

The Missionary World.

WE are indebted to the *Manchester Guardian* of a recent date for an interesting communication which has probably appeared elsewhere also in the British press. It quotes from an American paper a protest, dated October 5, 1915, sent by certain German missionary teachers at Aleppo to the German Foreign Office concerning the Armenian atrocities. The protest is suggestive in various ways. That these missionaries should have protested to their Government is reassuring at a moment when the better life of Germany and of the Germans is obscured. That their protest is not based on the highest Christian grounds we must accept; perhaps the missionaries appealed on the ground most likely to be effective at present with the German Foreign Office. They say:—

We feel it our duty to call the attention of the Foreign Office to the fact that our school work, the formation of a basis of civilization and instilling of respect in the natives, will be henceforth impossible if the German Government is not in a position to put an end to the brutalities inflicted here on the exiled wives and children of murdered Armenians. In face of the horrible scenes which take place daily near our school buildings, before our very eyes, our school work has sunk to a level which is an insult to all human sentiments. How can we masters possibly read the stories of "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" with our Armenian children, how can we bring ourselves to decline and conjugate, when in the courtyards opposite and next to our school buildings death is reaping a harvest among the starving compatriots of our children? Girls, boys, women, all practically naked, lie on the ground breathing their last sighs amid the dying and among the coffins put out ready for them.

These missionaries proceed further to specify the horrors enacted: it is not necessary for our purpose to repeat them here. They add:—

The more refined Turks and Arabs shake their heads sorrowfully when they see the brutal soldiers bringing convoys through the town of women . . . these poor wretches being hardly able to drag themselves along.

Christian peoples—or at least peoples nominally Christian—are judged by non-Christians according to the standard of their Faith. We can well believe the mental agony of the German missionaries when in their protest they say of the half insane victims:—

They utter low groans and await death. *Ta-a-lim-el alman* (the cult of the Germans) is responsible for this, the natives declare. It will always remain a terrible stain on Germany's honour among the generations to come.

The missionaries do not spare their Government on this last point, for the protest, as given, closes thus :—

We know that the Foreign Office has already received descriptions of local condition of affairs from other sources. Since, however, the procedure of deportation has in no way been ameliorated, we feel it more than ever our duty to submit this report for your perusal. Above all we realize to the full the danger with which German prestige is here threatened.

And this was written in October, 1915, and twelve more months have passed in Armenia. What must not the Christian world do for what is left of this people when the first opportunity comes? What balm can be offered for such suffering?

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Are we about to see the base of foreign missions greatly widened? It almost looks as if that long desired end were going to be brought about. The veteran missionary pen of the Church has recently written concerning the neglect of missions, "The Nation is guilty. The Church is guilty. Tens of thousands of individual Christians are personally guilty. The work which should have been shared has been left to a small minority of the community." Heretofore we have argued from the individual to the Church, and we have omitted the nation's sin and the nation's duty altogether. Have we taken too small a view of our task on its home side? Are foreign missions the concern of a nation as well as of a Church and an individual—that is to say, foreign missions in a non-political sense, in their simple Gospel character, spiritual, moral, social? The subject will bear much looking into, much thought, much prayer, for it carries with it the suggestion that the greater number of those who have taken part in missions may have become circumscribed, depressed, critical or even censorious towards the unheeding nation by which they were surrounded, and may have neglected a great and inspiring appeal to the nation as a nation to share in the spread of the Gospel, and to take such part as nations may in that glorious work. We shall have to address ourselves to these matters. Indeed we are ourselves being addressed about it. Missions as a great cause are not going to be left in the hands of a limited proprietorship. Great causes are appealing to men, deep and almost impatient desires are being aroused, and we are blind if we do not see how much is expected of us.

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When *The Times* gave—on November 4—three-fourths of a

column in large type on "Christianity in the Field: the Nations and the Gospel," it marked a new day. Not indeed that the daily press has been unsympathetic in the past, though there has often been a serious clash of view and perhaps a mutual ignorance of outlook. The significance of such a contribution—which has its counterpart in many a great provincial paper—is that the press knows what the bulk of its readers wishes to read, and though it may often lend its aid to previously unknown causes and give them prominence, yet it does not do so unless the sure instinct of journalism perceives that they will be taken up.

The Times article, written from a sympathetic and inner point of view, set a high and inspiring standard before the Church.

It is still the passionate faith of the Church that individual souls shall be won and Churches of the new born shall be formed. But there has come to the seers a vision of nations, accepting as a basis of their life the spiritual values of the Gospel. They read the missionary enterprise in terms of the statesmanship which alone can be tolerated in the coming age—the statesmanship which thinks internationally, and takes into its range the whole world. The vision glows before the Church of the day when nations shall come to the light, and kings to the brightness of His appearing.

We think that the National Mission, which has won its way to a most notable extent into the press of the country, is opening the door to a new and far wider consideration and support of foreign missions.

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We hail with thankfulness the first announcements of the Missionary Week, January 22 to January 27, which is being organized by the Executive Committee of the Central Board of Missions, at the request of the Council of the National Mission and acting as one of its Committees. We hail with further thankfulness the proposal made by the same Executive Committee that a missionary call be given during next Lent, and arrangements made whereby the missionary message shall be delivered in every parish in the country. These are two vitally important projects; the Church must surround them with prayer and support them with work. The Missionary Call in Lent will presumably be worked out by the Diocesan Boards and the Societies in all the Dioceses; it is as yet an "idea" soon to take to itself those forms in which it can become both potent and widespread. But the programme of the Missionary Week is practically complete, as the Church papers have already announced, and covers a wide sweep from the opening subject of "The Duty of the

Church to the World" to the closing subject at the Albert Hall "The Hope for the World." The Church of England can no better prove by any outward means devotion to the cause of missions and profound responsibility for the place to be taken in their advance than by such a week, when the Archbishop of Canterbury presides at the first meeting and the Archbishop of York at the last; when the opening service is in Westminster Abbey and the closing service in St. Paul's Cathedral. Nor is this an official or merely formal support; the missionary spirit is there, bursting up and breaking forth, the inevitable result of the opportunity offered to us by the closing of the first stage of the National Mission. As *The Times* says for us, "The Church, indeed, so far from thinking that the missionary enterprise can be delayed, is stricken by remorse to know that it is late, almost too late, with the offer of a faith to which all the spiritual strivings of the East have moved, 'If haply they might feel after Him and find Him.'" It is surely the duty of missionary-hearted persons to consider how far they can enter into this Missionary Week, listen to its addresses, share in its discussions, drink of its spirit and communicate its message. The whole Church House has been secured for the week, the whole Church must be roused as a result.

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The remembrance of the Intercessions at St. Andrew's-tide is strong upon us, and we are prepared to pay heed to urgent requests for prayer. Few could be more powerful than that in the *Jewish Missionary Intelligencer* for November for the Near East. We quote it in full, remembering that over against human impotence is Divine Omnipotence.

We are greatly concerned about the condition of affairs in Constantinople, Smyrna, Damascus, Safed, Jaffa and Jerusalem. Everywhere there is desolation, famine, disease and misery. According to a statement in *The Times* of September 2, "it is no exaggeration to say that two-thirds of the inhabitants of the villages in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem have died of hunger and typhoid fever."

The pity and pathos of it all is that we are so powerless, humanly speaking. Should this war not be over by Christmas, the condition of the inhabitants of Turkey-in-Asia will be too awful to contemplate. Pray for our workers and converts in all these places, that God in some way or other may provide for their material as well as spiritual wants.

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We must not pass over an important Editorial Note in *China's Millions* on opium in China. The day was when this subject rang

through the missionary world; even though it has now a less prominent place—in part due to the great reform effected internally and externally—yet the opium question remains a subject for ceaseless watchfulness, prayer and hope. If the “hope of seeing the evil trade completely terminated” next March is indeed fulfilled, what confidence must not the Church of Christ feel in grappling with evils which have been, from a variety of causes, firmly lodged as national habits.

The month of March, 1917, is a month of considerable importance in connexion with the opium trade in China. According to agreements made the last twenty-five per cent. of the opium shops in the Shanghai Municipal Settlement are to be closed next March; further, the period for which the Chinese Government stipulated that the three provinces, Kiangsi, Kiangsu and Kwangtung, should remain open (on condition of an extra tax of 3,000 taels per chest, on the 6,000 chests in stock, being paid) expires at the same time; and lastly, the eighteen months allowed for the sale in Kwangtung of the 1,200 chests in stock in Hong-Kong also terminates in the same month. For this last extension of eighteen months the Chinese Government were to receive an extra tax of 6,000 taels per chest. While we have deeply regretted these delays, obtained by the large sums of money promised, we look forward eagerly to next March with the hope of seeing the evil trade completely terminated. We are thankful to notice that an effort made by the Shanghai Opium Combine to obtain an extension of the time limit has been unsuccessful.

The Missionary Review of the World makes, with the October number, “a new beginning.” While the editorship continues in the hands of Mr. Delavan L. Pierson, the Review has been acquired by the Missionary Review Publishing Co., with a powerful Board of Directors of which the well-known Mr. Robert E. Speer is President. At a time when most British missionary magazines suffer seriously in appearance from war-time paper, the Review appears in a considerably improved form, and with some excellent illustrations. Better still, it is full of interesting matter of which the editorial “Forward Look” promises a continuance.

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Another publishing change has taken place in the case of *The Moslem World*, which will from henceforth be issued from 155 Fifth Avenue, New York, U.S.A. We are told that it will suffer no change through this transference, and that it will still be edited by Dr. Zwemer. We are glad to give prominence to this new arrangement, for it is necessary that all the friends of Moslem missions in the United Kingdom should continue to give such a valuable magazine their full support, and it is important for the missionary

world that the general information, the detailed knowledge and the missionary zeal of the Review should be available for a wider circle of readers. Perhaps few have valued sufficiently the "Notes on Current Topics" which appear each quarter. With a wide sweep and a strong grasp, salient points are presented which are indispensable for a true view on current matters in the Moslem world.

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The *Chronicle* of the L.M.S. has three strong articles on Mass Movements to which attention should be called—"Dawn in North India," "The Promise of a Mass Movement," "The Challenge of a Mass Movement." The amazement and the enthusiasm which these movements first aroused in the Church at home has been succeeded by something of that familiarity with stupendous events which renders people unable to feel any more. The more need, therefore, that emotions should be disciplined and that conscience and will should be quickened concerning the great changes gradually taking place in India, so that with sober zeal and unflinching courage we may know how to meet the "limitless opportunities" which the movements present.

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