

**A MEMOIR OF MRS.
HENRIETTA SHUCK: THE
FIRST AMERICAN FEMALE
MISSIONARY TO CHINA**

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A Memoir of Mrs. Henrietta Shuck: The First American Female Missionary to China by J. B. Jeter

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J. B. JETER

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ENGRAVED BY J. GENTLEM.

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Henrietta "Shuck

A
MEMOIR
OF
MRS. HENRIETTA SHUCK,
THE
FIRST AMERICAN FEMALE MISSIONARY
TO
CHINA.

BY J. B. JETER,
PASTOR OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, RICHMOND, VA.

Fifth Thousand.

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P R E F A C E .

THE compiler deems it proper to state briefly the motives which induced him to prepare the following Memoir. Shortly after the death of the late lamented Mrs. Shuck, the members of the China mission held a meeting, and, with other resolutions suitable to the occasion, unanimously adopted the following:—

“*Resolved* — That the character and the circumstances attending the life of our departed sister are interesting and instructive, not only to us, but, if made public, are calculated to aid the cause of missions generally, and especially that in which she labored and died, and, therefore, that the Board be requested to appoint her former Pastor, the Rev. J. B. Jeter, or some other competent person, to prepare a Memoir of her life.

J. LEWIS SHUCK, Sec.”

In due time, the compiler received a letter from the Corresponding Secretary of the Board, in Boston, informing him that they heartily concurred in the resolution, and desiring him to “prepare a suitable memorial of Mrs. Shuck’s worth and works.” The appointment accorded with the views and wishes of her family and friends. The compiler felt himself solemnly called, in

the providence of God, to decide whether he would undertake the task assigned him. After serious deliberation, and, as he trusts, earnest prayer for divine guidance, he resolved to engage in the preparation of the Memoir. Various considerations conducted him to this decision.

Mrs. Shuck was the *first* female American missionary who went to China. She was a lady of good mind, pleasant manners, and most fervent piety, and self-sacrificing devotion to the cause of missions. Her correspondence, on examination, was found to be copious and intrinsically excellent. If the compiler has not been deceived by his associations with the esteemed subject of the Memoir, many of her letters, and much of her journals, are distinguished by a beautiful simplicity and a most touching pathos, and all of them by a kind, generous, and pious spirit. Her life, though it did not abound in striking incidents and brilliant achievements, was filled up with diligent, self-denying, and earnest efforts for the salvation of the heathen.

China is a singular, and, to the enlightened Christian, who prays and labors for the salvation of the world, a most interesting country. The recent opening of its most important ports, by solemn treaty, to Christian missionaries, and the unexpected toleration of Christianity in the empire, have turned all Christian eyes and hearts towards it. It is the largest and most important mission field on the globe. Much information concerning China, its history, government, language, religions, the manners, customs, and moral condition of the people, &c., will be found incorporated in the Memoir. To those who have not access to

other sources of knowledge, it will convey much information concerning the "Celestial Empire," and that, too, not always in dry detail, but frequently in pleasing narrative.

Of the execution of the work the author need say nothing; of that the public will judge, and neither explanation nor apology can modify the decision. He may, however, be permitted to say, that his only reward for the labor of preparing the Memoir is the hope that it may promote the interests of true religion and the cause of missions. The profits accruing from the sale of the copy-right will be appropriated, one half to the education of Mrs. Shuck's children, and the other half to the cause of Foreign Missions, to be divided equally between the Northern and Southern Baptist Boards. To the compiler, this seemed the fairest distribution of the profits. To the private correspondence of Mrs. Shuck, cheerfully placed by the family in the hands of the writer, without the slightest expectation of pecuniary advantage to her children, the work will be mainly indebted for its interest. Nothing could be more suitable than that the children should reap the profits of their dear mother's intellectual efforts. But Mrs. Shuck was a missionary as well as a mother. While living, her anxieties, prayers, and labors, were divided between her loved offspring and the perishing heathen. Let the pecuniary profits of her Memoir be, in like manner, divided. As Mrs. Shuck labored under the patronage of the Boston Board, and as the Memoir has been compiled at their request, they have a fair claim to a portion of its profits; and as Mrs. Shuck was a southern lady, and her husband has connected

himself with this Board, it seems proper that they also should participate in the benefit. The compiler is aware that this explanation is not due to the public; that he has a perfect right to do what he will with his own; but, to prevent misconception, he has judged it better to make it, and hopes he shall be pardoned for giving the subject a prominence to which its importance does not entitle it.

He now commits the work to the consideration of the public, and to the blessing of God. Should it be the means of quickening the piety and increasing the liberality of Christians, and awakening a deeper, and stronger, and more effective interest in the cause of Foreign Missions, and especially for the evangelization of China, he will be richly compensated.

J. B. JETER.

Richmond, Sept., 1846.