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Yokohama, Japan

March 8, 1887

Horace Grant Underwood

Dear Dr. Ellinwood:-

The Mission voted me permission to take a run to Yokohama for the change and I am here now and expect to be leaving again in about a week.

There are one or two matters that I wish to write to you about and hence this letter. First, then, in one matter there has arisen a difference of opinion in the mission and I want the Board to tell me what position they desire me to take.

Several men were baptised by me just before I left Korea. They passed a good examination, gave good reasons for the hope that was in them and in spite of the fact that it might be death to them to profess Christianity, said that they must obey God rather than man. Drs. Allen and Heron were both present at their examination and united with me in the opinion that they should be baptised. A few days afterwards however I received the enclosed letter from Dr. Allen which I answered as per letter also enclosed. It is my desire that the Board should tell me what they desire my stand to be.

Another matter of great importance to the Presbyterian mission and one that I had hoped to let you know of before, but there has been no mail leaving, is the opening of the new Port of Pyang An Do or just across the border. The primary idea was to open Pyeng An [Pyeng Yang] itself, a city larger than Seoul and one to which the revolutionary party of a few years ago wished to move the capital, but this is a little too far up the river and it is thought that better results will be obtained by opening a port a few miles nearer the sea. Wherever the port may be opened it is bound to be of great importance to Korea as it is in what can best be termed the manufacturing district and right near to the coal mines which are said to be quite extensive. It is of importance then that this place be occupied at once and we ought to be ready to do so but there is no one to put in there. If we do not go in, the Methodists will. They are expecting out some three new families for Korea alone this spring and it seems that they are going to distance us. We could double and treble our work in six months had we the men and I cannot understand why it is that we have been left so long without reinforcements. Anyhow, whether you reinforce us at Seoul or not, you ought by no means to let the new port be opened without at once starting a station there.

Mr. Appenzeller [Methodist missionary] and I have prepared a re-translation of the Gospel of Mark, as the work of Rijutei has proved itself as useless; and I brought it over with me to get it printed. I had heard about the various difficulties in Japan and had received special instruction from the missionaries in Korea to get it printed in such a way as to avoid these difficulties. On consultation with Dr. Hepburn he suggested that I should ask the three Bible societies to print it conjointly.

Had there been no Bible Society in the field, we as Americans would have preferred that the American Society should do the work, but we had to recognise the fact that the British and Scotch societies are now both there on the field, the former with a Korean colporteur who has been working for them for two years and the latter with two Japanese colporteurs, one in Fusan and one in Seoul. Under these circumstances nothing but the plan proposed by Dr. Hepburn seemed open to us.

I proposed the matter to the two societies here and was sorry to find that the American Society could not go in for the matter till they heard from home and I therefore decided to let the Scotch Society print it with the understanding that as soon as word comes from home the American Society can unite if they desire to do so. About the British and Foreign Bible Society, Korea is worked from their China agency and I have written to Mr. Bryant telling him that he too can unite if they desire to do. The missionaries as a whole in Korea have requested me to be very

Seoul, Korea

August 20, 1887

John W. Heron

My dear Dr. Ellinwood:

At our Annual Meeting held August 18, we audited and approved the treasurer's accounts for the year just ended, full particulars of which Mr. Underwood as treasurer will send to you. He will also tell you how we used the surplus we found after posting all our liabilities.

As we had not heard any reply to our estimates except what you had written to Mr. Underwood on your receipt of our estimates, we were obliged to conclude that you had granted them in full, so a committee was appointed (Drs. Allen & Heron) to purchase the property adjoining the mission for which an appropriation was asked. That this is a wise investment of money is evident to all who watch the growth of this section of the city. The foreign settlement will be here, and this property, in addition to the added safety in health which the removal of the tumbledown, crowded huts which now cover it, will give, will be available either for the erection of new buildings or for sale to others.

Since writing the above, the mail has come in and we now know exactly what has been granted us, we are very glad the estimates are as large as they are, for our work here is steadily increasing, and if we only had men we could have a school of at least fifty by the end of 1887. The work is open to us, not so much perhaps in the way of teaching of Jesus Christ, but in school work which the government will very gladly encourage in every possible way. Send us out more men as soon as you can find them. They must learn the language before they can teach of Christ and while they are studying they can be well employed in teaching and at the same time become acquainted with the people among whom they are to work.

If the work for women is to be begun successfully we must have a lady who can take charge of it. The ladies now on the field with household cares cannot devote the time to the work that it will demand in its beginning, though they could each give some hours a day. Last Spring Mrs. Heron began a school and had altogether six girls and women in attendance, but after teaching them for six weeks she was obliged to give it up on account of a serious attack ofritis on both sides, which of course made work impossible for some months. Indeed, it was not until we came to the river that she recovered her usual strength. There being no one else to take up the work for various reasons, she was obliged to send them to Mrs. Scranton of the M.E. [Methodist] Mission. Send us a lady of mature years who won't be likely to get married within the first year of her life here, one whose heart is full of missionary zeal and is sufficiently steadfast not to be spoiled by attentions.

On motion of Dr. Allen, seconded by Mrs. Bunker, the mission voted unanimously to stand by the plan of work presented some time ago by Mr. Underwood and at [that] time unanimously adopted by the mission. This action was taken because this plan was agreeable to all and seemed to us on the field the best under which to work. As you have already received a copy of this plan there is no need for me to send you another. What will be the end of the difficulties here is still uncertain. I have not yet decided what I will do and Mr. Underwood has not told me of his decision. As my hands are too sore to hold a pen I have, as you see by this, borrowed Mr. Underwood's Caligraph to write this on.

Yours very truly,

John W. Heron, M.D.

(from the Presbyterian Historical Society microfilm reel #174, Board of Foreign Missions documents, Vol. 2, letter #43, 1887)

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particular in this matter and I trust that the plan that has been followed may be of service.

There is also another matter that I desire some instruction about, although I have not as yet presented it to our mission. It is on the advisability of having a small press in Korea on which Christian pamphlets, etc. in Korean can be printed. If for every little thing that is to be done someone has to come to Japan or to go to China to have it done it will be very very costly work. As it is now, here I have to read the proof of Mark's Gospel because there is no Japanese that can read Korean. An attempt is going to be made to get a Korean in Tokyo to undertake it but it is not certain that one can be obtained. A small press would not cost much and it seems to me that it would be a paying investment.

But I must close. Trusting that you are enjoying good health I remain,

Yours Sincerely,

H.G. Underwood

