

## The Missionary World.

THE year 1917 is closing still under the shadow of war. A year ago we hoped that by this time we should have been well on our way to missionary reconstruction in Africa and the Near East. Hope is deferred, but as faith looks upward the heart is not sick, for God is manifestly working out some great and mighty purpose whose lines we only dimly can discern, and the time of trial which to us seems endless is to Him but a fraction of an hour. The world-wide catastrophe is big with issues which cannot be hastened by any human power. The Judge of all the earth will do right and we bow before Him to learn the lessons He would teach. Meantime, while the year has shown once more the persistence of spiritual life in every mission field—that glorious record which demonstrates the living presence of the Lord in the midst of His Church, and while monetary contributions are being marvellously maintained—see the note of hope in the utterances both of C.M.S. and S.P.G.—it grows clearer every month that the first problem which will confront the Church when reconstruction and advance become possible is that of men and women for the work. The C.M.S. alone has lost 147 European missionaries since the beginning of the war, 111 by retirement (frequently on grounds of ill-health), and thirty-six by death, of whom four died at sea and five on war service. The reinforcements for 1917 number twenty-nine, and of these twenty-one are women who cannot sail till the Foreign Office is able to grant them passports.

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Careful thought is being given to the question of the supply of future missionaries. Committees both within the societies and on co-operative lines are at work. Special plans for the preparation of those who offer after the war are being considered by the Board of Study for the Preparation of Missionaries in conjunction with the missionary societies. But the real problem lies in the true presentation of the call of the Lord, the need of the world, and the surpassing greatness of the opportunity which opens before a missionary, man or woman, in the new world of to-day. Those who sound the call to service need to be steeped in such knowledge of the modern situation as a book like *The World and the Gospel* gives, and to have in their own hearts a flame of conviction that only in Jesus Christ can the

revelation of the Father come home to men. The great verities of Holy Scripture, read in the light of the Spirit of Jesus and applied to the need of the world, need to be so set before the Church as to summon the best of our younger men and women to the missionary task. It is a day only when great calls will meet with a great response. And the call that men heed is not the mere shout of urgency but the still small voice which interprets the meaning of life in the light of the Cross.

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The war, the Pacific, and missions, is a conjunction of thought which should have place in our minds. The coasts of the Pacific are mainly in the hands of the combatants, and on its broad bosom meet the interests of China, Russia, Japan, the United States and Great Britain. "The Asiatic races"—to quote an editorial in the *L.M.S. Chronicle*—"are, so to speak, pouring over the brim of the overflowing bowl of Asia and spreading, or seeking to spread, on every shore of North and South America, of Polynesia, and of New Zealand, Australia, and New Guinea." Trade is pushing vessels of all nations into every port, and unless trade and governmental relationships can be Christianized the existence of the more primitive races is imperilled. The full call of the Pacific is not merely to maintain and to extend missions among the islands—those missions so rich in romance and in reward—but to reach the great nations which encircle the ocean with the living message of the Gospel, so that they and we together may work in love and not for gain. The work of the South Sea Mission of the *L.M.S.* is a source of inspiration for the Christian Church to-day.

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A slender incident in the *B.M.S. Herald* is charged with meaning and life. A dear old woman, member of that sect of Fakiri Mohammedans in India among whom so many have become Christians of late, has been in close touch with Baptist missionaries. She owns land on which they have been camping under the shade of some great jack-fruit trees, and she has been among the women whom they have taught the rudiments of the Christian faith. She learned the Lord's Prayer, but would always insist on inserting some words of her own. To the clause "Thy kingdom come" she always with persistence added "in this place." Is it not just this that so many of us in thought and prayer—aye, and in service too—have

left out? We hail the coming of the kingdom in the far parts of the earth, but do not lay hold of it with eagerness for our own land, our city, our parish, our home, our personal life. Is not the weakness of our up-building in the "uttermost parts" based too often upon our failure in "Jerusalem"? We who have world-wide vision need also to pray as did the Fakiri woman under the jack-fruit tree in Bengal.

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Another picturesque paragraph in which old and new Japan appear side by side is found in the S.P.G. *Mission Field*. Near the missionary's home a site was chosen for a new spinning mill. So eager were the purchasers to get forward that the standing barley on the site, within a few weeks of harvest, was ruthlessly cut down while the ears were green, and a group of Shinto priests with gorgeous robes and elaborate ceremony were engaged to bless the site. The congregation were mostly men in Western dress, some of whom had come on bicycles. It is a picture of what is happening in Japan, where, notwithstanding curious survivals, the old agricultural life is passing into the new industrial life with startling rapidity. The country is hastening to be rich. Profits are enormous, and sweating, especially in home industries, is still extremely bad, notwithstanding the new Factory Act. We read that the children of the poor are pasting paper on match-boxes—both the outer cover and the drawer—for  $2\frac{1}{2}d.$  per thousand and finding their own paste. Many Japanese companies are standing out on lines of social justice to their employees, and a social sense is growing strongly in the Christian Church, but new Japan has many perils unknown in earlier days.

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There is perhaps no country in Asia which has more claim upon British sympathy and the aid of British prayer than Japan. The fact that none of the non-Anglican agencies has work in Japan throws special responsibility upon our own communion, yet it would probably be true to say that Japan appeals less widely and deeply to the mass of our communicants than any other mission field. The appeal of Japan lacks elements which impress the average mind, and we miss the vastness of China, the desire of India, and the appealing remoteness of Moslem lands. Yet the intellectual position of the Japanese needs far more than we give

in the way of the best and ripest of our Christian literature and thought, and we put far too little fellowship at her disposal in the social and industrial problems she has inherited from us and is now creating for herself. Further, it should never be forgotten that Japan is the only colonizing power in Asia, that in Korea and in Formosa, and, possibly, hereafter in the Pacific, she is facing problems of empire analogous to those we have had to face. In Korea the educational position is full of complex interest and needs the best thought of Great Britain as well as of North America. The many mistakes we have made ourselves as well as the unquestioned success of British colonization gives us a special duty to fulfil towards a nation stepping out into the empire problems which beset Japan.

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The October issue of *The East and The West*, which arrived too late for notice in these pages in November, opens with papers by two women writers. Miss Maynard's "Lesson in the Progress of Ethics" is worth learning; Miss E. R. McNeile's study of "Theosophy and Gnosticism" is valuable and based on real knowledge. Bishop Cecil's paper on "The Bad Habit of Translating the Prayer Book" lets in fresh air upon heated controversies at home. Mr. Keable's ideal for "An African Ministry" is an instance of the kind of article which only a missionary can write, and of which, whether we agree with the writer or not, we can scarcely have too many. It is the thought beaten while molten by the fires of experience which is going in the end to shape the Church. Dr. Fyffe (Bishop of Rangoon) on "Mr. Gokhale's Testament and the Indian Church" is good but does not carry very far. The short paper on "The Society for Religious Liberty in China" brings up to last April our knowledge of that interesting combination of all the Christians in China, including the Roman Catholics, to arrest the movement to insert a clause making Confucianism the State religion in China. Since the article was written, the victory was won (in May); but owing to the political changes and the suspension of work on the constitution it appears probable that the fight will have to be fought all over again. A paper on "The Conversion of Europe" by the Editor is sure to be read by those who have previously benefited by Canon Robinson's extensive study of the subject. G.