

THE MORAL BATTLEFIELDS OF MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE.¹

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I HAVE ventured to choose this title because it expresses the thoughts which are in my own heart, and not only so, but, by the philosophy of suggestion, it may help to crystallize those ideas which are at present in the minds of men, but in nebulous form. All enterprise constitutes a battlefield. Positions which we have reached to-day have been won by conflict of former generations. And in our own experience we have had to accept the principle whether we liked it or no that "through struggle to achievement" is life's inexorable law. In treating of moral battlefields I do not wish to think of the more popular meaning of the word, but rather of its philosophic import as to lines of human conduct implying principles and connoting certain lines of action as resultant forces.

"Two grand tasks," said Carlyle, "have been assigned to the English people: the grand Industrial task of conquering some half or more of this terraqueous planet for the use of man; and, secondly, the grand Constitutional task of sharing, in some pacific endurable manner, the fruit of the said conquest, and showing all people how it might be done." And again: "Two men I honour, and no third. First, the toilworn craftsman that with earth-made implement laboriously conquers the earth and makes her man's. A second man I honour, and still more highly—him who is seen toiling for the spiritually indispensable; not daily bread but the bread of life. . . . These two in all their degrees I honour. All else is chaff and dust, which let the wind blow whither it listeth." That is to say, that the true man of enterprise is the spiritual man, who is seeking to bring out of the Industrial and Constitutional elements of his national life those spiritual processes which will eventually leaven the whole. To do such the man of commerce has a battlefield as wide as the scope of his vision. He has to face certain moral issues and to make certain decisions which may make or mar him. But if he is spiritual he must go farther. He

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must ask himself the question—Had I any obligations binding on me, when I was dealing with my own concerns, that should have led me to look beyond them? It may be perhaps hard to persuade him that his fortune carried a burden of moral obligation with it. But if we put it in another way and ask him for a subscription to a local charity where his works are, he admits the obligation and subscribes. We might argue from this that we as a Nation have carried out our trust Imperially with the moral and spiritual always in view. If the man of commerce has made money in India or our Dependencies he has left the impress of the English character behind him in equal laws and perfect justice, more kindly institutions and more humane instincts. These are infinitely more valuable than the mere gold; simply from their elevating and enduring character.

But, when all is said, it becomes a question, and a very searching question, whether we, or I might put it, whether Western civilization has fully compensated the Eastern Nations for the amount of injury it has caused—that is, to the established customs of those nations which are so much older than our own. It is a fact that wherever we go, we go to destroy. We have destroyed the Caste system by our Civil Service Competitive Examinations, whereby a low caste may appear at the top of the lists. We have jumbled up Brahmin Parsee and outcastes in our electric trams in all the great cities of India. Nay, more—we have seriously encroached upon their religious ideals by the inevitable intercourse which the “open door” secured. We have by means of Education changed the character and the outlook of the men. They are demanding educated brides, and are refusing to live under the Hindu joint family system; but, following Western custom, are demanding homes of their own. The position of women has also benefited by the changed conditions. The Oriental ideal of womanhood dies hard. When we understand its oppression through all the centuries we begin to realize the meaning of one of those Indian love lyrics:—

Less than the dust beneath thy chariot wheels,
Less than the rust that never stained thy sword,
Less than the trust thou hast in me, my Lord,
Even less than these.

Less than the weed that grows beside the door,
Less than the speed of hours spent far from thee,
Less than the need thou hast in life for me,
Even less am I.

The women of India, China and Japan are imbued with the spirit of Feminism, at least in so far as it gives them the education which they demand and the freedom which they claim. People are beginning to see that "No nation can rise above the spirit of its women, and if that spirit be asleep the nation can never be wideawake."

But far greater and more difficult issues are raised than these as a result of this Western impact. Social questions, Labour difficulties, have arisen of sufficient magnitude to compel attention, our own Social and Economic problems have their exact counterpart in the Eastern nation. The profiteer was not a unique product of our soil. He can be found in Japan, and one of their own professors (Joda) has railed at "the rampant and unrestrained behaviour of upstart millionaires." The growing self-consciousness of the working classes is making a deep impression on the whole national life. Strikes are of frequent occurrence both in Japan and India. There are injustices crying out for redress that are far more glaring than anything through which our own nation has passed. In Japan to-day there is an utter carelessness of human suffering. Women are working twelve hours a day in factories. The mortality of factory girls is 23 per cent each year. Twenty-two per cent of the women and girls are under fourteen years of age. In Persia, children from four years old are employed in making carpets, working twelve hours a day, and in so cramped a position that their limbs are twisted and permanently deformed. In China, coal can be sold in Shansi at 1s. 6d. per ton, because the miners work eleven hours a day for 7 cents, and a cent's worth of rice and meal. They are often in water up to the knees or waist. Porters have to carry a 400 lb. load for less than 1d. a mile. From this it can be clearly seen that all these countries are going through exactly the same conditions as ours did in the early nineteenth century. But it can also be seen that the world is absolutely one; that as Mr. Lenwood, in his *Social Problems in the East*, says, "You cannot save White-chapel if you ignore Calcutta."

How is the Church going to face these new conditions? What is to be her attitude to them?

If there is one fact which stands out through all these world upheavals, it is that the great religions of the East have failed to have any effect upon the unsettled races, of either solving their

problems, or giving them a scrap of comfort in their travail and pain. It might be summarized in the answer of a Hindu priest to a poor soul in great spiritual anguish. He had no more to say to her than : " Go pluck a rose from the garden of anyone who is not in trouble." A Japanese writer said that Buddhism, Confucianism and Shintoism have " none of them a strong restraining influence on the people." Just as we in the West with modern European culture are no longer confronted with the claims of Jupiter, Thor, Osiris, we have passed beyond them, for " Mankind will always exchange legend for history and fiction for fact " in the spiritual as well as in the intellectual market. Even so : the modern Asiatic has ceased to derive any inspiration from the older faiths, which his forefathers accepted from sheer ignorance, as well as from heredity.

What presentment of Religion are we to give him ? We might ask another question far more pertinent, " Are we sure of our own ground, and where we stand ? "

This is a very real battlefield ; there is a tendency in many leaders of our Church to-day to detract from the Divine all those miraculous and superhuman accessories which confirmed the witness and experience of generations. It would seem that some leaders in theology have not recovered from the panic which the war inflicted upon their mental outlook. It is a well-known fact that detractors from the Divine have always flourished in times of upheaval. Is it not the old fallacy of the Earth being stationary and the whole universe moving round it ? Modern thought has assumed this " stationary " character by its wild and uncompromising assertions ; and the Divine must cast away a great deal if it is to be squared with it. We are confident, however, that the panic will pass. The witness of the spirit will ever remain. If the contest is to take the form of an " Ethical " Christ versus a " Soterial," there is no doubt which will win ! The saying of St. Paul will stand all the blast of criticism, as well as all the shafts of a rationalistic age : " This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief."

There are two outstanding features of the Religion of Jesus Christ which shall ever prove successful in their appeal to the Eastern nations. The first is that Christianity is a personal appeal

to individuals, and its influence will ever radiate from the individual soul which has been touched by the fire of God's Holy spirit. The phrase "Winning the Masses" has done much damage to the cause of Jesus Christ. It was John Burns who said very truly: "The religion of Jesus Christ is not like a factory gate into which men crowd. It is rather like a turnstile through which every man must pass by himself." I have read a beautiful quotation from Bishop Creighton's *Heritage of the Spirit* in which he says: "Christianity beautifies many an individual life and sheds a lustre over many a family. Its influence is less conspicuous in the life of business, it pales in the sphere of what is called society, and is still dimmer in politics. In the region of International obligations it can scarcely be said to exist."

The rejoicing concerning the various "Mass Movements" in Africa, India and China must be tempered by the fact that there are far too few missionaries and teachers to treat them individually. This in passing may prove a real menace; for the "Ghandi group" is the result of an insufficiently instructed Christianity.

The second feature is that it is based upon the law of self-sacrifice. That "he that seeketh to save his life shall lose it and he that loseth his life shall keep it unto life eternal." This is an inexorable law and cannot be explained away. The religion of the East as well as some forms of our Western creed are seeking to evade this, and to a great extent our Church is infected by it. In other religions it is done under the guise of magical rites. In ours it is, to our shame be it stated, by lowering the standards of Christian life. The Parable of the unjust steward has its counterpart in our National and Church life to-day. It is always "Take thy bill and write fifty or fourscore" as the case may be. There is not a movement in our social or moral life, but we have held up the white feather of shameful defeat from sheer fear of popular opinion, and we have acquiesced in a lower standard of moral life than has been since most of us remember. Our divorce proposals could never have assumed the form which they have, if our Church had risen up and with one voice condemned them. It would have saved the nation in spite of itself. It has become an aphorism of the war that "second-class standards have never made first-class men." We see the truth of this in the worldly spirit which has crept into our Church life. A church or a parish that has to depend for raising

its funds upon theatricals, whist drives and dances, had better be scrapped or destroyed lest others become infected with its virus. The inventor of the term "The line of least resistance" has indeed a lot to answer for!

I believe that these two appeals shall win the heathen. The poor outcast who is despised will be won when he hears Him Who Himself was the "despised and rejected of men" say to him, "Come unto Me and I will give you rest." The high caste and austere Brahmin will be won by the searching question, "What think ye of Christ," for the growing consciousness of personality is not only becoming "a vision beautiful," after an age of pantheistic thought; it is becoming to them "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God *in the face of Jesus Christ.*"

The second result of these features will be character. Character is the result of contact with Jesus Christ. This is unique in the history of all religion. There is no hope of building well where there is no character. The claim of the Religion of Jesus Christ to change the life and to reform the character is unique in any scheme or system of ethics. Deane Inge puts this question in his succinct way. He says: "The acceptance of the world's suffering from which every other spiritual religion and philosophy promise a way of escape is perhaps the most distinctive feature of Christian ethics. In practice it thus achieves a more complete conquest of evil than any other system, and by bringing sorrow and sympathy into the Divine life it not only presents the character and nature of the Deity in a new light, but opens out a new ideal of moral perfection."

The next question that arises is upon what lines this proclamation shall be perpetuated. The great blunder in all our missionary movements is that we have been too prone to Anglicize rather than Evangelize. This is a weakness as well as a strength in our national ideals. But it is a decided weakness in our missionary propaganda. We have in our Societies been holding a very firm hand for over a hundred years now, and controlling all the missions from home. Our mental outlook has decided that the time is not ripe for local autonomy, and we have never created a Diocesan Indian Bishop. We have, in short, with the best intention, been usurping the province and work of the Holy Spirit who in the early days of the Church guided its destinies with His Divine co-operation. We do not so trust Him to-day. The growing spirit of Nationalism has

many side issues. It shall certainly develop. It is a grave question whether we might not have prevented the unrest in India had we long ago said to them, "Now we have given you the Gospel, we have erected the first foundation of the Spiritual Temple. It is now for you to carry it up to its sublime completion. We commend you to God and to the word of His Grace which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among them which are sanctified." This was what St. Paul did, and it was according to the will of God. If we are to achieve the Kingdom of God amongst the nations, we shall have to relax the too tenacious hold over the churches in those countries and let them grow under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. If the churches are of His planting He will see to their watering and increase. It is humiliating to be told that the world will carry on even after our departure from it. In the days of the Commonwealth, relates Dean Inge in *The Church and the Age*, there was a certain Ambassador to the Hague named Bulstrode Whitelocke. He was one night tossing about through sheer anxiety about the condition of his Country and his Church. His old and tried servant begged to ask him a question, and on being given leave said, "Sir, did God govern the world well before you came into it?" "Undoubtedly," said his master. "And will He rule the world well when you have gone out of it?" "Undoubtedly," still replied his master. "Then, sir," said the servant, "can you not trust Him to rule the world well while you are in it?" It is related that the tired and harassed Ambassador fell into a profound slumber!

But were this brought to pass, it does not relieve us of any responsibility. In fact, our responsibility towards the Church abroad and Missions overseas is made legal and binding upon every member of the Church. By Clause 2 of the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure, 1921: "It shall be the primary duty of the Council in every Parish to co-operate with the Incumbent in the initiation, conduct and development of Church work both within the Parish *and outside*." But it might get rid of these appalling deficits in our great Societies' accounts. The cost of living is in a far less ratio to the native than to the European.

What, in conclusion, shall we say to these things? I pass by the discussion of the great problem that we cannot hope to evangelize the world from an unevangelized England. This has a primary

relation to Home Missions. It was also touched upon when speaking of the lowering of our standards. But it is with this great stumbling-block towards Missions in my mind that I close with a personal appeal. What is the measure of our own attitude to Christ? The war and its aftermath has hid Him from our vision. Christ must be re-discovered. A very few years before his death Dr. Salmon, Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, was seen crossing the "quad" jubilantly flourishing a sheaf of papers which were filled with abstruse calculations. He ran into my old Tutor, Mr. Cathcart, and exultingly showed him the result of days' close study in the solving of a most difficult problem. Mr. Cathcart took them and looked over them hurriedly and then said to Dr. Salmon, "Why, you have all this worked out in your book on Conic Sections!" There it was! But the dear old Provost had at least the joy of re-discovering something that he had lost fifty years before when the book was published. The joy of re-discovery will be even greater with us. What is needed for the world to-day and especially for the Home Church, is a fresh vision of Christ upon the Cross. The woe as well as the triumph of that hour must touch each of us afresh. This will become our inspiration to fresh effort. "We see not yet all things put under Him, but we see Jesus . . . crowned." When young Dudley Ryder, who was one of the pioneer missionaries to the Niger Hinterland, lay dying of blackwater fever, he was heard to breathe this prayer couched in schoolboy language—for he was only fresh from Cambridge—"Oh, Lord, do not let Thy work suffer because of this 'kink' in it," meaning that his death might impede the mission. At his funeral the next day they sang his favourite hymn, "Jesus shall reign where'er the sun doth his successive journeys run." In an adjoining field a Moslem woman was singing a Moslem song. She immediately ceased her singing and listened to the Christian hymn. This is the promise that shall be. The songs of Christ shall drown all other music.

Prayer and consecration are the two hands that shall, when stretched out to Heaven, bring down the blessing upon the world. In prayer we may be deciding a great Labour dispute or may be heralding in a new joy for the sorrow-stricken outcasts of Heathen lands. By consecration we can yield ourselves as His instruments, and thus prepare for that great world revival which, by God's grace, may soon be a blessed reality.