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THE CONTINENT

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Present Prospects of Unity

WHAT IS THE CHURCH UNION OUTLOOK NOW?

With the whole question of church unity the mischief is that as long as people stick to general terms, discussion flows along with beautiful felicity. But once let them get around to concrete propositions and practical plans, and then what a storm there is!

Say that the divisions and denominations of Christians ought to be greatly reduced, and applause is rapturous.

But suggest a working idea of how to reduce them, and a cyclone of objections instantly blows you off your feet.

Most church men, it seems, are for union but against uniting.

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What is called the "Philadelphia plan"—its official name is "plan for organic union of evangelical denominations"—is an honest effort to get past this difficulty by asking churches first of all to accept union as a principle—to agree in spite of any and all problems to unite—and then to work out cooperation afterward.

Naturally this makes a decidedly vague document out of the constitution proposed for the "United Churches of Christ." At the beginning there would not be much more union about it than the name. If the denominations included did not choose to go farther, they could continue their separate operations unaffected.

Closer arrangements than this, which would consolidate mission administrations and unify local and national action, could only be wrought out by common consent all around.

No denomination therefore puts itself by this plan in danger of being compelled to give up what it does not wish to surrender.

It only consents to live in an atmosphere whose influences may make it willing to concede more than it now anticipates.

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From this standpoint The Continent has been heartily urging Presbyterians to indorse the Philadelphia plan as now submitted.

The only complication which qualifies this advice is the simultaneous development of another plan for a quite similar combination of five or six denominations of the Presbyterian family.

It is plain that if there comes a competition between these two ideas that makes it necessary to choose which shall go through first, it is the latter that should be given right of way.

This is because the combining of churches nearly related in habits, doctrines and history is naturally likely to lead to a solider association—more real union. Indeed, the proposals already drafted provide at the outset for very much more power to be lodged in the joint General Assembly of this Presbyterian-Reformed union than in the national conference of "United Churches of Christ."

Fortunately a circumstance which nobody appears to have planned averts present need of choice between the two: It chances that the Assembly's overture on the Philadelphia plan is so worded as to be without legal effect to alter the Presbyterian constitution.

If therefore, it is favored by a majority of presbyteries the vote will only express informal approbation of the purpose animating the Philadelphia proposals. The church will still be free to take the other road to immediate results if that should seem desirable next year. And it is entirely safe to rely on the brotherliness of other denominations to understand such a policy in such conditions.

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The other big fact in view to this survey is the address published from Lambeth Palace in London by Anglican and Episcopalian bishops who gathered there last July from the whole globe.

How much does that mean?

It cannot be honestly denied that the non-episcopalian branches of Protestantism have fallen into the habit of thinking that what Episcopalian bishops say about church union amounts to little worth considering. This is because they have been accustomed, at least when speaking as a body, to recommend their own denomination as the only real church open to Protestants. Non-Episcopalians can't see it that way.

But this latest utterance of Anglican spirit is quite different from the habitual tone of the past.

In the frankest and straightest possible terms the bishops this time say that the real Church of Christ includes and consists of all baptized followers of Jesus, no matter with what visible organization they are connected. And they say that for the divided condition of this real church, they are themselves partly to blame.

More than that, they count it no disgrace to be suspected of changing their minds. The bishop of Winchester, perhaps the leader of the highest and stiffest wing of the Church of England, says plainly in a magazine article that Anglicans and "Anglo-Catholics" have been "called to reconsideration of language and thought" and that they have thus been delivered from "much temptation to arrogance and self-sufficiency."

Some like enlargement has taken place also in their argument for bishops. They no longer insist that there is no church apart from a bishop but only that bishops are considered necessary by a large portion of Christendom, and therefore non-Episcopalians ought to accept the episcopacy in order to come to unity with the world's Christian majority.

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The only serious flaw left now in the attitude of Anglican leaders is their continued insistence on reordaining ministers already ordained in presbyteries or councils.

Here is the only place where there really rises any question whether the bishops are perfectly sincere. In order to induce ministers of other denominations to come to them and be ordained again, they offer themselves to take ordination in turn from Presbyterians, Methodists and Congregationalists—so that they may be prepared to minister, if opportunity offers, to congregations of these various bodies.

Is it possible that the eminent prelates of Episcopalianism are really so dense as this implies? Surely they cannot be ignorant that their present ordination—or the ordination of any Episcopal clergyman—is entirely acceptable qualification for them to serve in any ministerial capacity for any "nonconformist" congregation?

And if they are aware of this, what is the point of offering as a reciprocal concession something which means nothing at all to those to whom it is extended?

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However, the query may be let rest. Here is what's plain:

Episcopalians, simply under pressure of their own consciences, are yielding more and more every year from the exclusiveness which has made them the worst bar to Protestant unification.

And the best that other denominations can ask is that conscience shall continue to do with them its perfect work.

The same complacency, indeed, may be observed toward groups of every sort who hinder union by the toploftiness of dogmatism.

No such group anywhere in Protestantism is free of the uneasy inward consciousness that its antagonism is wrong.

And conscience eventually will break such antagonism everywhere.

On the Pathway of Mission Wonders

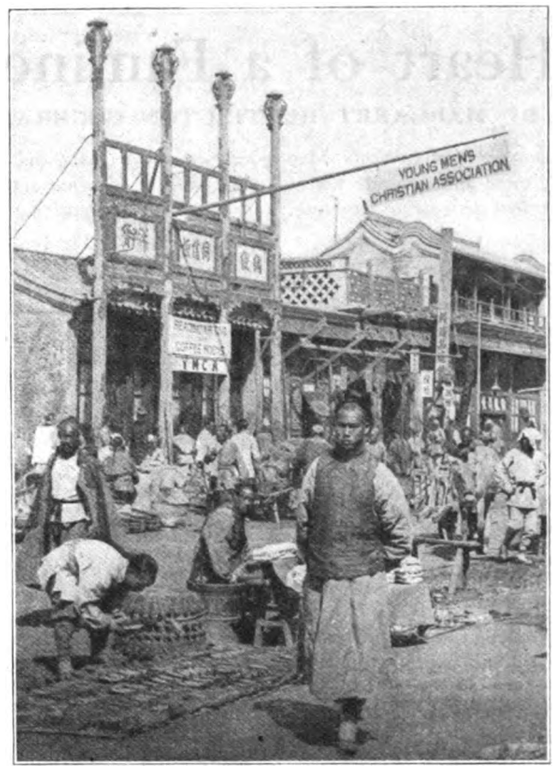
BY JOHN T. FARIS

IF A MAN WOULD gratify the natural passion for seeing the wonderful, he has only to spend a season among the outposts where consecrated men and women are heeding the command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel." In October it was my privilege to spend a few weeks on this pathway of wonders, begnining in Japan, passing over to Korea, then on to China.

There was Tokyo, where Presbyterian missionaries began their work in 1869, where the first church was organized in 1873, where thousands of Christian men and women, boys and girls responded to the stimulating leadership of a band of devoted native pastors, where is the Meiji Gakuin, the union college and theological seminary. There more than one hundred applicants are denied admission every year. A sight of the young men of the theological seminary, of the students in the college, of the hundreds of boys in the middle school, is an inspiration; in them is in large measure the hope of Japan's future, a future that depends on Christianity. For, in the words of the authorities of the institution as stated in "Meiji Gakuin and New Japan," "The more intelligent are coming to realize that unless Japan accepts in sincerity and truth the Christian ideals of humanity and justice and endeavors to live up to them, even though she be classed among the five great powers she will find herself in a splendid isolation."

Then there was Seoul. It is nearly a thousand miles, mostly by rail, from the capital of Japan to the capital of Korea, which has been physically transformed by the Japanese rulers. But while the Japanese have accomplished wonders in roadbuilding, city planning and sanitation, they can create nothing so wonderful as Severance hospital, with its Medical College and nurses' training school, where the missionaries and their native associates are taking full advantage of marvelous equipment to do far more for the thousands who throng to them than American hospital authorities would think possible.

Severance hospital is only one of the outstanding Christian institutions of Seoul. There is the Y. M. C A., whose splendid building was given by John Wanamaker. Here boys and young men come under pronounced Christian influence. The institution is thoroughly Christian; even the expert native barbers hold a morning prayer meeting before beginning their work for the day.



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Religion Thrives Where China's Life Is Teeming—a Peking Street

Moreover, Seoul is the site of another of the educational institutions that are transforming the orient—Chosen Christian College, which already is occupying the first of the modern buildings planned for the magnificent site of 300 acres of hill, valley and woodland three miles from the city, said by many to be the best site for a college in the far east. The first unit—the Charles Stimson building—is to be followed by the liberal arts building or Underwood Hall, given by John T. Underwood as a memorial to his brother, Dr. Horace G. Underwood, one of the pioneers of Korean missionary work. The pioneer's widow, though in failing health, still is living, in a home that commands a splendid view of the city. Their son, Rev. H. H. Underwood, is a member of the faculty of the college.

Chosen Christian College, which is under the cooperating control of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Presbyterian Church in the U. S., the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church South and the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., is one of the institutions in the far-seeing plan for unifying the educational work of the orient to which Dr. John F. Goucher has been giving his attention since his resignation from the presidency of Goucher College, Baltimore.

Consider some of the remarkable features of Korean Christians. Witness the way they thronged last October to hear Rev. Kim Ik Tu, one of the native pastors who are efficiently caring for the Korean churches. His church has released him for evangelistic work, and he was conducting a series of meetings in Seoul. Three or four times each day he spoke. Usually the building was crowded—not by a comfortable seated congregation, but by squatting men and women who have learned to perfection the science of using every available inch of space on the main floor and the galleries. They do not object if the plain speaking minister—who is dramatic as Billy Sunday and as evangelical as D. L. Moody—chooses to speak for an hour. Their chief joy is in the morning prayer meeting—which probably is so named because the sun rises long after its opening by candle light!

Seoul is wonderful, but those who would see Korean missions at their best should go nearly 200 miles north, on the railway, to Pyengyang, the largest mission center under the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, of which Robert E. Speer says: "We saw nothing else to compare with it anywhere in the world." How the people delight in church attendance there! One who has seen the audiences of men and women that crowd into the large central Presbyterian church, overflowing through the doors, and looking in at the windows as apt to remember the sight by day and dream of it by night.

And the faces of the people! No wonder the Christian church in Korea grows by leaps and bounds, until there are church buildings every two or three miles for a long distance from Pyengyang; until, for many miles around, the Christians in great numbers come to Pyengyang for Bible study, living at their own charges for five weeks at a time; until they clamor not only to support their own work but to send missionaries to a certain district in Shantung, China, in which are 100,000 people; until they respond eagerly to a three years' advance campaign that sets goals far enough ahead to alarm many an American church—in the majority of them reaching all the goals before the close of the first year.

Northward to the Yalu river, and into Manchuria, past Mukden, the gateway to a vast country fertile as the plains of Kansas, where teeming multitudes await the coming of missionary; on to Peking, the great city where the traveler looks with wonder at the water gate, through which the soldiers came to the relief of the beleaguered missionaries during the dark days of the Boxer uprising of 1900; the city where churches vie with hospitals and hospitals contend with schools to lure the Christian traveler from trips to the Forbidden City, the Ming tombs and the great wall; where Peking University claims notice today and gives tremendous promise for the future; where the women's college, a part of Peking University, occupies picturesque buildings made notable by the residence, centuries ago, of the mother of an emperor—Peking, the center of China's culture, is the Meeca of the globe-trotter. But let the eyes and the prayers of the church be fixed on it and on its consecrated workers.

Today there is a railway from Peking by way of Tientsin through Shantung to Nanking, then on to Shanghai. Thus access is comparatively easy to some of the mission stations that scarcely ten years ago could be reached only by a tedious sail on the Grand canal or a slow pilgrimage by wheelbarrow or cart. One of these stations, Tsining, twenty miles from the main line, is reached by a branch road. The Grand canal leads through this old walled city of 200,000 people, the second largest of Shantung province, a hive of industry, not far from the region where famine now is doing its awful work. There the missionaries are carrying on an impressive educational and evangelistic work in a wide

district. The church is well attended. But would that some liberal giver could see the unfinished gallery of the building and ask for the privilege of completing it!

Some of the Tsining missionaries were just leaving for Ichowfu, that fertile field in southeast Shantung opened in 1893. But I was unable to go with them all the way. I could go only as far as Yihsien, the station opened in 1905 in a group of native buildings that still form an important part of the compound. In some of these old buildings the missionary physician carries on his hospital in which nearly 40,000 people were treated last year. Fortunately the institution is to have a new building, designed by the mission architect. This worker, a Yihsien resident, in addition to his architectural responsibilities is in charge of the industrial work of the station. Boys make rugs, brushes, furniture and machinery in quarters wretchedly inadequate. But there is a better day coming, when workers will be properly housed, and when one of the women missionaries will rejoice also in modern facilities for her girls' school and for the girl workers in lace. That is the day that the early builders of the station—Dr. William P. Chalfant, Rev. C. H. Yerkes and Mrs. Yerkes, Dr. W. R Cunningham and Rev. Wallace S. Faris and Mrs. Faris saw by faith. The grave of Mr. Faris, who gave his life in distributing famine relief in 1907, and of the babe of Mr. and Mrs. Yerkes, are alone in the little cemetery of the station, within a few rods of some of the curious stones and tombs that date from the Ming dynasty, a thousand years ago. But others stand ready to yield their lives for the work that was begun with joy and has been continued through many trials, with gratifying success.

Nanking on the Yangtse river—with its fourteen churches and chapels and the university, a union institution, on a sightly location in this city that is still great, though not so great as before the Taiping rebellion, when it was razed—is a good preparation for Shanghai, on the Woosung river, seat of the great Shanghai Mission Press. At Shanghai one of the women missionaries beams as she tells of the alumnae of Mary Farnham high school, who have taken the lead in providing funds for the first dormitory on the new land obtained by the institution, a dormitory first occupied during the fall of 1920. The architect's plans include four dormitories and a large school building. Who will provide the four buildings remaining?

Back across the Pacific now—whose waters have been traversed by countless missionaries on their journeys to the orient. Past the Hawaiian islands, with their history of miracle. Back to America, the land of privilege, where the Presbyterian Church has a membership that could do marvelous things for the further equipment and the adequate support of these missions of the far east. Yet year by year the missionaries lift their voices in appeals for more gifts, more men and women, more prayers.

In the Heart of a Famine Mother

BY MARGARET HUNTINGTON COCHRAN

(This article was written in 1907 by Mrs. Cochran, long a missionary in China and now gone to her reward. That it reflects in a remarkably vivid and accurate way today's conditions in that slow-changing land we are assured by those who know the present distressing situation from personal observation.)

THE OLD GATEMAN, as he nods, seated on his wooden bench just inside our gate, sees many curious venders with still more curious wares pass and repass. Well he knows the long pathetic wail of the seller of red turnips; the t'r'r'-rat-tat-tat-tat of the man whose swinging glass cases are full of bits of tape and string, bright buttons and red and green garters; the cheerful hail of the traveling restaurant man with a stove and a sizzling hot dinner on each end of his carrying pole, who for a handful of cash will serve you a bowl of soup or a steaming sweet potato.

But yesterday when a gaunt man with big hungry eyes stooped by the gate and offered for sale his 3-year-old boy, perched, the better to be seen, on his father's shoulder and clinging with loving baby touch to his tumbled hair, even the old gateman stopped and looked, and said he would go in and tell the mistress.

I ran as fast as I could to the gate, but man and child already had gone and were out of sight. "It's too bad," the old gateman said. "He was a nice little chap, just about as big as our Billy here." I looked down at the little child clasping my hand tightly, and my heart gave a great throb and I understood that other motherheart, and so I write—for she can not.

* * * * *

The children had been crying and begging for food all day, but at last they had crawled under the grass mat and in a little moaning and kicking heap were struggling off to sleep. By the hole that served for door the mother sat fingering two cracked bowls, while the father, his hands tucked up his ragged sleeves in vain attempted to keep warm, sulkily watched her.

"What shall we do?" he asked. "There's nothing more to sell, and the last of the beancake went yesterday morning. We haven't burnt a fire for two days; would you have us all starve?"

"But our little boy," she said. "I wanted a little boy so long, and at last I prayed to the idol and offered him ten years of my life in exchange; and he sent him."

"Well, we've got the older boys," he returned. "I'd sell the girl, but she's so sickly she won't bring much. The little chap would sell for five or six dollars. He's still fat and pretty, and we could live on it all winter. Yes," drearily, "I'll sell the boy." Then, with a sullen shake of his head, "And you needn't make a fuss. I'll beat you if you do! We must live. I'll take him out early tomorrow morning."

Out of the tangle of the sleeping children under the mat, the mother lifted one drowsy little form and, wrapping him warm inside her coat, sat cuddling him all night long. The stars, pitiless and far away, looked down on her vigil, but she saw only the face of the sleeping child on her breast. Once he stirred and shivered a little with the cold and she drew him closer and turned to shelter him better from the wind. Once he opened his eyes and smiled to find her so near, and she smiled back—a strange smile.

A woman from a straw shed ten feet away came out at about midnight and called and called for a soul. "Soul of my child," she called, "Come back, come back!" She brought a pair of little ragged green trousers and put them on a pole beside the door, hoping to attract the fluttering soul by the sight of this familiar garb; and she called and called and called.

At last, toward morning, she gave it up and brought the little sick child and laid him on the stones beside the door to die. The other mother, listening and watching, held her well child tightly to her, and when at last she heard wild wails from the mother, crying that the little spirit had gone she wondered which suffered most, that woman in her frantic grief or she herself in this dumb agony.

Neither would ever see her child again after tonight, and where was that other little soul now? Would it, too, be a slave somewhere? "No one knows," she said to herself. "No one knows."

When the first red streaks showed in the east she wakened her baby boy, dipping the corner of her coat in the pool nearby to wash his face and smoothing his tangled hair and braiding it neatly. The older children were roused and clamored again for food when the father came to take the boy. The children quarreled, cold and shivering in the early morning, and pulled at their mother's coat. But she did not hear them. Nor did she even turn her head until the father, carrying the little figure, disappeared round the wall by the temple gate.

Late that afternoon she saw him, far off beyond the stretch of barren fields, and she knew with an aching throb at her heart that his arms were empty. He came slowly, dragging his feet as if they were too heavy to lift, and threw down in front of her the cake of dried bean pods that was to sustain their lives for a few weary days more. "The boy brought only three dollars," he said. "They're a mean lot, those rich people in the city."

"Where did you sell him?" the woman asked drearily.

"At a big kong kuan, just outside the south gate. I carried him around all day and thought perhaps I would have to bring him back. He got hungry and cried, and somehow he knew that I wanted to leave him somewhere. He clung to me and buried his head in my neck so nobody could look at him. I told him they'd give him a cake to eat in there at the kong kuan. And that was what made him go at last with them. I turned and ran for nearly a mile. I seemed to hear him calling, "'Dada,' all the way." He paused listening for a minute. "I can hear him now," he said—then fiercely he demanded: "Where is my opium pipe? I got a little opium anyhow—that's better than meat and drink to me."

While the older son "burned" the opium pipe for his father, the woman built a little fire of dried *(Continued on page 51)*