

The Missionary World.

THE missionary societies have now held their annual meetings and presented their annual reports to a Church that was expectant but rather anxious. The results are hopeful and stimulating—for difficulty stimulates as much as success. The note in the great meetings was that of chastened confidence, and the thanksgiving of those societies which had an especially favourable balance sheet was tempered by the necessity of an unrelaxed loyalty to responsibilities undertaken. Each year of the war it has been the custom to say that *next year will be the test*. It was said last year, and the year has been good. It is being said now again and the omen of rising prices supports the statement. But the missionary year of 1917-18 has dawned well, and the word is passing round that chastening is a proof of sonship and when it is not regarded lightly it is sure afterward to prove to be for our profit. The burden of missionary administration is a heavy one and those who bear it need to be encouraged by a cheerful and willing Church which announces its intention to see them through. The National Budget appeared about the same time as that of the missionary societies. Perhaps missionary supporters may here be reminded that the income tax is not to be raised and that the three newly increased taxes are not those which are ordinarily supposed to effect the regular contributors to missions! Let us set out bravely once more to give and to gain for the societies all that we can.

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The C.M.S. made a notable advance on May 1, in appointing twenty-four women to membership of the General Committee. Events have been moving in this direction for several years; the step has not been taken without much careful thought and when it was taken it was done generously. A very important principle has been recognized in fixing the number of elected women at twenty-four—the same number as that of elected laymen previously appointed annually. The Society has recognized that the laity includes women as well as men and that the lay members of the Church need to be called into council. It would be a foolish interpretation to give of the occurrence that the Society wished to mark its thankfulness for the vast help which women have rendered to it. Rather

is it true that the Society has recognized that full-orbed work is that which alone can give the fullest results in the Kingdom of our Lord and having so resolved has fearlessly acted. In so doing the C.M.S. has given a lead to the Church of England, opening to the lay woman the same sphere of usefulness as to the lay man, and probably the effect will be widespread in other societies. However much we may personally welcome this step it remains to be affirmed that no advance, no reform, no new departure, however needful, will in itself effect great results; the Spirit of the Lord alone can vitalize, renew and bless. If He should pour out His Spirit freshly now upon the C.M.S. His sovereign power will have a new channel to use, and the glory will be given to Him and not to an expansion of the method of administration.

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Few more striking instances of change in the "unchanging East" could be given than the account in the current number of the *Moslem World* of a modern newspaper called the *Kibla* which is published in Mecca. The latest telegrams and Marconigrams follow the course of the war and local news shows how the organization and discipline of the country are proceeding under the control of the Sheriff. The aim of the paper is to support the movement for Arab independence and for return to old religious tradition, in opposition to the attitude of the (so-called) Committee of Union and Progress at Constantinople. In addition to news, which is said to be accurate though perhaps selected because it is favourable to the end in view, there are articles on the position of Islam in various lands and on current events touching Arab interests, or showing how other nations—*i.e.*, Italy—attained to independence; and extracts from Egyptian and Indian newspapers, and even from such London organs as the *Near East* and the *Morning Post*. Not only East and West but the Middle Ages and modern thought meet in this most interesting newspaper which appeals alike to the Bedouin in the desert and the cultured university student in the town. Mecca must ere long become an open city when it issues a paper with a world outlook such as this.

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Mr. Wigram's article in the *C.M. Review* on "Past Efforts and Future Adaptations in the C.M.S. in India" is very welcome as giving a broad setting to the many questions which arise as to missionary policy and advance. The need of the hour is for wide-eyed

specialists, who know one subject supremely well, and yet because they can relate it to general issues are in no danger of taking action in view of that one subject alone. It is profoundly true that general evangelization, medical work among Moslems, educational work, work through indigenous Christians (whether by voluntary witness or by the ordained ministry) and church organization are all inter-laced and act and re-act upon each other. There has never been a time when Christian missions were so full of possibility and hope or when problems lay so thickly along every line of advance.

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We welcome with special pleasure the minute of the C.M.S. Committee on "The Progress of Christianity in India" called out by requests for reinforcements from the various Indian missions of the Society. Though addressed to the "governing bodies in the Indian field" it has a powerful message for those who serve the cause at home. It demonstrates the inadequacy of what is as yet being done in view of the needs of the work; it shows how thought in the home committee as well as in mission councils abroad is turning towards a transference of much more responsible office to qualified Indian workers; it throws open for "thoughtful consideration" the whole educational work of the society, and raises the question whether its educational policy might not in the future concentrate more closely on giving more efficient education to Christians, even at the cost of lessening other schools; finally this stirring memorandum deals with the need for fostering the sense of responsibility for the progress of vital Christianity which is "already happily manifest in some parts of the Indian field." We can conceive no better programme for a meeting of laymen or clergy, for a missionary night in a C.E.M.S. branch, or for a study circle, than a careful debate upon this statement by the committee. It leads to the heart of some of the most living problems of the day.

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The question of missionary reinforcement after the war begins to claim attention from those whose eyes are turned to the needs abroad. The Conference of British Missionary Societies—which is meeting this month at Norwood instead of at Swanwick—has appointed a strong committee to consider the whole question of recruiting for foreign work, and communication has been opened with chaplains at the front and others who are in touch with men. It is

evident that when war claims press no longer the new spirit of sacrifice and service will lead many to offer for work overseas. Educational and training centres are considering how to complete the equipment of men who were called to the army in the midst of a college career, and missionary societies are taking pains to discover how such candidates as have true vocation may be used to the best effect. On the women's side a committee has been formed including representatives of agencies connected with home or parochial work, social service and foreign missions, so that the widest possible presentation of avenues for after-war service may be brought before the girls and women who have so strenuously served their country. Nothing but good can result from such a facing of the common needs of the world; the cause of foreign missions will assuredly not lose by being regarded as part of a great whole rather than as a separate interest in the Church's life.

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In theory every reader of the *Churchman* has an interest in Jewish missions, and some at least take a practical part in their work. The London Jews' Society, in particular, claims support from many of the parishes which support the C.M.S. But Jewish missions will never come to their own until the extraordinary interest of the Jewish mission field is presented with a force and freshness greater than in the past. It needs to be shown that this scattered ancient people, comparatively few in number, make an appeal as varied as the other non-Christian races, and that in solving, or even intelligently studying, the problems presented to Christianity by Judaism—whether orthodox or reformed—light will be thrown on the very heart of missions to Moslems. There are among us not a few who have made a scholarly study of Judaism and the Jewish mission field, and of them some have produced literature of great apologetic value for use among the Jews. Will some of these writers turn their pens to produce pamphlets or articles which will win from the Christian public for the Jewish people and Jewish missions that warmth of well-instructed sympathy which they sadly need? We believe a large response would follow such an approach.

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China's Millions for May contains an editorial note, which owing to its peculiar value we take the liberty of reprinting almost in full. The subject dealt with is the China Inland Mission and the war.

this mission, as is well known, contains missionaries of numerous nationalities and accordingly it has had to deal with exceptional complications. The entry of America into the war and the breach of diplomatic relations between China and Germany, bringing a possible five hundred million more human beings into relation with the conflict, have increased the complications. China was one of the few remaining parts of the world where German missions could continue their work; this presumably will now be suspended. There were also German missionaries on the staff of the C.I.M. The situation is delicate for the C.I.M. and the statement which follows will be widely welcomed.

“Quite apart from the many political and economic questions involved, with which we are not here concerned, the problems which this strife forces upon the Church of Christ are complicated and painful beyond measure, and the Mission’s difficulties are only a part of this greater whole. Believing, as we do, that the Church of Christ is composed of those who, out of every nation, have been born from above through faith in Christ’s atoning work, we are naturally more concerned about the attitude in spirit of Christians one toward another than about any other question. And in this war it seems as though Satan was making his supreme effort to separate those who are called to be one in Christ Jesus.

“Though we do not write as avowed pacifists or conscientious objectors, we can and do adopt the following words of an article published in the *Friend* for February 16 last: ‘In our judgment the present condition of the world constitutes a call to emphasize more than ever before the super-nationality of the missionary movement and of the Church of Christ generally. In its very essence the missionary message is opposed to everything that savours of racial antipathy or prejudice. The work to which we are divinely called is not to extend the civilization and interests of any particular nation, but to make Jesus Christ known to the world.’

“In a way that was quite unsought and manifestly of God the China Inland Mission has developed not only into an interdenominational but also into an international organization. . . . Is this bond in Christ to be sacrificed to war? If it is, will it be for God’s glory? Only a supreme love to Christ and a supreme devotion to His Kingdom can overcome the disruptive forces of this war as they bear upon the members and associates of the Mission. . . . In view of inquiries which have been made by some friends of the Mission it seems desirable to state that in the matter of finance all the Continental Associate Missions are entirely supported by funds supplied by their own countries. These and other similar matters connected with the practical administration of the work are known to the British Minister in China and to the authorities at home.

“But some may ask, as some have asked, if fellowship is possible or desirable in the light of all that has happened. The answer to this must depend upon the loyalty of all to the sole object for which they are united, namely, to quote the [words used above, ‘not to extend the civilization and interests of any particular nation, but to make Jesus Christ known to the world.’ Failure in this respect must imperil the fellowship. This is not to denationalize any men or make him unpatriotic, but solely to put the things of Christ first. As to whether a man should repudiate the actions of his country, as British

Christians have repudiated the opium traffic, that assumes that the man has full, unbiased, and accurate information upon which his judgment can be based. Until such time as all have this there is at least a call for patience, forbearance, and charity. Only God can really judge the heart of any man.

"What the future holds in store we do not know. Our one concern, come what may, must be to maintain the spirit of Jesus Christ, to love our enemies, to pray for those who spitefully use us, to ask that our love may increase and abound one toward another and toward all men. Only thus can evil be overcome and the spirit of war cast out."

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The *Foreign Field* (Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society) contains a brief and striking article by Mr. Marshall Broomhall on the end of opium in China. In 1906 the Emperor of China issued a decree saying that "within a limit of ten years, this harmful foreign muck must be fully and entirely cleansed away." The task is now completed. So engrossed with war demands have we all been that this really great event has received comparatively little notice. Vigorous agitation was made in this country, and in certain circles it is true to say that there was prayer "without ceasing," but the impressive part in the anti-opium movement was taken by China itself. Immense financial sacrifice was made to suppress the trade, and those who know China well think that nothing but moral greatness could induce the rulers to persevere in their determination. *The Times* stated that "the strongest of governments might have flinched from such a task." Not so China. We echo Mr. Broomhall's closing question: "With such striking qualities as these, to what heights of national greatness may not China rise if possessed by the quickening power of the Spirit of Jesus Christ?" F.C.G.'s Cartoon in the *Westminster Gazette* is reproduced in the *Foreign Field*, representing a Chinaman in conversation with John Bull and in pidgin English explaining that when opium was stopped in ten years' time then he would send a missionary to stop drink in England.

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