

The Missionary World.

ONCE again the January number of the *International Review of Missions* brings us in its "Survey of the Year" strong stimulus and hope. Against a background of political events and social movements the living work of the Gospel is boldly traced. Not only is each fact significant in itself, but the combination of statements drawn from so many sources produces a total effect which is most impressive. We are glad to learn that several of the British Missionary Societies are putting into circulation a penny pamphlet based on this Survey, by permission of the editor, which, while it will by no means take the place of the sixty closely compressed pages of the original Survey, will make some of its material available for popular use and wide circulation. The pamphlet is called *Christian Missions and the World War*.

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The January issue of *The East and The West* contains articles by Dr. J. H. Ritson (on the Bible and the War), by Dr. Eugene Stock (on the C.M.S.), and by the Rev. Nelson Bitton (on Robert Morrison and the L.M.S.)—all writers well-known to readers of the *CHURCHMAN*. Another paper which should not be missed is a careful discussion of the training of ordained missionaries by the Rev. J. S. B. Brough. But the most thought-provoking pages in the number are those in which the Rev. Robert Keable, missionary in turn of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa and of the S.P.G., and now a chaplain in France, discusses the reaction of the four African clergy who have come over with the African labour contingent to the tests imposed upon them by the war. While it is open to question whether all African clergy have become as separated from the life of their own people as those of whom Mr. Keable writes, his fearless but entirely loving words cause much searching of heart. There is a depth in the meaning of the Incarnation which has not yet been wholly translated into the missionary service of, at any rate, the Anglican Church. We are so far from becoming in all points like unto our brethren of other races that those who are drawn most closely to us are apt to be severed from their own kith and kin. The problem is a deep and difficult one, and it is easier to criticize what is

than to lead onward to what should be. But eyes are being opened, and a way must and will be found.

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The Missionary Review of the World continues, side by side with a marked advance in scientific presentation of missions, to maintain its popular interest. Two articles in the December issue are particularly fresh and arresting. One is an account of the mental and moral degradation caused by Fetishism in West Africa, the other an account of work among the Doms, the thief caste in the Benares district. The former paper, from which we learn that in African tribes beyond the immediate restraints of foreign governments nineteen out of twenty persons die by violence as the result of war, or charges of witchcraft, has one charming anecdote which we must quote :

“It is truly astonishing how the African mind, despite its crude materialism and its degradation, grasps ultimately the spirituality of God and the spiritual nature of true worship. Let one instance suffice as illustration. The women of West Africa in preparing their food (the cassava or manioc) bury it in the ground beside a stream for several days. A missionary, one day examining an old woman who presented herself for baptism, and careful lest she should regard the water of baptism as a fetish, asked her a question regarding its significance, to which she replied :

“When I bury my food in the ground I mark the place. What use would the mark be if there were no food there? Baptism is but the mark; God dwells in the heart.”

The account of the work among the Doms, of whom probably 90 per cent. of the adults have been in prison, is one further illustration of the fact that where Hinduism has failed Christianity is winning its victories. Even the Government of India is glad to hand over the criminal tribes to the Salvation Army or other Christian agencies. Bright testimony is borne to the influence of high-caste Indian Christians and their readiness to serve these outcasts.

“One of our workers is an ex-Brahmin. To see this man sitting by the bedside of a sick Dom, giving him milk and medicine and teaching him the sacred law, is to see a miracle of the living Christ.”

The District Magistrate reports a “marked decrease in the criminal habits” of the Benares Doms, of whom there are about 1,100. The health officer of the municipality, a Brahmin trained in England, reports that the Christian Doms who are his servants do their scavenging work in the city much better now than it was done in old days. The keepers of drink shops complain that mis-

sion work is interfering with their trade. Indecent dancing has utterly ceased at the great gatherings of the Doms. The mission to the outcastes has become an object lesson to the Hindus and Moslems of India.

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It is curious how few books have been produced within the last seven years which bear intimately upon the ideals of central administrative missionary work at the home base. Yet the responsible staff of all the mission boards amounts to a considerable aggregate, and when the members of executive committees are added there is found to be a large body of men and women engaged in complex and highly differentiated work. For such the study of Dr. Ralph Wardlaw Thompson's life, written by Mr. Basil Mathews and published by the R.T.S. (2s. net) provides inspiring and instructive reading. As a biography the work is admirably done; a really great man stands out in the fullness of varied personality, with a delightful humanness running through strenuous work. But the special feature of the book is its record of missionary policy, its acute probing of the regions which lie behind routine and committee work. This definition of leadership in a representative missionary organization, for instance, should be written in letters of gold.

"Leadership consists not in walking ahead in the belief that the rest will follow, but in at least three laborious tasks: (1) the education of the constituent members of the organization, its directors and its local workers, in the principles on which policy is to be based; (2) the modification of that policy at a hundred points to fit the ideals, as it were, with the wheels of practicability on which to run; and (3) the lucid commendation of the policy thus planned to those who will be asked to give it their effective support."

Mr. Mathews tells us that Dr. Wardlaw Thompson "toiled terribly" to equip himself for these tasks. The administrative work of missions will be deeper and stronger where others in increasing numbers seek to follow in his steps.

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For the thousands of men serving in the labour battalions in France from many tribes and peoples in Africa and Asia, the Bible Society had already published the Scriptures in the vernaculars and is generously providing copies for widespread circulation.

"The Indian coolies who are now busy in France," says the *Bible in the World*, "if brought together, would of themselves constitute a picturesque and polyglot assemblage. There are Afrides from the north-west frontier, and long-haired Burmese, Bengalis from the

valley of the Ganges, and Santals from the jungles of Bihar. According to the *Calcutta Statesman*, no fewer than 10,000 recruits for the labour contingent have already been dispatched from Assam alone. . . . Of these coolies from India considerable numbers have been evangelized. Among the first 500 Santal recruits 150 are Christians; 600 of the Lushais are Christians. Many of these Indians have gone into the war area, not for the sake of the pay they will earn, but from a sincere desire to be of service to the Empire."

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No less interesting is the account given in the *C.M.S. Gleaner*—attractive in its new form—of the polyglot services held in Baghdad by an Indian worker of the S.P.G. now acting as chaplain to the Indian forces in Mesopotamia. He writes :

"In Baghdad there are five temporary English churches in connexion with the British campaign. In one of the churches in which we hold our Indian services, the Anglicans, Nonconformists and Roman Catholics have their services one after another in succession. On Sundays no fewer than seven services are held in that church in English, Urdu, Latin, Tamil, and Punjabi respectively. . . . There are four other churches close by which belong to the Christians of the place, who have their services conducted in Chaldean, Syriac, Arabic and Armenian. One Sunday I had five men coming to the service, a Punjabi, a Marathi, a Hindustani, a Telugu, and a Tamil . . . I had to use a sixth language—English—which was understood by them all."

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The fresh hold which Wesleyan missions are laying on the whole church membership is inspiring to all other workers. With courage and faith lines are being laid for a great advance. There is depth and reality in the monthly appeals from the mission house, and it is evident that a real *esprit de corps* is being created. The *Home Organization Department Magazine*, which is the medium of official communication between centre and circumference, has a happy way of linking details of work to large principles which govern action. The following paragraph illustrates this :

"Our way for 1918 will lie upward still, for it will be the second year of a period of five years during which we have adopted a programme of work needing a steady increase of five per cent. each year on the previous year's income from the circuits. To secure that we shall need to begin early, lay our plans wisely, and work strenuously. We shall not succeed by clamour, we shall not get the money we need merely for asking. There are many people well able to help us, but to whom we must give much before we can hope to get anything back. We must sow if we would reap, and our work in missionary propaganda must lie increasingly in teaching, spreading knowledge, deepening interest, creating fresh missionary motive that will be first an enrichment to the man and to the Church, and then a fountain of supply and a centre of service for the missionary cause."

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The Guardian for December 13 contains a striking paper entitled "The Missionary," written by Dr. Percy Dearmer, who has been spending the winter in India at the invitation of the Y.M.C.A. While it may be questioned whether there are many exact originals for Dr. Dearmer's missionary of the past, there is no doubt as to the clearness of outline in which he depicts the missionaries of the present. Many of his references are to people at once recognizable by those familiar with outstanding C.M.S. men. The article is a true and valuable appreciation of missionaries and of the reality and breadth of their work. They are not "a special breed of supermen," but by the nature of their work they have become "wiser and more charitable than we are at home." "Parties have become reconciled because something outside teaches them their essential unity, just as, since the war began, people have discovered in England that those things which hold them together are far greater than those which divide them." Dr. Dearmer writes :

"When I try to summarize my impressions I find myself thinking of a scholarly, quiet man, living simply but genially, though cut off from many things that make life desirable to most people—very fixed in his purpose and yet free in his outlook. He knows what he is doing, and why he is doing it, and finds it worth doing ; I think in that clarity of purpose he differs from the clerical order in England."

The paper closes with an earnest plea that the home world and the missionary world be brought closer together, for the writer holds that if young clergy "instead of going straight from the Theological School to the Mothers' Meeting" were to spend even five years in the mission field, "a new type of parson would pervade the Church." Such a plan would be, he adds, a great gain to the mission field, for many who went for five years would elect to stay.

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