

The Missionary World.

DURING close of June and the whole of July, great Christian Conferences, embracing our own and other communions, are held; we need only instance those at Mildmay and at Keswick, and the Conferences of the Student Christian Movement at Swanwick. None of these is primarily missionary, yet each has a wide bearing upon the evangelization of the world. All that uplifts a standard of Christian belief and Christian service, all that tends to deepen the experience of individual souls, directly affects the spread of the Gospel. The barrier lies not in any disability in the Message, but in the fact that it does not sufficiently dominate men to convert them into messengers. Here is where these great Conferences help. Their force lies not so much in the meetings set apart for foreign missions as in the meetings where the great truths of the Gospel are livingly applied. If Mildmay and Keswick are charged with vitalizing power, they will forward foreign work.

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We ask the prayers of our readers that this may be so, and more especially that, at the Students' Conferences at Swanwick, the young men and women from our colleges may face the great fact of Christ, with all that its recognition involves. The issues which lie behind these Conferences, and indeed the whole work of the Movement, grow clearer every year. Some of the ablest of the younger leaders in the mission-field had their training as officials of the Student Movement, and its influence in the home Churches grows steadily stronger. It promulgates a living Christianity, and from the first trains those under its influence to see realities at home and abroad in the light of the teachings of JESUS CHRIST. Thus it is little wonder that from its ranks come strenuous home advocates of foreign missions, as well as a steady stream of missionary volunteers.

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A Conference widely different in character, but also charged with import, met at Swanwick from June 12 to 14. It consisted of representatives of the Missionary Societies of Great Britain and Ireland, and is an outcome of the Edinburgh Conference. This is the second time of its meeting, and already it has had a unifying and illuminating effect. Nearly all the leading societies were represented, and several topics of great importance were discussed. One of these the question of co-operation between men and women in missionary administration at home and abroad, on which a special committee had prepared a most valuable report. We understand that this will be embodied in the General Report of the Conference, which will be awaited with keen expectation.

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The work of the Baptist Missionary Society for 1911-12 is effectively surveyed in *The Herald* in a special anniversary number. The Society is working among non-Christians in India (Bengal, Behar, North India, and Orissa); Ceylon; China (the Provinces of Shantung, Shansi, and Shensi); and on the Congo. It has also small missions in the West Indies and on the Continent of Europe. Its staff of European workers consists of 187 men missionaries, 138 missionaries' wives, and 29 single women, besides the 89 European women workers in the Baptist Zenana Mission. The distribution in non-Christian lands is as follows: India, 81 men, 66 wives, 2 single women; Ceylon, 4 men, 3 wives, 6 single women; China, 49 men, 35 wives, 5 single women; Africa, 45 men, 27 wives, 12 single women. The Society closes the year "with a debt of £11,980," but nevertheless the survey gives cause for great encouragement. The same striking opportunities are reported as by all other societies, and the blessing of God is resting on the work. It is interesting to see that the recent Indian census shows that the Baptist native Christian community in India is only 1,000 less than the Anglican, and is larger by 114,000 than the Lutherans, which come next below it. The aggregate Baptist

membership in India has increased in the last ten years by 50 per cent.

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We have more than once suggested that the evidential value of the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society was far too little recognized. The facts concerning the circulation of the Bible, and its living force throughout the world, are recorded, but they appear to be far too seldom used. Here, for instance, are some mere figures which stir us to thought. Last year, over 1,400,000 copies of the Scriptures were distributed by Chinese colporteurs and Bible-women. In South Malaya, Scriptures were sold in 43, and in South Africa in 80, different languages and dialects. Since 1906 the circulation of the Scriptures in Burma has nearly doubled. In Japan, the circulation shows a large decrease. This is a call to prayer, though it may be partly explained by the fact that the colporteurs have here been working in the less populous country districts. The colporteurs of the Society last year sold a total number of 3,300,000 copies of the Scriptures. The number of versions on the Society's list now includes 440 distinct forms of speech, 8 new versions having been added during the past year.

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Then here is a story in brief: A Moravian missionary has been working since 1900 amongst a little-known tribe—the Banigika—numbering from seven to ten thousand, in German East Africa, north of Lake Nyasa. They are an industrious people, and make keen Christians. The work has spread to 14 out-stations; there are 26 village schools, 183 baptized adults, and 127 children of Christian parents. The only authority on their language—which can be read by some of the surrounding tribes—is this Moravian missionary. He has just translated the New Testament into their language, and the Bible Society has agreed to publish it. Hitherto the little Christian Church has only had St. Matthew's Gospel. Think of the glorious access of light they will shortly have!

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A fascinating little article in *The Bible in the World* tells of a new translation of St. Mark's Gospel into "Chinook Jargon," giving the story of the growth of the strange *lingua franca*—"two-fifths Chinook, two-fifths other Indian tongues, the rest English and Canadian-French"—which has sprung up through the contact of traders with remnants of scattered Indian tribes in British Columbia and the territory of Alaska. This language has no pretensions as to its past or its future, but it provides the best means of giving the Word of God to some 50,000 Indians, many of them illiterate, but capable of understanding what is read to them in Chinook Jargon by their children. It is difficult to say which best illustrates the power of the Bible to meet human need—the record of enormous sales among the thronging millions of the East, or the strenuous efforts made to put its living message into the hands of a little band of African Christians, or a few remnants of scattered Indian tribes.

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The current number of *Our Missions*, the quarterly paper of the Friends' Foreign Mission Association, contains an interesting description of Ceylon, where the Friends have a strong and well-worked mission. Of late special emphasis has been laid upon the importance of maintaining a high level of spiritual life amongst the men and women who are the native workers in the mission, and thrusting responsibility upon the more experienced of them in order to develop "a strong indigenous Christian community." To prevent the Church life from being inherently weak, we read :

"It is essential that the people in our districts should be made to feel that the Christian message is not an exotic, an outside influence . . . but a life, a fact of universal significance, absolutely essential to *their* best interests and the fulfilment of *their* highest religious ideals, an inward knowledge which gives to all experience a newer, a richer and a fuller content. When the tremendous worth and power of the Christian Faith is *felt*, when it becomes a vital part of the people's existence, financial support will not be lacking."

We ask ourselves whether the words do not bear as closely upon us as upon our native Christian fellow-workers in Ceylon ?

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The Foreign Field of the Wesleyan Methodist Church contains in its June number some articles which should stimulate its readers. The Rev. J. H. Ritson contributes, to the series on "Africa," a paper on "The Bible in Africa"; the Rev. W. A. Cornaby of Shanghai, in the series on "The Non-Christian Religions of the World," writes on "Confucianism"; and there is a brief but suggestive paper on "The Hindu Labourer's Wife." In view of the approaching Centenary of the Wesleyan Missionary Society much space is being given to preparatory work. Mr. Goudie writes urgently and hopefully, and there is also an interesting reproduction of the "plan" drafted by Dr. Coke as early as 1784 for the establishment of missions among the heathen. From Dr. Stock's "History of the Church Missionary Society" (vol. i. pp. 58, 155) we learn the importance of the work of this great Wesleyan missionary leader who made "eighteen voyages across the Atlantic to carry the Gospel to the negro slaves in the West Indies," having been set apart by John Wesley for the work. Although the actual Centenary celebrations do not take place until October, 1913, it is not too soon for us to begin to uphold our Wesleyan brethren in prayer, that they may attain their hearts' desire, which Mr. Goudie has thus expressed :

"At those gatherings we hope to have with us representatives of all the branches of the great Methodist family across the seas, and the occasion should be one of joyous thanksgiving and thankoffering. . . . The occasion should be one of unalloyed gladness and thanksgiving as we review the past, and ungrudging and whole-hearted consecration as we face the future and take up the task of the new century. The Church must have a gift ready. The work requires that we should not fall a penny short of the sum requested—£260,000—with readiness to maintain the work of a larger programme with annual giving on a higher scale. But we aim in this Movement at making another and more acceptable gift to God in memory of His goodness through a hundred years—a gift of the entire Methodist Church, renewed and enlarged in the spirit of her mind, *fit* for service and consecrated to great world ends. In such an offering our fund, while it would be more than guaranteed, would be lost as an incident in a great spiritual movement."

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The ninety-fourth Annual Report of the London Association in aid of the Moravian Missions illustrates painfully the result

of the crippling of missionary finance. There is no lessening of earnest strenuous effort, but the splendid record of long-sustained work in the West Indies, in South California among the Indians, in Demerara, in Surinam, in South Africa, in Labrador, in Nicaragua, and on the Moskito Coast in Central America, in Little Tibet, in Alaska among the North Queensland aboriginies, and in East Central Africa, is shadowed by an almost piteous recurrence of despondent appeal. It is evident that God is blessing the work abroad, but the pressure of monetary need is great. This is the only depressing thing in the Report, which we have read from cover to cover. It may be that there is a special call to English Christians to come to the aid of this noble Missionary Church, and a call to those who speak and write on behalf of Moravian Missions to steep themselves once more in the glowing faith which abounds in their own past history.

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The linking together of the Anglican Missions in China, a full account of which is given in the *Record* for May 24, is indeed a cause for profound thankfulness, to be hailed as an earnest of greater things. But it is only a step on the long road that has to be travelled still before the true "Church of China" is attained. The united Anglican body in China has 28,561 members; the total number of baptized Christians in China, excluding Roman Catholics and members of the Russian Orthodox Church, is 214,546. The Anglican communicants number over 14,000; the total number of Protestant communicants over 177,000. It is good to know that "the hope of a wider and more comprehensive unity than that which has just been established was prominently before the Conference" at which the Chung Hua Sheng Kung Hui was constituted.

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