

The Missionary World.

THE fact that peace proposals have been made—whatever their value and however remote their fruition—naturally gives rise to the thought of the Church under the test of peace. Shall we meet that test as well or as ill as we met the test of war? For that it will be a test is certain, and nowhere will it be more acutely applicable than in the missionary world at home. The test of peace after the intense strain of war, when every faculty was bent to endurance and every personal sorrow was mitigated by the common calamity, will prove our capacity to relapse or our resolve to continue. We sometimes easily assume that peace, when declared, will bring at once in its train all those flowers and fruits of peace which are normally the product of its long prevalence. This is not so. After carnage and bitterness and death such as the last thirty months have brought us, peace will at first be negative; it will mean the ceasing of war not the harvest of calm. Indeed the harvest of war will long continue to be reaped in days of peace. As surely as the soil and the sub-soil have been ruined from the agricultural point of view in the war-trodden areas of France and Belgium for years to come, so surely has the moral and spiritual ground of Christian endeavour been affected by the influences of war. What can we do that no loss shall befall our Master's cause and Kingdom when we exchange the stress of watching by land and air and sea for the stress of possessing without material hindrance a new world in His Holy name? There is a great danger of expecting automatic expansion, or of taking a period of repose, or of believing that because great shells have ceased to shake this earth, all is well. Surely the message for the missionary worker is "Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end. . . ." If the first shock of war was a call to prayer and to action, so also will be the first shock of peace. And now we have been clearly warned that out of the darkness of the past and the threats of the present such a day is coming to us. Let us in all the confusion of the hour and its multiplying embarrassments give ourselves afresh in loyalty and discipline to the Christ of the whole world, so that we may not waver nor relapse, hesitate or unbend, when we can once again prosecute our task.

The cornfields of France and Flanders can only be remedied with patience, but a miracle can renew the devastation of Christian endeavour, and we have a right as chastened believers to expect that our merciful Lord will grant us His grace in miraculous measure. It will be in this confidence that we shall seek to reconstruct our life and service ; surely a new humility as learners will be upon us, a new generosity as givers, a new simplicity as citizens ; and as we have preached everywhere during the war that spiritual force must displace material force, then we shall set ourselves to live as we have proclaimed, establishing on earth a society out of which a harvest of witness to Christ will be raised up. With so great a prospect before us let us gird up the loins of our minds and bind ourselves afresh to the cause of all causes—the spread of the Kingdom of God—in peace as in war.

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The announcement that the Missionary Week following the National Mission has been postponed will be a greater disappointment than surprise. It is well known how far-reaching are the restrictions placed on travel for all save actually essential purposes. We believe the Committee were quite right in their decision, following as it does on the decision of the Islington Conference and anticipating, as we believe it also does, many similar decisions with regard to the larger religious gatherings in London. But the situation throws a fresh responsibility on the Church to which we doubt not it will manfully arise. In the early stages of the National Mission it was announced that “ this is a soldier’s battle.” So it is now in the missionary ranks. The individual and the locality acting for the whole body of the Church can maintain and expand the missionary cause. Every prayer meeting, every study circle, every collection, every sermon, every bit of self-preparation for future service abroad has an added value. Rural deaneries and urban areas can have their own small conferences and can cultivate among themselves the larger spirit of corporate determination to bring in the day of Christ throughout the world. Not for one moment can the missionary countenance of the Church blanch nor the missionary heart of the Church cease beating because some of the great fixtures temporarily cease to be held. The infantry of the Church, the rank and file, will stand shoulder to shoulder with

renewed dedication and confidence, each determined in his own locality and according to the character of his special responsibility, not only to maintain but to advance his share of the work. And may it not well be, in the end, that the trust of individual responsibility freshly thrust upon us will prepare us now, as nothing else would have done, for the greater days which are coming to us?

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The publications which were specially prepared for the Missionary Week and the whole missionary movement following the National Mission, are now issued by the S.P.C.K. They should be widely used, and will prove invaluable in furthering the cause through the country. They are as follows: *Adventure for the Kingdom*, Rev. W. E. S. Holland; *What are Foreign Missions Doing?* Eugene Stock; *Islam and the Gospel*, Rev. H. U. Weitbrecht, D.D.; *The National Mission and Mohammedanism*, Canon W. H. T. Gairdner; *Young West and Young East*, Ruth Rouse; *Things as They Are, A Survey of Recent Missionary Facts*, G. A. Gollock; *Some Objections to Foreign Missions*, Edwyn Bevan; *The Church in Earnest*, Rev. C. C. B. Bardsley. All these are either 2d. or 1d. Bishop Copleston has also written a leaflet on *The Missionary Sequel of the National Mission*.

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The East and The West opens the year in its January issue with a number of articles of real worth. Whether we read Bishop Baynes on "Missions and Labour," or the two articles on "Social Reform in its Relation to Missionary Work," and "Indian Social Problems," written respectively by Mr. John Lee and Mr. N. K. Bose, or study "The Chinese Church, its Financial Problems," by the Rev. H. B. Rattenbury and "Self-Support and Self-Control in Polynesia," by the Rev. H. Hough, we find breadth of spirit and freshness of outlook. The paper on "Sir Rabindranath Tagore in Japan" has a curious interest, and the editor contributes another chapter on the Conversion of Europe, dealing this time with North Germany. Bishop Montgomery's article on "The American Church," though fragmentary, is illuminating. All who desire to follow the wide current of missionary thought owe a debt to Canon Robinson for the quarterly which he edits and for which he provides material of value from such varied sources and on so many themes.

The January number of the *International Review of Missions* contains again one of those missionary surveys of the past year which missionary students and speakers have found so indispensable. Into some sixty pages are compressed the outstanding missionary facts of the year, classified under countries and topics so that reference is easy, and yet so arranged as to give a broad conception of world movements. The record of the year 1916 is a striking piece of Christian evidence which men who watch for the coming of the Kingdom should not miss. The general deduction made at the close of the survey is as follows :

“ There is one fact of supreme significance which the preceding pages must have brought to the consciousness of every reader. Among non-Christian tribes and peoples there is an eager readiness to hear the Gospel and a spirit receptive of its message, and the Church in the mission field is realizing in a new and dominating sense that ‘ the real, the fundamental, the permanent object for which it exists on earth ’ is to interpret to others the revelation of God in Christ, proclaiming its meaning in wide-spread evangelism, and manifesting its application in every department of human life.”

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Education continues to receive—and rightly so—a large place in the pages of the Review. Problems are arising in the mission field which will claim the best attention of the Christian Church. The article on “ Japanese Nationalism and Mission Schools in Chosen ” has a significance far wider than the two countries of which it treats, and Mr. Oldham’s study of “ The Question of a Conscience Clause in India ” is an invaluable contribution to clearness of thought on a problem which may at any moment press acutely for solution. Among other articles we notice with pleasure the first of a series of four papers by Professor A. G. Hogg of Madras on “ The God that Must Needs be Christ Jesus.” It is a fresh and striking statement, born of the author’s experience in the presentation of central Christian truth to a college audience—partly Hindu, partly Christian—in India.

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The monthly missionary magazines bear evidence of careful forethought. Especially is this the case with the *Church Missionary Review*. The number is strong, fresh, and varied ; we welcome the range of subjects touched and the varied writers secured. Special attention should of course be directed to Mr. J. H. Oldham’s article

on "Principles and Practice of Co-operation." This is one of the subjects of the hour, and it demands the closest study. *The Mission Field* (S.P.G.) fittingly welcomes Bishop Montgomery home from his recent visit to the United States. Though the financial statement for the year is not complete, the treasurers have much to report that is encouraging, the total sum received to date being nearly £2,000 in excess of that received to a similar date last year. Behind the gifts lies the increase of the spirit of self-sacrifice—best of all assets of a missionary society. *The Bible in the World* (B. & F.B.S.), in a brave leading article, says, "In the dawn of a new year such as none of us ever faced before, we do well to lay to heart the saying of an eloquent American bishop: 'The power of any life lies in its expectancy.' What are we hoping for?" We ought to take this question in conjunction with a later statement on the financial position of the British and Foreign Bible Society which may be imperfectly understood. We quote a paragraph in full to show what the war means to the enterprise of a society which so far has maintained its service to Christian missions abroad without any reduction, and which hitherto has not refused any missionary organization the editions for which it has made request.

"Christian people, however, must grasp the serious problem which confronts the Society in which they are all partners. To-day the cost of producing books has enormously increased. Our English editions alone are costing at the rate of £8,000 a year more than they cost before the war; while the cost of foreign editions is enhanced in similar proportion. Our binding bill in London alone has increased by £6,000 a year; even during the last twelvemonth our expenses for freight have gone up by between £2,000 and £3,000. In war time the loss on foreign exchange forms a very grave item; at the present rates, as compared with those of 1915, we are incurring a net loss of over £7,000 a year. The above figures involve the Bible Society in an increased expenditure of £24,000 *per annum*, and they by no means exhaust the adverse effects of the war."

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The New Year's message of *China's Millions* on the words "Fear Not" is just what we would expect—strong, satisfying, human and absolutely uplifting. "Let the worst come that man or devil can achieve, our times are in the hands of Him Who has conquered and holds, with hands once wounded for us, the insignia of His supreme and final authority." These are the things we need to be told—and need to believe. A touching interest attaches to the following statement on "Sons of Missionaries and the War."

Missionaries give much, but not exclusively to lands other than their own.

“ In the present great war there is a wide fellowship of sorrow and suffering. All classes of the country are affected alike, the rich and poor, those at home and those abroad. In the case of our missionaries, though engaged in work for God in a land far distant from the fields of conflict, their homes have not been exempted from the general call upon the manhood of the nation. In all more than 110 ‘ Old Boys ’ of the Chefoo schools have joined the colours, and of these sixteen have given their lives for King and country, while four more are among the missing of whom so seldom further news is heard. Besides these one was drowned through the torpedoing of the *Lusitania*, one engaged in the Royal Army Medical Corps is a prisoner of war, while several others have been wounded, some, we regret to say, seriously. Of these 110, eighty-eight are sons of C.I.M. Missionaries, either now or in former years.”

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