

The Missionary World.

WEEK by week the absorption of the world in the war becomes more impressive. The very forces which in one sense separate, in another sense draw us closer together. India, Japan, and China are directly concerned; the islands of the Pacific, great and small, have become centres of defence or of assault; the most living factor in Africa to-day is the extension to vast territories in west and east and south of the antagonisms of Christian Europe. With the exception of some of the monthly magazines issued by American Societies, which stand entirely aside, all the October periodicals deal with war questions at greater or lesser length. Some merely discuss consequences as they subvert autumn plans or threaten financial outlook; a few admit a combative tone or purely political comments which jar as being out of place; but for the most part what is written contributes to the awakening of national conscience and the maintenance of Christian love. Specially timely is the plea in *China's Millions* that thoughts and words should be brought into captivity to Jesus Christ while feeling is being so intensely expressed. Certain judgments in connection with the war are necessary, others are the prerogative of Him Who alone can discern the thoughts and hearts of men. He has said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged."

"Much, very much, depends upon the obedience of God's people to this command during these days. Obedience or disobedience will not only have their influence upon the national temper, and affect the national settlements when made, but will inevitably help or prevent that much to be desired unity of the Spirit between the Christians of this country and of Germany. Whatever happens, God's people, who are one in Him, must not be divided."

An expression of this fellowship which rises above national barriers into the unity of the Kingdom of God is found in one of the Minutes of the Synod of the British Province of the Moravian Church which met just as the war broke out :

“The Synod of the British Province of the Moravian Church sends hearty and brotherly greetings to the Brethren in the German Province, mindful of the fact that hate cannot exist between members of the Body of Christ, nor war between the members of the Brethren’s Church.”

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Specially noteworthy is a paragraph by Canon Robinson in *The East and The West* on the work of the “devoted and self-sacrificing” German Protestant missionaries, of whom there are over 1,000, supported at a cost of £400,000 per annum:

“Any help which we can give to those who are nominally our enemies, but who are our fellow-workers in Christ in the Mission field, will afford a convincing proof both to them and to their converts that Christian love is a more potent force than the antipathies and prejudices which are begotten of a one-sided and imperfect patriotism.”

The special number of *Evangelical Christendom* also emphasizes the reality of international fellowship, the extreme value of which grows in direct ratio to its difficulty. Two articles in the October magazines dealing with the war call for careful study: one by Professor Cairns, in the *Student Movement*, treats of the war as a “tremendous apocalypse of the human soul,” which should lead us to penetrate into the heart of Christ and renew our faith in “the practicability of the Kingdom of God”; the other is in the *International Review of Missions*, where Mr. J. H. Oldham discusses the whole subject in an atmosphere where national bias finds no place.

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The phrase “Business as usual,” which is current in missionary circles just now, contains both a truth and a fallacy. It is true, as every missionary periodical urges, that undertakings must be vigorously carried forward, and that emergency work for the war does not release us from the steady support of foreign missions. But it is a fallacy to urge that missionary work this winter should be dissociated from the great common interests which press on us all. The war not only shatters the outer fabric of missions, but raises questions which go to the heart of the whole missionary enterprise. At the close of the

war we shall have missed our opportunity if we can show only a maintenance of pre-existing undertakings; we should expect to see rather a new Home Base. The Church should be herself purged and quickened and should have come into new relations with national life and world-wide enterprise. Lines for this should be laid in the missionary work of every parish and of every organization from to-day. All work should be related to the great issues involved. Men and women are keenly responsive on these lines, but turn with distaste from meetings that would in other years have been attractive.

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The two agencies, which most need to be captured, and which will yield perhaps the largest return, are missionary prayer meetings and mission study circles. The former offer an unparalleled opportunity of shaping the minds of Christian people towards the true issues of the war. Prayer for individual missionaries and their work, for local and central organizations, for supplies of men and means will still have place, but the leader should see that all is set in the light of the greatness of the present peril and the living possibilities of the hour. Great thoughts such as those presented in the articles referred to in the *Student Movement* and the *International Review of Missions* should be the basis of intercession, in view alike of the possible continuance and uncertain issue of the war, and of the great reconstruction which lies beyond it. The preparation of our people for truer living and clearer thinking is of vital importance. It would be only too possible for the Church to come through the time of trial, safely perhaps and bravely, and yet to miss the great destiny which lies before her in controlling the issues of the war. Those who desire to utilize intercession meetings for these greater ends will find that the most familiar spiritual truths becomes new if examined in the light of the war. Take, for instance, the Lord's Prayer, clause by clause, week by week, in an intercession meeting, studying it in view of the fratricidal strife in Europe, and it will be found to pierce to the heart of every problem of the hour.

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A desire to study any subject except war news is evidently lacking this winter, yet we cannot afford to have a single Study Circle dropped. The members with their keen desire to "do something useful in connection with the war" can readily be shown that the Study Circle provides an outlet on the best and highest line. Right thinking lies behind right living, and even activities for our forces at the front cannot usurp the place of thought on the causes and issues of the war. The special textbooks for 1914 deal with China, and in literary form, in compelling interest and in varied appeal, they are at least as good as any of former years. Circles working upon them can keep the war and its problems in view, but in order to make a more direct connection between missionary Study Circles and current thought the United Council for Missionary Education, who prepare these books for the Missionary Societies, have issued a 2d. pamphlet with four outline studies on "The War and the Kingdom of God," which will be found highly suggestive and stimulating. The four questions proposed for discussion at successive meetings are: (1) How is the war hindering the spread of the Kingdom? (2) What change must take place in Christendom if the Kingdom is to come throughout the world? (3) How is the war enabling us to understand God's presence and purpose in the world? (4) What are our immediate tasks in the service of the Kingdom? Notes are provided for the guidance of the leaders. In many places these four studies will be taken before Christmas as a preliminary to Study Circles on the China textbook in the New Year. One Missionary Society has already arranged to put several thousand copies of these outlines into circulation. Copies can be procured from the offices of the leading Missionary Societies, or from the United Council for Missionary Education, 8, Paternoster Row, E.C.

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The missionary quarterlies are so full of interest that there is little danger that they will lie unread. The *Moslem World*, with no one outstanding article, is good throughout, the variety of its contents illustrating the wide area embraced in its special

topic; *The East and the West*, which is also above its own high average, opens with a paper on the Anglican Bishopric in Jerusalem (written before the welcome appointment of Canon McInnes was announced), and contains among other papers a statement concerning "The Native Pastorate and Lay Agency in Uganda," by the Rev. J. Roscoe, and a searching article on "The Plain Man and Foreign Missions," by the Rev. J. H. Horsburgh, which makes many true points and yet unintentionally does some measure of injustice to foreign missionaries as they are to-day. The *International Review of Missions*, in addition to the article already referred to, has a valuable study of the census of 1914—"Causes of the Expansion or Retrogression of Religions in India"—by Dr. Ernest Datta; a discussion of "Vestiges of Heathenism within the Church on the Mission Field," by Professor Joh. Warneck, which should be of singular value to missionaries; an article on "The Present Attitude of Moslems towards Jesus Christ and the Scriptures," by Dr. S. M. Zwemer; and a most interesting survey of "The Influence of the Keswick Convention on Missionary Work," by Mr. Walter B. Sloan. The veteran Dr. Andrew Murray contributes "A Call to Prayer on Behalf of Missionaries," which will stir many.

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The larger monthlies for October are also good. Mr. G. B. Durrant's paper on "The Authority and Grace of Vocation," in the *C.M. Review*, is thoughtful and stimulating, as is everything that comes from his pen. The Rev. C. D. Snell contributes an admirable summary of an inquiry recently instituted into the practice of "Female Infanticide in China." The *Missionary Review of the World* has an illustrated article on "The Moslem Menace in South Africa," by Dr. S. M. Zwemer, and interesting papers on "Constantinople College and the Women of the Near East," by Principal Mary Mills Patrick, on "The Future of Mesopotamia," and on a mission to Arabia, initiated and supported by the University of Michigan.

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It was suggested somewhere not long ago that we were too apt to look at our mission fields from a home base angle, estimating the growth of Christianity in groups related to the various societies, instead of in totals of the whole Christian Church in a land. In other words, the unit of our missionary thinking is apt to be, say, C.M.S. or S.P.G. work, rather than the Church in India or in China. Mission study textbooks, by their inter-society work, have done something to remedy this. But for real inclusiveness nothing equals the year-books produced by the missionary bodies in some of the larger mission fields. The *Christian Movement in Japan*, for 1914, for instance, which can be procured from the Religious Tract Society (St. Paul's Churchyard, London, E.C.) for 5s., is quite indispensable for all who are interested in the welfare of our allies. It contains a survey of all great movements in the Empire—religious, social, and political—brief accounts of each mission and each agency at work, numerous excellent statistical tables, and a very full treatment of mission work in Korea. This twelfth annual issue of the year-book is far in advance of its predecessors, and cannot be too warmly commended to all students of missions in the Far East.

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