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The East-End and the East: Being Some Thoughts on the Relationship between Home and Foreign Missions.

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"I bring you a posy of other men's thoughts.
The string only is my own."

A SHORT while ago a Home Missionary meeting was being held in a certain North-country parish, and at the close of the meeting a local layman was asked to speak. He urged the people to support Home Missions rather than Foreign Missions, saying, "If you support one, you cannot very well support the other, as they are exactly opposite to one another, and, after all, charity begins at home," etc. He was interrupted by another layman, who said that in his opinion Foreign Missions ought to be supported rather than Home Missions, as the need abroad was so much greater. The deputation who had been addressing the meeting, and who, like most Home Mission workers, is an enthusiast for Foreign Missions, explained that both these speakers were the victims of a fallacy in believing that there is *any* antagonism between the Home and Foreign Mission work of the Church.

This heresy, however, is far too common. It does not often appear in quite such a crude form as in the case just mentioned, but, in more subtle forms, it is constantly causing trouble and misunderstanding.

This paper is not intended to suggest that Home Missions should receive more support at the expense of Foreign Missions, nor that Foreign Missions should receive more support at the expense of Home Missions. It is rather proposed to appeal for a more statesmanlike realization of the close inter-relation between the two.

Since Home Mission work stands for vital spiritual work

in the Church at home, and Foreign Mission work stands for vital spiritual work in the Church abroad, it follows that those who help the one are indirectly, but very materially, helping the other; for spiritual work faithfully done in any part of the Church cannot fail to react on the life of the whole Church.

I.

That there is no antagonism, but rather a close relationship, between these two branches of the Church's work is shown by the evidence of Scripture, the evidence of History, the evidence of Missionary Authorities, and the evidence of Common Sense.

(a) THE EVIDENCE OF SCRIPTURE.—To examine the evidence of Scripture on this subject at all thoroughly is impossible within the limits of a short paper. Briefly stated, the argument is as follows: The Old Testament is the story of how God chose a single nation to be His people, and of how He purified and purged this "Home Church," so that ultimately the whole earth should be full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. The object was the Evangelization of the world. The preliminary method was the purification of the "Home Church." The idea that God's gracious dealings with His chosen people would lead to His acknowledgment by the whole world is often expressed in the Old Testament. This is especially noticeable in the Psalms. "God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him" (see Pss. xxii., xlvi., lxxv., lxxvii., lxxviii., c., cii., etc.).¹

When we come to the New Testament we find that before the Resurrection "Jesus maintained the traditional Jewish attitude of exclusiveness, but that His ministry exhibited an expansive character . . . and in His teaching He both laid down principles which were destined eventually to make Jew and Gentile one, and also gave direct intimations that the time would come when the Gospel should be proclaimed in all the world."² His object was to evangelize the world. His method

¹ Tait, "Christ and the Nations," p. 106 *et seq.*

² *Ibid.*, p. 147.

was to devote Himself almost entirely to the "Home Church," teaching its members to love Him, and knowing full well that those who love Him faithfully will not fail to love the heathen, for whom also, as He taught them, He died. We have very little record of His teaching between the Resurrection and the Ascension, but what we have is largely concerned with the Church's mission to the world. He has trained His disciples: let them make disciples of all nations. He has founded His Church; let it grow and increase until it covers the earth. But even now let Home and Foreign Missions go hand in hand. "Ye shall be witnesses to Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."¹

(b) THE EVIDENCE OF HISTORY.—It is evident to all who have studied the history of Foreign Missions that when spiritual mission work has been faithfully done at home, there has always been a corresponding revival of spiritual mission work abroad. We owe the establishment of the C.M.S. and the Bible Society to those energetic Home Mission workers²—the members of the "Clapham Sect."

Dr. Eugene Stock has shown, in his "History of the C.M.S.,"³ that the Moody and Sankey revivals greatly favoured the development of the missionary earnestness of the Church of England; and none can measure the help that Keswick's message of consecration has rendered to the missionary cause.

In the year 1836 various members of the C.M.S. met together in a C.M.S. committee-room, and gave evidence of their appreciation of the importance of Home Missions by founding the first Church Home Missionary Society, the C.P.A.S. This brings us to our third witness:

(c) THE EVIDENCE OF MISSIONARY AUTHORITIES.—Nearly every thoughtful missionary leader has at one time or another

¹ "Surely for us 'Jerusalem' may be taken as representing the parish in which we live; 'Judea' the National Church, of which it forms a part; and 'Samaria' our colonies."—Rev. W. C. Procter, in "Stronger Stakes for Longer Cords."

² Carter, "English Church in Eighteenth Century," p. 98.

³ Vol. iii., p. 804.

expressed himself strongly on this subject. Dr. Mott has told us how Commission I. of the Edinburgh Conference conducted correspondence with several hundreds of leading missionaries in all parts of the world, and, among other questions, asked what constituted the most crucial problem in connection with the great missionary task. "It is a remarkable fact," he writes,¹ "and one that gives cause for much reflection, that to this question the larger proportion of the correspondents, although face to face with all the difficulties of the work abroad, agree in replying, 'The state of the Church at Home.'" Commenting on this at the Conference, he said: "There is unanimity and emphasis of conviction abroad that the most crucial problem is the state of Christendom. It is futile to talk about making Christ known to the whole world unless there is greater reality in Christendom."

The Secretary of the Church Pastoral Aid Society a short while ago received a letter from the Rev. Cyril C. Bardsley, Hon. Secretary of the C.M.S., covering a generous gift to the deficit fund of the C.P.A.S., in which Mr. Bardsley writes: "There is imperative need for advance here at home as well as in our foreign work—the two are inseparably related. If the foreign work is not to be gravely hindered by unchristian conditions in our own country, the Church must be more earnest in evangelizing the richer and poorer classes alike, but if she is to have the mighty power of the Holy Spirit in her midst, she must also be obedient to the vision of her world task."

Prebendary W. E. Burroughs, in an article in the *Church Missionary Review*, June, 1913, writes: "The Spiritual life of the Church at home must ever be the measure of her missionary energies abroad." And, "It is not natural to seek in the circumstances of the Church at home the cause of the present 'set back' in the long-continued advance of the missionary work abroad, rather than in those of the mission fields themselves. But we can look in no other direction. Abroad we know only of doors 'taken off their hinges,' of a polyglot cry from the unevan-

¹ "The Decisive Hour of Christian Missions," p. 149.

gelized world of to-day, 'Come over and help us.' The hindrance is not there."

Dr. C. H. Robinson, in *The Missionary Outlook*, p. 117, quotes Dr. Mott as saying: "My anxiety is not lest there be not a great awakening in the East, but lest there be not a corresponding awakening in the West." Canon Joynt, in *Pastoral Work* (p. 121), writes: "That there is no conflict between Home and Foreign Missions has been often enough asserted. Consult the records of the societies for home and heathen evangelization, and it will be found that in the vast majority of cases the parishes which most largely support the one most largely support the other. The heart which yearns for the Christ-forgetting multitudes in the densely populated centres of English life are usually the hearts which yearn for those to whom His dear Name has never yet been carried. Of course. For there are not two missionary spirits, but one. Nor are there two Holy Ghosts, nor two atoning Crosses, nor two divisions in the great multitude who stand before the throne with the white robes which have been washed in the blood of the Lamb. The one Divine Spirit imparts to us the mind and Spirit of Christ, making us see the world with His eyes. He creates in us love for souls. He impels us to go and bring some lost ones home, from whatever fields it may be—at home or abroad. Let us ask Him to cast out the evil spirit of prejudice from the hearts of His ministers for or against one or other part of His work."

These opinions may be summed up in two characteristic sayings of the Bishop of London in Convocation: "We shall never convert Bethnal Green until we are far keener on Foreign Missions," and "We shall never convert the world until we are red hot on Home Missions."

This close relationship is not only proved by the evidence of Scripture, of history, and of missionary authorities, but by—

(d) THE EVIDENCE OF COMMON SENSE.—Home and Foreign Missions are different aspects of the work of one Church, and, just as the disease of any single organ will affect the vitality of

the whole body, so backwardness in one branch of its work will affect the life of the whole Church. Inefficiency in the work abroad will adversely affect the work at home, and inefficiency in the work at home will hinder the Church in the carrying out of her "World Mission."

To quote John R. Mott once more, he writes, in "The Home Ministry and Modern Missions" (p. 174): "How may the home minister promote the spiritual power and fruitfulness of the world's evangelization? First of all by making his own Church a spiritual Church. The greatest spiritual power and efficiency of the missionary enterprise abroad is dependent on the spiritual life of the Church at home. It will eventually share the general standards and characteristics of the Home Church. What the spring or fountain is to the stream, the Home Church is to the foreign enterprise. It is surprising how directly and how quickly any manifestation of spiritual power here gives an impulse to the work of Christ at the ends of the earth. . . . They (*i.e.*, the Church at home and the Church abroad) constitute parts of the same body. And the strength of the heart determines the pulse beat at the extremities."

II.

The help which Home Mission work renders to foreign mission work is very *practical*.

(a) Home mission work helps to supply the men. This is obviously one of the most pressing needs of Foreign Missions. Speaking of the "real ground of appeal" which the C.P.A.S. and other Home Missionary organizations have for the sympathies of C.M.S. supporters, Dr. Eugene Stock says¹: "This appeal . . . is one of real cogency. If spiritual work at home is faithfully done, it will produce missionaries. And missionaries, true and able and devoted, are the Church's greatest need at the present time." Not only does Home Mission work, by the preaching of the Evangel of Christ,

¹ "History of Church Missionary Society," vol. iii., p. 700.

produce missionaries to work in the foreign field, but it produces missionary workers and leaders at home. Dr. Mott has said¹ that "the greatest problem of foreign missions is not on the foreign field, but in the home field, and without doubt, the most critical aspect is that of providing adequate leadership."

(b) Not only do Foreign Missions need more men, but they also need more prayer. And since Home Missions exist to make more Christians it stands to reason, that they will be the means of causing more prayer for Foreign Missions; for all true Christians pray for Foreign Missions.

"Away in foreign lands they wondered how
Their single word had power;
At home the Christians, two or three, had met
To pray an hour."

And those two or three Christians may be humble folk, meeting in some mission hall, where the curate or lay reader is supported by a Home Mission Society.

(c) A third great need of Foreign Missions is money, and Home Missions help here. The following is a case in point: There was a large and growing parish in one of our northern towns which, with the help of the C.P.A.S., was divided into two parishes. The energetic young parish, alone, now sends considerably more to C.M.S. than the two parishes could do before division. The mother parish is not so hampered in her work and can also give more attention to the needs of the foreign field.

To take another case which is typical of what is constantly happening: There is a large, poor overcrowded parish in which for years the vicar worked single-handed. He ultimately received a grant from a Home Mission Society which enabled him to have a curate. When the vicar was working alone, he was unable to do much for Foreign Missions. He had the annual collection in Church and an annual meeting, but more he could not do, for all his energies were engaged in the necessary routine work of his great parish. When the curate came he at

¹ "Future Leadership of the Church," p. 49.

once began to stir up interest in Foreign Missions. A Sowers' Band and a Study Band were started, the contributions to Foreign Missions increased, and there are those amongst the young people of the parish who have definitely decided to offer themselves for work in the Church abroad.

(*d*) Missionaries agree that one of the worst difficulties with which they have to contend, and one which Home Missions must help them to face, is the problem of the Godless European, who is supposed by the heathen to be a Christian. It is the Home Mission worker who must influence the soldier, the sailor, and the trader, so that when he leaves our own country he shall go as an ambassador of Christ, who shall live the Christ life in the sight of the heathen.

In emphasizing the fact that one of the needs of the Church in the mission field is "a new revival of national Christianity at home," the Rev. W. S. Hooton writes:¹ "Obviously as long as we send out soldiers and sailors who become a byword in the seaports and military stations of the East, civilians and officers who disregard the name of Christ among non-Christians of the Empire, and literature which is corrupt or rationalistic, and therefore destructive, either morally or intellectually, of the Christian influences at work; as long as the heathen see us sending a mere handful to proclaim a message professedly all-important, and divided about the very authority of the word on which that message rests, so long will our best efforts be countermined by the spirits of evil which have their home in our Christian land."

(*e*) Not only do the heathen see the life of the European in foreign lands, but in this twentieth century they also see his life at home. The heathen are at our doors. Many of them know Bermondsey and Bethnal Green, Everton and Ancoats. The young Indian or Japanese student has seen the drunken women and the neglected children who blaspheme at their play. He has seen empty churches and crowded public houses, and he does not fail to draw the moral. When he returns to his own

¹ "The Missionary Campaign," p 180.

land will he say, "England is a Christian land, let us make our own land Christian too"? It is a well-known fact that Indian parents have been known to send their sons to England, because they were inclined to become Christians, and that the youths have been effectually cured by what they saw here.

The Bishop of Chelmsford has told us of an experience with an Indian Prince. "Some little time ago," he writes,¹ "one of the great Princes from India, while visiting this country for the first time as the guest of the King, wished to see the condition of life in the East End, and it was my privilege to be his conductor. As we passed along a poor street he asked that he might enter one of the houses and see the interior for himself. I shall never forget the significant look which passed between him and his companion as we ascended the rickety, dirty stairs, and as we entered the squalid room in which a woman and three or four children were making matchboxes. As he inquired concerning her hours of work, her wages, her struggles, I felt disgraced that such a scene could be witnessed by such a man in the capital city of an Empire supposed to be governed on Christian lines."

This is surely an example of the close inter-relation between Home and Foreign Missions which will make us think. May God help us not to shirk the problem.

III.

The help which Foreign Missions render to Home Missions is just as practical and definite as that which the Home Church renders to the Church abroad.

(a) Foreign Missions widen our horizon and deliver us from parochialism, which is usually one of the most conspicuous characteristics of Englishmen. We who are members of a world-wide Empire are always most interested in "the politics of the parish pump." Foreign Missions deliver us from this failing in matters of religion. The two or three humble folk

¹ "Here and Hereafter," p. 124.

who meet together in a little mission-room to pray for Christian work at the ends of the earth are, at the same time, receiving an inestimable benefit and widening of outlook in their own spiritual life. However "cribbed, cabined, and confined" his material life may be, the missionary-minded Christian can say, "Thou hast set my feet in a large room," for by his prayers he is labouring in India and China, Palestine and South America, his own parish and the uttermost part of the earth.

(b) Foreign Missions teach our people to give generously ; and this reacts favourably on work at home. Every missionary society, Home and Foreign, has gained financially from the C.M.S. Swanwick appeal.

(c) Foreign Missions are an unanswerable apologetic. The story of how Charles Darwin, after seeing the wonderful change wrought in the Fuegians, commenced to subscribe to the S.A.M.S., and continued his subscription to the day of his death, is well known. The apologetic value at home of such a wonderful mission as that in Uganda is immeasurable.

(d) Foreign Missions make definite contributions to our knowledge of the true Christian character. Our Lord was the Perfect Man and His character contained all that is good and noble. Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, are found in Him. But this very catholicity of our Lord makes our individual appreciation of His character only partial. The Eastern mystic and the Western man of action see His character from very different view-points. Each can appreciate different aspects of that perfection, but neither, by himself, can appreciate or comprehend the whole. The Rev. William Temple has well expressed this in his essay on the Church in "Foundations" (p. 358). He writes: "As Bishop Montgomery has said, 'the Body of Christ is a torso.' Only when the glory and honour of all nations are brought into the kingdom will the true greatness of the kingdom be known. A meeting of devout Christians a little while ago was startled to

hear a well-known missionary say something like this: 'What are the characteristics of a converted Englishman?—Honesty, manliness, truthfulness, trustworthiness. And what are the characteristics of the converted Hindu?—They are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.' But what will be the result when the mystical and spiritual nations of the East, and the affectionate and child-like nations of Africa, are quickened by contact with the perfection of their own virtues in the person of Jesus of Nazareth?—Inevitably the whole Church will be filled with a new spirit of devotion and selflessness."¹

(e) The path of Foreign Mission work, like the path of Home Mission work, is the path of obedience; and the path of obedience is the path of blessing. There are many reasons why those who sympathize with Foreign Missions should also sympathize with Home Missions, and there are many reasons why the friends of Home Missions should also be the friends of Foreign Missions. I have tried to call attention to some of these, but the greatest of all remains. It is this: Both Home and Foreign Missions are the Will of our Lord. Those who love Him Who first loved us cannot rest until all, both at home and abroad, shall call Him Master.

¹ See also the Bishop of Oxford's Bampton Lectures, 1909 edition, pp. 170, 171.

