician to the American Legation. Private practice continued for about three months, when on the night of December fourth the revolt of 1884 broke out. Dr. Allen was called to treat Prince Min Young Ik who had been badly wounded. The distinguished patient recovered, luckily for Dr. Allen's safety and reputation. Finding it impossible to attend to the many sick and wounded Koreans at their homes Dr. Allen through the American Legation, proposed that the Korean Government provide a suitable building to be used as a hospital. This was done and money was furnished for equipment and a native staff of assistants was appointed.

We may be glad that the man on the spot was a man able to meet the need of the occasion. Let us be thankful that it resulted as it did for success led to royal favor. The value of Dr. Allen's services to Korea was recognized by the Emperor's bestowal of the decoration of the first grade of Tai-Keuk, the highest award granted to any outside royalty itself.

The First Methodist Hospital. About the time that Dr. Allen opened Government Hospital Dr. W. B. Scranton arrived in Seoul. Dr. Scranton assisted Dr. Allen for a short time, after which he opened a hospital which the King designated as See-Pyeng-Wun or Universal Relief Hospital. Two years later Dr. Meta Howard arrived as the first physician sent out by the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society. She treated the women patients for two years when ill-health compelled her to return to America. Her successor, Dr. Rosetta Sherwood arrived in October 1890.

Immediately upon arrival Dr. Sherwood formed a medical training class numbering one Japanese and four Korean girls. Of this class Dr. Esther Kim Pak later received her M. D. degree from the Woman's Medical College of Baltimore and thus became the first Korean physician to practice Western medicine in Korea. Dr. Sherwood also developed medical work for women in the eastern part of Seoul. From this grew the East Gate Church and the Lillian Harris Memorial Hospital. This latter institution has the distinction of having more babies born than any other hospital in Korea.

Medical Training for Women. From 1923 to 1926 Dr. Hall acted as Superintendent of the Lillian Harris Memorial Hospital. During these years she was planning for a school
that would make it possible for Korean girls to have medical training in their own land.

Single handed and with little financial aid Dr. Hall began the organization of such a school and the Women's Medical Institute was finally opened in September 1928. The faculty volunteer their services in this most unique social service work in Korea. The fruits of their voluntary teaching was shown this very June when the first class of girls who entered were graduated, five of whom successfully passed the difficult government examinations, with flying colors and are now fully accredited doctors. These examinations are the same as those required of missionary doctors who seek license to practice medicine.

Upon the fifth anniversary of the founding of the institute Dr. Hall paid a splendid tribute to her Korean associates and voiced her hope that the institute might soon develop into a fully accredited medical college for women. A committee of prominent citizens is now working to bring this dream of Dr. Hall's into reality.

Severance Union Medical College. The Royal Korean hospital established by Dr. Allen was later transferred to the Presbyterian Mission, in 1894. Dr. O. R. Avison of that Mission, who was in charge of the hospital conceived the idea that medical work in places like Seoul should be an union enterprise, participated in by all missions, and not competitive. While on furlough in 1900 Dr. Avison secured from Mr. L. H. Severance gifts for the opening of such an enterprise in Seoul. The hospital work conducted by Dr. Scranton was then discontinued.

Dr. Avison also began plans for the training of medical students, and the first class was graduated in 1908. Proposals for union in this enterprise were made and beginning that year Dr. E. D. Follwell and Dr. W. T. Reid began to make weekly trips to Seoul to give lectures at the medical college. In 1912 the name of the college was changed to Severance Union Medical College and Dr. N. H. Bowman and Dr. J. D. VanBuskirk were appointed full time workers.

During the next fifteen years or more Methodist students were in the great majority in the college. This was due to the fact that the Methodist high schools had registered at an early date with the government while the
Presbyterian schools had not done so, and graduates from the unregistered schools could not be received by the College.

At present Dr. E. W. Anderson of the Methodist Episcopal Church South and Dr. Norman Found of the Methodist Episcopal Church represent the Methodists in this great union enterprise.

II—Pioneering in the Interior

By 1890 the missionaries were planning to extend their work into the interior. In most cases it was a medical man who began the work of opening the new station.

Pioneering in Pyengyang. Before coming to Korea Dr. Sherwood had been engaged in medical welfare work in Roosevelt Dispensary in New York City. The physician in charge was Dr. William James Hall. Dr. Hall was a missionary volunteer. He followed Dr. Sherwood to Korea where they were married June 27th, 1892 by the Rev. D. A. Bunker.

Shortly after Dr. Hall’s arrival in Korea Mr. Appenzeller suggested a trip to the border at Wi-ju. Dr. Hall was greatly impressed with Pyengyang and suggested opening mission work there where as yet no mission had a foot-hold. Bishop Malleson promptly appointed Dr. Hall to the task and immediately at the close of the annual meeting in August 1892 Dr. Hall went to Pyengyang and began the work of securing property.

In the spring of 1894 Dr. Hall was joined by Mrs. Hall and son (Sherwood) but it was not long before the anti-foreign feeling and the resulting persecution caused the American Consul to order the Halls to return to some treaty port. They had barely reached Seoul when the Sino-Japanese War broke out and Pyengyang was the scene of a bloody battle of that War.

In Dr. Hall’s last letter he speaks of a return visit to Pyengyang after the battle. “I have been treating several gun-shot wounds,” he says. “I use my bamboo cot for a stretcher and our Christians are the ambulance staff. They also bring wood and water. The hymns of praise that less than a year ago would have brought curses are now listened to with delight. I rejoice that we came when we did.”
Dr. Hall was stricken with fever and taken to Seoul. The delays incident to the long trip by boat before medical aid could be secured were too much for his exhausted condition. It is fitting that a memorial stone has been placed in the First Methodist Church in Pyenyang on the site where Dr. Hall organized our first church in northern Korea.

Dr. Hall’s place was promptly filled by Dr. E. D. Follwell, staunch pioneer, who carried on the work until 1920, when his place was taken by Dr. A. G. Anderson. That same year the Presbyterian Mission united with us in union medical work and appointed Dr. J. D. Bigger as their representative. In January 1932 a third unit was added to this union when the staff and plant of the Hospital of Extended Grace of the Women’s Foreign Missionary Society entered the Union and the Pyenyang Union Christian Hospital was organized. This latter hospital had been begun by Dr. Rosetta Hall when she returned to reopen work in Pyenyang in 1898. The original building had been a memorial to Dr. Hall’s daughter Edith who had died in the city of dysentery. This work begun by Dr. Hall was later carried on for many years by Dr. Mary M. Cutter.

The results have far exceeded the fondest hopes of the promoters of the union enterprise. The number of inpatients doubled in ten years and the total number of dispensary patients has trebled. The value of the charity work has increased 140%. During the past three years the number of conversions incidental to the Medical work has exceeded 600 per year. Dr. Kang has established a remarkable reputation in eye-ear-nose-and-throat work.

Through the generosity of his friends in the Swedish Methodist Church, Dr. A. G. Anderson has been able to install first-class X-Ray equipment and the X-Ray work done in this department is widely known as of a very high order.

Pioneering in Songdo’s Ginseng Shed. Dr. and Mrs. R. A. Hardie first came to Korea in September 1889 as representatives of the Y. M. C. A. of the Medical College of Toronto, Canada. During the first winter in Korea, Dr. Hardie did some work in the Government Hospital in Seoul. In the
Haeju, Korea

Milktime on the Salvation Farm

The Salvation Chapel

Happy Hour in the Salvation Farm. Every Sunday night a church service is held. The congregation is joyous.

Ah, what a wonderful experience! The music is smooth and uplifting.

Fingers crossed!
beginning that the great revival of 1906—7 began. Largely through Dr. Hardie’s own evangelistic efforts there began in 1903 in Wonsan a remarkable out-pouring of evangelistic fervor which gradually swept over all Korea and into Manchuria and China. The movement reached its climax in 1907 in the Methodist and Presbyterian churches of Pyengyang where there was a signal outpouring of God’s spirit upon the Korean churches, upon the missionaries and their children. The writer was one of the children who gave his heart to God and dedicated his life to medical missionary service at that time and looks upon Dr. Hardie as his spiritual father.

One dream come true. Medical work has been begun at various other centers by the Methodist Episcopal Church, but only one of these is now left functioning. In 1908 Dr. A. H. Norton began dispensary work in Yeng Byen. Two years later the resignation of Dr. Kent at Haiju made Dr. Norton’s transfer necessary. Dr. I. M. Miller soon arrived on the field to take Dr. Norton’s place at Yeng Byen, but after four years poor health in his family caused his return to America. Years passed and Yeng Byen’s dream of a hospital faded away.

At Kongju Dr. McGill labored for a couple of years in opening the station. In 1908 came Dr. J. D. VanBuskirk; a dispensary was opened and the site was levelled for a hospital. But funds did not come and Dr. VanBuskirk was transferred to Severance Union Medical College. In 1921 Dr. Norman Found came to Kongju, but after five years of working in a small dispensary while waiting for funds for a hospital he too was transferred to Severance. Kongju’s dream of a hospital had likewise vanished.

At Wonju Dr. A. G. Anderson opened medical work in 1912. Buildings and equipment were given by the Swedish Methodist Church. This continued to prosper until Dr. Anderson was called to fill the vacancy in Pyengyang in 1920. After four years the hospital work was reopened by Dr. S. E. McManis. Dr. McManis went on furlough in 1930. Again ill-health prevented a doctor’s return and another hospital was closed.

In Haiju Dr. Norton continued the dispensary work begun by Dr. Kent, and later built the Norton Memorial Hospital. In 1922 Dr. Norton was transferred to Severance Hospital. Dr. K. W. Hidy followed to Haiju but remained only two years. In 1926 Dr. Sherwood Hall and Dr. Marion
Hall arrived in Haiju. In Pyengyang Dr. Hall as a boy had seen Korea’s first woman physician, Dr. Esther Kim Pak stricken with the dread white plague. He had resolved to build a sanitarium where Korea’s youth might be taught how to get well and how to stay well. In October 1928, Korea’s first sanitarium for the tuberculous was dedicated at Haiju. One medical dream had come true! The sanitarium now has a capacity of over fifty beds.

The call for pioneers in rural Korea. Due to a lack of personnel and funds there has been a tendency to centralize medical work of the missions. The result is that the Norton Memorial Hospital at Haiju is the only rural hospital of the Methodist church now operating. Yet eighty percent of Korea’s people are rural. Korean doctors concentrate in the cities. Dr. H. H. Cynn recently called attention to the great need for medical missionaries who would go into the country and do the type of work that neither the government nor the Korean doctors can as yet do. It is a great pity that there is no one to continue the unique and much needed work of Dr. Mary M. Cutler, the Dispensary on Wheels, which reached the remotest rural hamlets with healing and with the gospel message.

It may be noted in passing that Dr. Mary M. Cutler shares with Dr. Rosetta S. Hall the unique distinction of being the only medical workers in the Methodist church to have had the privilege of giving a life-time of medical service to Korea. Both have served more than forty years in the divine service of healing.

III. Pioneer nursing in Korea

The story of pioneer nursing in Korea makes very interesting reading. Miss Ella Lewis who arrived in Korea in 1891 and served until her retirement in 1904 was the first practical nurse in Korea. She had been engaged in nursing in Roosevelt Dispensary in New York and was a great help in the medical work in those early days. She came as assistant to Dr. Rosetta Sherwood.

But it was not until March 1903 that the first graduate nurses, Miss Margaret Edmunds, of the Methodist Episcopal Church arrived on the field. Miss Edmunds’ trip with Dr. Mary M. Cutler and Dr. Rosetta Sherwood Hall by way of England and India was unexpectedly a very long and tedious
Sea-sickness, not of the walking type, characterized that historic journey which began in September 1902 and ended in March 1903.

Upon arrival Miss Edmunds began to establish a nurses's training school. The first question was, By what name shall a nurse be known in the Korean language? Never in all the centuries of their history had a woman become a nurse. With the aid of a scholarly old Korean gentleman it was decided that a Korean nurse should be known as a Kan-ho-wun, one who cares for and protects the sick.

A second question was that of uniform. Of this Miss Edmunds says "After much dreaming by night and planning by day it was necessary for me to say to my dress-making instincts, 'Arise thou that sleepest,' and we went to our knees for the purpose of cutting into the precious cloth that had been secured after a long wait. The uniforms were made."

Miss Edmunds not only established a very fine training school for the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society but also assisted Miss E. L. Shields in organizing the Nurses' Training School at Severance in 1906. Miss Edmunds later married W. B. Harrison of the Southern Presbyterian Mission.

Miss Gilberta Harris was the first nurse of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South to be appointed to Korea. She came to Ivey Hospital, Songdo in 1908.

The years 1919-22 were notable for the number of nurses who were appointed to Korea. In the words of Dr. Mary M. Cutler "The Lord almost overwhelmed us by sending so many nurses to Korea in answer to our prayers." With this new blood in the nursing staff it became possible to begin a new type of work, that of public health and baby-welfare. The difficulties and the possibilities of this work are well illustrated in the extract from one report. Miss Rossenberger says, "We literally got cold feet when we opened our work at Seoul in the Social Evangelistic Centre, because people did not understand what we wanted and would not let us into their homes. Dr. R. S. Hall started our clinic for us and that first afternoon we had one patient! Now we have 462 babies enrolled."

Miss Bording has built up a splendid and almost unique work in Kongju. In 1933, over two thousand health examinations were made; 64,666 bottles of milk were distributed
from the milk station; five nurses were given post-graduate training; a sub-clinic was established at Taiden where 110 bottles of milk are now distributed daily. Miss Bording has been granted a medical license for Kongju and Taiden by the government authorities.

In Pyengyang a large public health and baby welfare work has been established. Both in Severance and in Pyengyang Union Christian Hospital modern training schools for nurses have been established and are now registered schools, training educated Korean women to be excellent nurses.

I close with the following verses from a hymn, entitled, "Who will Go?", written by the blind poet, Fanny Crosby, on the departure of William James Hall for the mission field in 1891.

Dearest brother, you are going
Where you oft may sow in tears
And the fruit of earnest labor,
Be withheld perhaps for years;
Though you toil amid their changes,
Burning sun and chilling frost,
Not a seed will be forgotten,
Not a single blade be lost.

God be with you on the billows,
God protect you o'er the main,
In his tender, loving kindness,
Bring you back to us again;
But if otherwise determined,
And on earth we meet no more,
May we all sing hallelujah,
On the bright eternal shore.
KOREAN METHODISM
1884-1934

SEMI-CENTENNIAL