A Supplement to the Transactions of the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society

AN APPRECIATION   
OF THE LIFE AND WORK   
OF THE LATE RIGHT REVEREND MARK NAPIER TROLLOPE, D. D.   
BISHOP IN KOREA;   
AND FOR THIRTEEN YEARS   
PRESIDENT OF THE KOREA BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

A PAPER READ BY **H. H. UNDERWOOD Esq. Ph. D.** AT A MEETING OF THE SOCIETY HELD AT SEOUL ON NOVEMBER 24th, 1930.

The Right Reverend Mark Napier Trollope D.D. Bishop in Corea [28 March, 1862 - 6 November, 1930]

We are warned "De Mortuiis nihil nisi Bonum" and whether from this cause. from sentimentality or charity it has become the custom to utter such fulsome extravagances about the departed that in many cases their best friends would hardly recognize the person described. This lavish expenditure not only leaves us with hopelessly depleted vocabularies but with the current value of whatever we say greatly depreciated in public estimation when we suffer the loss of one on whom we might well expend some of the phrases so recklessly squandered on lesser personalities.

Fortunately those who in Kipling's words "praise our God for that they served His World" are not in need of lengthy epitaphs or high flown words of eulogy. It is however both valuable and inspiring for those who have some distance yet to go, to stop and consider briefly the records of those who have "fought the good fight, kept the faith and finished the course." It was with this idea in mind that the Council of this Society honored me with instructions to present to-day a brief resume of the life of our Honored and Lamented President, The Right Reverend Mark Napier Trollope. D.D. Bishop in Corea.

The boy, Mark, was born in London in March [*March 28*] of 1862. His father was a surveyor and architect by profession, having his offices near the Houses of Parliament and being largely employed on public works by the City of Westminster and several City Companies. He was a Warden of the Church of St. Matthias in Kensington and, always a devout churchman, gave largely of his talents in the building of the beautiful church of St. Cuthbert, Philbeach Gardens. His mother was a Napier of the Napiers of Glasgow and a Presbyterian but later Confirmed in the Church of England by Bishop Corfe, known to all of us as the Pioneer of the Church of England Mission in Corea.

His grandfather, David Napier, is said to have been the first to practically realize the place which steam navigation was soon to occupy and the importance of the construction of steam vessels. He was not merely a famous shipbuilder on the famous river Clyde but a leader and pioneer in a great industry. The physical likeness between Bishop Trollope and his grandfather is said to have been startling, but apparently more than features and physique were inherited, for the grandson, at the exteme limits to which the grandfather's ships might sail, showed the same qualities of leadership which the older man had proved on the banks of the Clyde.

Robert Napier, another of the same family, was also a famous ship-builder executing over four hundred contracts for the Danish, Dutch, Russian, Japanese, Turkish, Italian and other governments and being entrusted with more than sixty contracts by the British Admiralty. Young Mark sang in the Choir of St. Matthias and from a very early age hoped and planned at some time to be ordained. He took his schooling at Lancing College, Sussex, one of the principal schools of the Woodard Foundation. From Lancing he went to New College, Oxford, and in 1883 took 2nd Class Classical Moderations (the first public examinations after matriculation) and 3rd Class Literae Humaniores in 1885, his B. A. in 1886 and his M. A. in 1888. His theological training was taken at Cuddesdon College, Oxfordshire and he was ordained to the Diaconate in 1887 and to the priesthood in 1888 by the then Bishop of Norwich. From 1887 to 1890 he was Curate at Great Yarmouth and while there saw an appeal from Bishop Corfe for volunteers. He offered himself and came to Corea in the same year.

From 1890 to 1902 be was Chaplain to the Bishop and Senior S. P. G. Missionary, and from 1896-1902 he was Vicar General. In 1902 he returned to England on acount of the ill health of his father and was for some years Vicar of St. Saviour's, Poplar, East London. In addition to the ordinary difficulties of a great slum parish it was his lot to follow Father Dolling the famous slum worker. Under such circumstances there is apt to be plenty of unfavorable criticism of the successor of a beloved leader and it was characteristic of Bishop Trollope that even under these conditions he was remarkably successful while in the parish. During this time he was offered the Bishopric of Shantung but refused, apparently feeling that if he was to leave England again it must be for Corea. In 1910 Bishop Gore asked him to go to St. Alban's, Birmingham where he was when news was received of Bishop Turner's death in Corea. On July 25th, 1911, the Rev. M. N. Trollope was consecrated Bishop of Corea in St. Paul's Cathedral by the Archbishep of Canterbury, Dr. Davidson, assisted by no less than four missionary and five English Bishops. In this same year the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon him by Oxford University.

Bishop Trollope's return to Corea in 1911 was the beginning of the period in which most of those present to-day knew him. From this date his service for Corea was continuous although this service entailed a number of trips to England. On one of these, occasions his heart, which had interfered with his undergraduate athletic career, combined with a nervous breakdown, threatened to keep him permanently at home but fortunately he recovered and returned to Corea for further years of usefulness. His health was not robust but it seemed reasonable to hope that by the exercise of care he might serve this land for many years more. This spring I was presumptuous enough to ask him to deliver the commencement address to the graduates at the Chosen Christian College. He graciously consented and at no small difficulty to himself, came and made an address which will long be remembered by all who heard it.

At the time he told me that pressure was being put upon him to attend the Lambeth Conference in London, but, using the Corean phrase, that he had "a-not-going-mind". Later he told me that "not-going-mind or no" he would have to go and as we all know he left us in June and the Conference was enriched by his counsel and witness. While in England he ordained a Korean and a Japanese to the Diaconate, and then started back with them via Europe. This last journey was not only toward Corea but full of Corea for en route he visited such museums and libraries in Paris as might confirm or throw light on certain questions of Corean culture and literature, and also visited at St. Ottilien, Bavaria, the Mother House of the Benedictine Mission in Corea, where be doubtless took up with Father Eckardt, on behalf of this Society, the question of the translation into English of the latter's paper on "Corean Music." Thence via Rome and the ports he came ever closer to Corea. His journey was almost at an end, his bags packed and with his coat on preparatory to landing the Bishop was on the promenade deck when the fatal collision occurred [*on November 6, 1930, as the ship was entering harbor in Japan*]. He ran below to his stateroom, put on his life-belt, ran up again to the boat-deck and took his place by the boat to which he had been assigned, but the sudden exertion plus the excitement was too much for his heart and he fainted. From this faint he never recovered consciousness. Many of you who had hoped to welcome him back to Corea, went to the station on the night when his body was brought back to this his adopted country. All of you were present when be was laid to rest in the Cathedral.

And now that the living presence is gone what remains to witness of his work ?

Like other great leaders Bishop Trollope was wont to belittle his own part and make much of the accomplishments of his predecessors and co-workers. But those who are best in a position to know tell me that the whole work of his mission felt his influence both in the earlier days and since 1911 when he himself directed and guided the work. They tell us that his vision, his encouragement, his unswerving purpose combined with tact and unfailing kindness and the inspiration of his presence will long be felt in the mission and church.

More tangible for those who must see and touch are the architectural witnesses to his work. The Church of St. Peter and St. Paul on the island of Kangwha has been called the only successful adaptation of the beautiful Korean architecture to modern church purposes. In harmony with the main structure stands the three-arched Corean gate, a loving memorial to Bishop Corfe. Both the church and the gate are the fruit of Bishop Trollope's plans, vision and energy. In Seoul stands the Cathedral, At the time of Bishop Turner's death some e 3,000 was raised for a memorial to him. But for lack of sufficient funds it seemed as though nothing further could be done. Largely through Bishop Trollope's work a bequest of £7,000 came to the mission from the late Mr. H. Wills. Through personal friendship for Bishop Trollope as well as zeal for the Church the distinguished English architect Mr. Arthur Dixon, Fellow of the Institute of British Architects gave his services and made two trips to Corea personally to supervise the work. To many of us it detracts not at all from the memory of Bishop Turner that the structure as it now stands speaks to us of Bishop Trollope and it seems very appropriate that Bishop Trollope should lie in the Turner Chapel.

Bishop Trollope's literary work is not voluminous. This Society has bad the honor of publishing his papers on "Kangwha", "Introduction to the Study of Corean Buddhism" and his "Arboretum Corrense" in two parts. Most of you listened to portions of his paper on "Corean Literature" which will he published as the next volume of our *Transactions.* In addition to these papers the Bishop was the author of the book "The Church in Corea" and contributed essays to "Essays Catholic and Critical" as well as articles to the magazine "The East and the West" and a pamphlet "The Peace of Jerusalem" which in no small way influenced the Lambeth Conference; and other periodicals. He was also a member of the Committee on Bible Translation and therefore had some part in the gift of the Bible to the Corean people.

Bishop Trollope was a thorough scholar and one of the few in Corea who had made himself at home in the old Corean literature. This he read as you or I might run through lighter reading in our own language. His interest in this literature led him to collect specimens till his library of old Corean books numbers at present something around 10,000 volumes and contains many priceless editions. These are thus preserved for the future in what is now one of the best private collections in existence. The Landis Library of Occidental works on Korea and the Far East is also largely his contribution for it is now many times the size of the collection and represents many hundreds of pounds of and many hours of time expended by the Bishop in gathering these volumes.

It is unneccessary to-day to tell you what Bishop Trollope did for this Society. A member of it since its foundation in 1900, he has been our President for 13 years. The revival of the society in 1912 and its more recent revival into activity were almost entirely his work. Many if not all who have contributed to the published *Transactions* will tell you of his encouragement and help and our minutes tell of generous financial aid, the most recent example of which was seen in the beautiful coloured plates illustrating Sister Mary Clare's paper on "Korean Wayside Flowers", one of these plates being the gift of the Sister's mother and the other a gift from our President.

There is much that I would like to say personally, for to me he represented the ideal of a Scholar, a Gentleman, a Gracious Friend and a Prince of the Church. But if you did not know him certainly no words of mine can bring you any adequate idea of either the Bishop or the Man, and if it was your privilege to know him my words would only trammel your vision.

I will however ask you to listen to Bishop Trollope's own words with which he closed his address to the students at the Chosen Christian College :

"I am an old man now, and a fortnight hence I shall be 68 years old. And as we know "the days of our age are three score years and ten and though men be so strong that they come to four score years yet is their strength then but tabour and sorrow." Yet there is a glory as well as sadness in the sunset. As I look back over my past life, although I am conscious of many shortcomings and wasted opportunities my chief feeling is one of thankfulness for all that life has brought to me, and for the many blessings, bodily and spiritual which have fallen to my share. And the glory of the sunset not only illumines the day that is past, but is the herald of the morrow's sunrise. For death to the Christian is not so much a "chorup" (Completion - Corean word for graduation) ,s a "commencement". And I, at the end of my earthly career equally with today's graduates at the beginning of theirs, may look forward with the courage of hope to a future as full of the promise of progress as anything that life has had to shew us in the past.”