

## The Missionary World.

LAST month we wrote "with the exception of the L.M.S. to whom our sincere sympathy is extended" when referring to the financially encouraging condition of the various missionary societies to date. Thank God, the exception no longer stands, and all down the ranks of missions and missionaries the good news will once more pass that great again and again is the faithfulness of God. "The miracle of response" to which the L.M.S. referred as alone being able to save them from withdrawing from Calcutta and Mirzapur and from reducing work in the South Seas has been wrought. We should like to let our friends speak for themselves as they do in the L.M.S. *Chronicle*, for on their words rests the freshness of joy from the touch of God which communicates itself to others.

"Higher than our highest hope, beyond the measure of our dreams, God has through the Church given the word of release. Our first glad duty is with full hearts to give praise to Almighty God for His marvellous mercies.

"On the day in December when it was decided under the compulsion of grim facts that if we were to continue to finance the Society it absolutely must withdraw from Calcutta and Mirzapur and reduce in the South Seas unless within six weeks a miracle of response should be wrought, no single soul among the Directors or Officers of the Society really believed in the possibility of any result so glorious as the reality that confronts us to-day. Withdrawal under the circumstances of December 1915 was inevitable. If the churches continue to speak with the voice of the present hour withdrawal will be inconceivable.

"The assured increase in annual subscription income for the next financial year (1916-17) is already £15,000 out of the £20,000 increase necessary for carrying on our existing work without withdrawal or expansion. This means that 75 per cent. of the whole increase of income required to save the whole situation has been promised; 75 per cent. of the Congregational churches have responded nobly; 25 per cent. of the churches have not yet been able to send in their mandate. It lies with these to carry the flowing tide to a triumphant fullness.

"This is an event not simply in the history of the Society, but in the spiritual life of the churches of our land. It reveals an awakening of soul, a quickened passion for the coming of the Kingdom of God. It is in a real sense revival.

"Who has achieved this wonderful result? Consecrated men and women have given large sums, the use of most of which will be spread over the next four years. In one breathless week, one of the most remarkable in the Society's history, the following heart-stirring events happened.

"On the Monday £1,000 was received from two sisters in East Anglia. Tuesday morning's post brought a promise of £1,000 from the widow of a friend of the Society. On Wednesday a letter was received from Dr. Horton announcing that he had raised over £1,000 to save Mirzapur, and was prepared

to guarantee a further sum of £330 to provide the total expense of that mission during the next financial year. On Wednesday also Mr. John Carter of Hampstead called at the Mission House and intimated that he had decided to give the Society the sum of £5,000. On Saturday a Director in the north of England, from whom a challenge offer of £500 was received at the last Board Meeting, promised to give £1,000 instead. We praise God greatly for the sanctified sacrifice of these gifts.

"The greatest joy, however, of these weeks of rising tide has been the evidence at every hour of the day that the churches which the Society serves—churches that have been called by critics supine and anaemic—are in truth quick and alive at heart with the will to carry the Gospel to the whole world."

There is an echo of the C.M.S. experience at Swanwick here, and following such a deliverance, for the one Society as for the other, we ally ourselves with the L.M.S. in the flush of their thankfulness when they further say :

"The word of warning of the angel to the Church at Sardis was that the church had not carried any of their work to completion—it was not perfected. . . . We cannot stay our hand till every church member and adherent of our churches is sharing the joyful privilege of helping in the work. . . . The one sure hope of a permanent foundation for the work of the Society abroad and its support at home lies in a strong, quick spiritual life in our whole life as churches."

Yes, we must all needs remember Sardis.

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The "deeper note" as we call it, for which thoughtful souls have been listening is beginning to sound, and soon that sound must swell. Discussion as to a National Mission and its probable effect on Christian missions has been rife among us. Conscious that the social conditions prevailing in England are increasingly becoming known in non-Christian lands and that in these lands themselves western industry and commerce are rapidly producing the same problems that have overtaken a supine western church, a dread has been rightly expressed lest the mission should be one of those efforts in which results would be ineffectual for lack of adequate conviction of sin. There could not be a graver doubt. Behind the longing to send the Gospel of life to men in darkness, there has lurked the paralysing sense that we ourselves and our Christian Church have hands that are not clean and honour that is not untarnished. It is startling to know that a Hindu father wishing to prevent the baptism of his son has felt that he can take no more potent measure than to send him on a visit to England. Men are pausing to ask themselves, Is the missionary advance we speak of hung up entirely until we ourselves and our household have got right with

God and with one another, with all sorts and conditions of men? It is well that such a fear has seized us; it has worked in us by the Holy Spirit and wrought confusion and discomfort as it is now working a dawning hope. With fresh insistence it is being pressed on us that we and not only the appointed ministry are "the Church," and that only a clean Church can present a pure Gospel. "Out of the deep" of a consciousness of sin—which has only begun—we are calling to God in hope.

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This is the burden of the editorial message in the *Student Movement* for March. "The Church as the organ of the world's redemption is held to be in its dark night." "Movements independent of the Church towards social righteousness" are there. The tide of revival is flowing. "Will it also flow within the Church? Will her leaders and members humbly acknowledge the depth of their failure to manifest the life of Christ to the world?" The whole of this editorial should be thoughtfully read; the sharpness of some of the words used is the sharpness of sorrow, not the taunt of a bitter spirit nor an attempt to sting to repentance. Let us all be ready to learn anything from any one who will show us how we have misinterpreted our Lord and His Household the Church to all our brethren and sisters in the whole world.

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The Central Board of Missions at its annual meeting in February was alive to this subject which came before it in a resolution concerning "the need of spiritual revival in the Church at the present time as essential, not only to personal and social life, but also to the extension of the Kingdom of Christ in the world." The further statement was made that "whatever failure there may be in the Church at home hinders God's kingdom throughout the world." The Board is accordingly urging that Quiet Days and Conventions and other means should be used to promote the cause of spiritual revival. It is just again at this point that the deeper note must sound. We need a revival that not only brings the joys of life and liberty with it, but a revival of truth—"truth in the inward parts," and in this connexion such a revival stands for truth in the inward parts of the Church and of its servants the missionary societies and organizations. There must surely be a fearless clearing of all choked channels, a pruning of all dead branches, and the elimination of all outworn

methods which are now retained on grounds of sentiment. Nor can any place be given to things which seem to be what they are not ; in days such as these all that is of the nature of " pretence," whether in thing or in person, is discerned at a glance. On the human side truth lies in being ruthless towards ourselves.

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The March number of the *Mission Field* reports with deep thanksgiving that the S.P.G. has received in 1915 an income of £20,000 above the estimate, and the total of £241,017 is within £10,000 of the highest ordinary income ever received by the Society. The Wesleyan Missionary Society is also able to announce " A Te Deum for 1915." The Society asked for an income from its home churches of £170,000, and hoped out of this total to be able to contribute £5,000 towards removing the existing debt. The total received was £163,000, and owing to certain economies which proved possible, not only did income and expenditure meet but the entire debt of £9,000 was removed. Probably there is a romance behind missionary financial statistics such as no other cause can ever show.

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We are indebted to the *Student Movement* for an article of singular interest on " A Visit to Central Europe," by Dr. H. C. Rutgers, General Secretary of the Dutch Student Christian Movement, who, in company with Mr. de Rougemont, General Secretary of the Swiss Student Christian Movement, visited Berlin, Vienna, and Budapest last December. Both men are well known and trusted, and the picture drawn for us can be received without hesitation. The importance of the article lies in the satisfactory condition of the Student Christian Movement in the three countries whose capitals were visited. The German Movement has been growing steadily in scope and importance ever since the beginning of the war. Of the 52,500 students in Germany 41,000 are in the Army. The Student Christian Movement keeps in touch with some 40,000 of these through the dispatch of literature, and it supplies to its own members among the number leaflets with prayers, Scripture readings, etc., which enable them to lead religious services for their comrades or to conduct burial services. In Germany the Student Christian Movement has been entrusted with work for the troops such as the Y.M.C.A. does here, and accordingly it has gained prestige in the university world such as it had never enjoyed before. The Move-

ment in Austria has also witnessed a marked development because of the war. The previous difficulties in that land would obviously have been very great. The first effort made after the outbreak of war was to send the Gospel of St. Matthew to as many students as could be traced in the Army; so encouraging was the response that presently gospels were in circulation in eleven of the languages of the Empire, and soon this effort was followed by the dispatch of a paper twice a month, which goes now to 6,000 mobilized students. While 75 per cent. of the Vienna students are in the Army, refugee students from Cracow and Lemberg bring the total in Vienna to about one half the usual number. It is suggestive to learn that two new universities have been created in Hungary since the war began, though two-thirds—10,000—of the Hungarian students are in the Army. Here again Dr. Rutgers is able to say that the Hungarian Movement is steadily moving forward and that it is spiritually not less strong than any other Movement in the Federation. We quote two sentences more with hearty endorsement: "Certainly it is now the great task of the Federation to prove that there is a unity in Christ which surpasses all national differences and prejudices, even in times of war and misunderstanding," and "we may thank God, as one of the most helpful signs of the future, that it is exactly the World's Student Christian Federation, the movement of young people who have the future still before them, which holds best together, and is still ready for a renewed co-operation in the common cause of Christ."

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Few indications of hope—and there are many such in the mission field—are brighter than the efforts being made by young Christian churches to send the Gospel to the regions beyond. One such effort of peculiar interest is being undertaken by the Chung Hua Sheng Kung Hui, the Church formed in 1912 by the union of the eleven Anglican dioceses in China. The Chinese clergyman who is General Secretary of the Board of Missions of that Church, records in the *Chinese Recorder* for January the official action of the Synod by which it has been decided to open work in the Province of Shensi, beginning at the capital Sian, with a view to the establishment of a new missionary diocese. A call for voluntary workers—clergy, catechists, Biblewomen, and others—has been issued to the eleven dioceses, the principle of diocesan apportionment has been adopted

by the general Synod, and an Apportionment Table has been issued for the first three years, which would involve an average contribution of \$0.20 per head from the total number of Christians—34,756—in Church membership. Special gifts from individuals for the purchase of property will also be welcome. A Chinese presbyter appointed by the Board of Missions will be in charge of the work, the policy being determined by the Bishop of the Diocese in consultation with him and with the Board of Missions. Until a Chinese Bishop has been elected and consecrated for this new diocese, a happy event which is hoped for “in a few years,” its episcopal oversight will be entrusted to a neighbouring Bishop. The responsibility for the new missionary diocese is borne entirely by the Chinese Church, but foreign missionaries will be welcomed as workers in the new diocese, provided they are under its episcopal authority and appointed by the Board of Missions, and also grants from the mother Churches, provided that they are made to the Board of Missions. In addition to this corporate missionary effort undertaken by the whole of this Chinese Church, each diocese, and indeed each separate congregation, undertakes some special missionary responsibility.

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An American missionary, in some notes recording a conference of the evangelists belonging to one of the missions far up the Congo, lets his readers into the secret of some successful work. There is not a little suggestion for us at home in the simple paragraph—

“For a number of years one of our Evangelists, named David Mputa, has been stationed at one of our most distant outposts. He has been there practically shut off for much of the time from the advice of missionaries. He has a plant in operation which almost rivals some of our actual mission stations. We had David Mputa here at the Conference. In the course of one of his talks to the Conference he let slip the statement that he did not allow any one to come into the Catechumen (inquirers) class until he had made a ‘cisokomenu,’ *i.e.* a closet for private prayer. Of course he got his idea from Matthew vi. 6. And here he unconsciously let out the secret of his success. The Conference was so deeply impressed with this idea that it was decided that each Christian, as far as possible, should have such a place for private prayer. David Mputa said that sometimes these closets for prayer were little cleared spots in the forest with a table and seat, or sometimes they were in some quiet place in the yard or on the veranda of the house. We all know from experience how hard it must be to have privacy in the villagers’ houses. So I give this suggestion for what it is worth.”

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