

The Missionary World.

A GLANCE at the list of summer gatherings of the missionary societies and organizations in so far as they are publicly announced is reassuring as to the quiet confidence in which missionary work is being done. Following quickly on the official anniversaries in London, with their sober, earnest tone, we have reason to be thankful that the more popular annual summer gatherings are also to take place without interruption. Of these the two most notable are the Summer Schools of the S.P.G. and the C.M.S., to be held at Eastbourne and at Keswick respectively. The wide scope of the programmes gives evidence of the impact of the war in its world-aspect on the thought of the Church; such effect must deepen as the days pass on, and ultimately, we doubt not that it will produce a new conception of the task before us, and of the greater sacrifices we must make to perform it. Each of these two Summer Schools is setting apart one day for prayer. We understand that the applications for membership are more numerous than ever, (though the fact that military claims on accommodation at Ilkley has necessitated the transference of the C.M.S. Summer School to Keswick has somewhat cut down its numbers); and this means that what we term the "rank and file" of missionary work are undeterred from fulfilling their Christian duty by the difficulties they see before them. An important joint conference of younger clergy of the C.M.S. and S.P.G. will have been held before these pages pass through the press. Much is said, often without intentional unfairness, of the inadequate share which the clergy take in missions; such a gathering as this should produce a juster estimation of their position. Equally should an influential conference of the Laymen's Missionary Movement, to be held in June, also help to remove the accusation that the "laymen do not care." Possibly one of the most interesting gatherings of the summer is a combined conference of representatives of all the Free Church Missionary Societies; we are glad to see at this conference among the announced

speakers are Canon W. H. T. Gairdner and Mr. T. R. W. Lunt. The conference is suggestive to us of the Church of England. Our missionary societies may well note that, as this war enforces, allies co-operating closely in work as well as in spirit are indispensable for the performance of our duty to the world.

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A peculiar interest attaches to the Conference of the Student Christian Movement to be held at Swanwick in July. Year by year this conference, with all its promise of young and ardent life for the ranks of the Church of Christ, has raised or kept up the standard of service and devotion in Great Britain. It will meet this year depleted in numbers so far as men students are concerned, for the Universities have poured out their best life for the service of their country. The students of Great Britain, France, Belgium, Germany, Servia, and now Italy, are freely paying in their own blood the price of liberty as they respectively conceive it. We must see to it that the movement, which is so dear to them, and which is of such value to us, does not suffer in any way which could be obviated either by our gifts or by our prayers. It has always been a brave body, and never braver than now. It will not be out of place in this connection once more to commend *The Student Movement* (93, Chancery Lane, W.C.) to the notice of our readers, and the more especially because of the notable paper in the May number by Professor D. S. Cairns on "The Message of Christian Apocalypse for To-Day," in which he shows

"how closely and vitally our Lord's teaching regarding His Second Coming bears upon the present great convulsion of human society, and how much encouragement it gives at a time when we surely all need it."

The Church as a whole has needed a man of Dr. Cairns' scholarship and spiritual insight to deal with the evolutionary and the apocalyptic aspects of the present situation.

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The popular gatherings of the missionary societies, with all their elements of encouragement, must not blind us to those other more private gatherings where the real problems of

missionary administration have to be faced. Nevertheless, the spirit of the "rank and file" will help to solve difficulties and guide decisions. There is a healthy realization that the year 1915-16 will be momentous in missionary finance, and first to claim our sympathy is the C.M.S., with its deficiency of £23,000. The society's publications inform us that decision as to retrenchment or otherwise will not be taken before the July meeting of the General Committee, and the interval is being vigorously used to make known the position to the supporters. But ultimately it is on the Committee that the duty will devolve of interpreting the real significance of the society's position at home and abroad, the capacity of the members to render aid, and the Will of God to determine its course. This is a day of great things, and it will be the wish and belief of the whole Church that whatever course the Committee takes will be taken *greatly*. Once more, then, the conduct and the faith of others will be influenced by the C.M.S., which now, as formerly, does not live unto itself.

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Bishop Montgomery's monthly survey as given in *The Mission Field* shows that the S.P.G. is now beginning to face financial anxiety, and that the situation deserves "most serious attention." The first four months of the year show a shrinkage in income of about £14,000. No conclusions can be built on such a fact, but it is indicative of what may be expected by all societies with the advancing months of this year. While there is no disposition to despondency, there is every need to be alert. In a number given up almost wholly to this object the *Church Missionary Gleaner* states the case against retrenchment on the foreign side so that all can understand it.

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After all, reinforcement for the missionary societies of our own Church is coming from fresh directions. The recent Missionary Convention of the Central Board of Missions held at Swanwick gave evidence of this. The spirit of the gathering was altogether excellent, and while, of course, the members of

the Convention were all identified with some one or more of the societies, yet the Convention itself had all that unity, zeal and heartiness that we are accustomed to identify with the meetings of the inner friends of particular societies. This missionary unity, now manifestly on the increase in our Church, must inevitably be the means of penetrating to heretofore inaccessible persons and neighbourhoods, and even if it should do nothing more—and its effect will not be negative—it will remove the last remnant of excuse for “not supporting missions” because they are advocated by societies and not by the Church. *The Chronicle* of the Central Board of Missions should be read, and as it only appears three times a year it will not claim much time from other missionary reading. The progress of the work of the Diocesan as well as of the Central Boards should be noted hopefully. Perhaps our readers do not know that by sending 2s. 6d. annually to the Publication Fund of the Central Board they will receive the Annual Report, *The Chronicle*, and all the leaflets and pamphlets issued during the year.

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The Jubilee of the China Inland Mission has fallen felicitously. That it should have been celebrated in the early summer of 1915, after ten months of bitter conflict when the whole world is in the shadow of war, is significant for all other missionary societies. It may even be said to be providential; it is certainly prophetic. The Jubilee Report, presented at the meetings and given in *China's Millions*, with its story of the lark heard singing above the thunder of the guns at Neuve Chapelle, as recorded in one of the letters of “Eye Witness,” is moving reading. It seems incredible now, when Chinese Churches are undertaking missionary work of their own, that when this Mission was founded the interior of China was practically a closed land, and that the Mission to-day has over 1,300 stations and out-stations, over 1,200 chapels, and over 350 schools in places which then were all, or nearly all, closed to the Gospel. The first twenty-five years of work saw less

than 5,000 baptisms; there are now over 50,000 baptized converts. It is not, however, appeal to any statistical success that moves the Church as regards the China Inland Mission, but that spirit of faith first found in Hudson Taylor and then transmitted to those who came after him. As Mr. Walter Sloan said in his retrospect at the Jubilee Meeting, "The base of this work has been faith." The situation caused by the war is no more insurmountable than was the situation in China which faced Dr. Hudson Taylor in 1866, and the means of overcoming is the same.

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While it is the heroic aspects of missionary work that face us chiefly at the moment, and we are attempting to grapple with imminent difficulties, there is a quiet work of preparation going on in other directions which must presently contribute to the greater efficiency of work at the home base and to a wider distribution of responsibility in maintaining it. This fact is illustrated by the growing place which is being given to women in missionary administration. Twenty women members were co-opted on to the Central Board of Missions in June, and of these some are to be placed on its Committee for home organization and literature, and, we understand also, on its Council for Missionary Problems and Policy. *The Mission Field* records a resolution sent up by the Incorporated Members and Members of S.P.G. in the Diocese of Manchester, in which was urged the desirability of securing such a change in the Charter of the Society as would allow women to become Incorporated Members; and the action taken thereon by the Standing Committee of the S.P.G. was sympathetic postponement for discussion after the war. The C.M.S. has recently appointed women as members of the Committee of Correspondence, which is practically the Foreign Committee of the Society, but subordinate to the General Committee, and they have for some time been members of the Funds and Home Organization Committee. The General Assembly of the United Free Church of Scotland has also sent down to its presbyteries for discussion an interesting Report

which proposes a large expansion of the place given to women both in home and foreign work. This is all change in the right direction.

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A short note in the *B.M.S. Herald* opens up an interesting field for study, to which we may return at a later date. It is pointed out that the Baptist Missionary Society is rich in "Field Magazines," and reference is made to the *Serampur Students' Chronicle*, the *Yakusu Quarterly News*, the *Lualaba Letter*, the *Yalemba News*. It is suggested that enthusiasts at home would be more enthusiastic still if they read some of the "Field Magazines" in addition to the official organs at home. We do not doubt it, but many of us scarcely know of their existence, and few know how they can be obtained. Let it suffice for the moment that they are in existence, and that they point to the true home base for missions being in the fields themselves.

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