

# THE CHURCH

## AT HOME AND ABROAD.

JANUARY, 1898.

### CURRENT EVENTS AND THE KINGDOM.

**Methodist Missions.**—At its annual session in November, the Methodist General Missionary Committee made appropriations for the year 1898 as follows: for domestic missions, \$442,430; for foreign missions, \$577,480.

**In Memory of Whitman.**—Memories of greatness should be inspirations to noble living, said Mr. Justice Brewer at the Whitman memorial service in Washington, D. C. Gen. O. O. Howard read a character sketch of the hero of Oregon; the Rev. Dr. Newman gave a graphic history of the famous ride, and Senator Wilson told why it was worth while, proposing as a subject of the last panel in the fresco in the rotunda of the Capitol below the dome, Marcus Whitman riding 3000 miles to save the great empire of the Northwest.

**Presbyterian Union in South Africa.**—The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa was constituted at Durban, September 17, 1897. Twenty congregations did not favor the union, but it is likely that some of them will soon come into line. One anticipated result is a new impulse to the spirit of self-help. The Assembly resolved unanimously to make the effort to raise \$100,000 within two years to be devoted to Church extension. It was also resolved that steps be taken at once to provide means for the training of ministers, and arrangements were made for the issue of a magazine.

**Progress in China.**—The civil service examinations in China are intended to provide educated men for the service of the State. About two million candidates are

admitted every year, and only one or two per cent. succeed in passing. Literary criticism, history, agriculture, military affairs and finance are covered by the examinations. Until recently the questions have been limited to Chinese affairs. Now, however, it is reported that the examiners recommend the Old Testament as a text-book, "because it is the classic of Christian countries," and a new question on the examination papers this year is: "What do you know of the re-peopling of the earth by Noah and his family after the flood?" Who can estimate the good results of requiring two million educated Chinese to study "the classic of Christian countries"?

**The Railway in Africa.**—Henry M. Stanley has said that the railway is civilization's *sine qua non* for securing possession of Africa. The opening for service of the railway to Buluwayo, so recently known as Lobengula's "place of slaughter," and the discovery of coal at that place, are two important events in the industrial development of Africa. Buluwayo is described as having the appearance of a modern European town, with well-paved streets, public buildings and electric lights. The railway is to be extended northward to Fort Salisbury, where it will join a line to Beira on the Indian Ocean, and the time cannot be far distant when it will be possible to travel in a comfortable coach from Cape Town to Cairo. The recent transmission of a telegram from Blantyre to a missionary secretary in Edinburgh, in about three hours, is mentioned as an illustration of the rapidity with which the interior of Africa is opening

and hesitation of the conservative apostles at Jerusalem. As an outcome of these Apostolic efforts the gospel was soon proclaimed to the then known world and Christianity became the dominant faith.

(E) *The Continued Acts of the Apostles.* The same work continues in our day. Every missionary, so far as the preaching of the gospel is concerned, is an apostle; that is the meaning of the word. Many noble heralds of modern date are worthy of a place with Paul and Timothy and Silas.

### FROM WHENCE DOES THE CHURCH DERIVE ITS MISSIONARY INSPIRATION ?

H. H. JESSUP, D.D., BEIRUT, SYRIA.

In these days of rapid transit, newspaper enterprise, fervent appeals of returned missionaries from all parts of the world, and a vast missionary literature on the religions, language and customs of distant nations, with the constant craving for some new stimulus to maintain the interest of the Church, we may well inquire on what, primarily, is our missionary interest founded? All that is sensational, sentimental or personal, is necessarily transient. Have we no permanent perennial fountain of inspiration? We want something which will sustain the weary laborer amid torrid heats and pagan abominations, and stimulate the zeal of the indifferent believers at home. It is fortunate for the Presbyterian Church and the Reformed Churches generally, that they do not depend, for their missionary character, on their doctrinal symbols, their Confessions of Faith or Catechisms.

In the answer to Question 191 of the Larger Catechism we read, that "in the second petition (thy kingdom come), acknowledging ourselves and all mankind to be by nature under the dominion of sin and Satan, we pray that the kingdom of sin and Satan may be destroyed, *the gospel propagated throughout the world, the Jews called, the fullness of the Gentiles brought in, the Church furnished with all gospel officers and ordinances, purged from corruption, countenanced and maintained by the civil magistrate . . . and that Christ would rule in our hearts here, and hasten the time of his second coming, and our reigning with him forever,*" etc., etc.

This answer is perhaps too general to be effective, and is virtually unknown to the rank and file of our people.

Among the proof-texts adduced, the golden text for Foreign Missions (Matt. 28: 18-20 and Mark 16: 15) are conspicuous by their absence; and the words of our Lord, Matt. 9: 38: "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth laborers into his harvest," are used as proving that we should pray that "the Church be furnished with all gospel officers and ordinances."

In the 102d answer, in the Shorter Catechism, which is the only catechism familiar to the Church, "we pray that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed, and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced, ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it, and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened."

In the Directory for Worship, ministers are advised in public prayer to make "intercession for others, including the whole world of mankind, the kingdom of Christ and his Church universal."

That clause in the 191st answer in the Larger Catechism, that "the gospel be propagated throughout the world," indicates that the framers of our Standards had *some* conception of the Church's duty to the heathen world, and enjoined prayer for the propagation of the gospel, but it seems to have had little effect on the life of the Church before the beginning of the present century.

The symbols of the Church of England are even more deficient. The "Thirty-nine Articles" do not allude to the Church's duty to the heathen world.

The recent Lambeth Conference of 194 bishops, "in full communion with the Church of England," held in July, 1897, in addition to a lengthy, eloquent and admirable report of a committee of fifty-seven bishops on Foreign Missions, which states that "the cause of missions is the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ," issued an Encyclical Letter, giving Foreign Missions a larger amount of space than any other subject.

The opening sentences on this point are worth quoting: "Lastly we come to the subject of Foreign Missions, the work that at the present time stands in the first rank of all the tasks we have to fulfill.

"We have especial reasons to be thank-

ful to God for the awakened and increasing zeal of our whole communion for this primary work of the Church, the work for which the Church was commissioned by our Lord. For some centuries, it may be said, we have slumbered. The duty has not been quite forgotten, but it has been remembered only by individuals and societies. The body as a whole has taken no part.

"The Book of Common Prayer contains very few prayers for missionary work. It hardly seems to have been present to the minds of our great authorities and leaders in compiling that book that the matter *should be in the thoughts of every one who calls himself a Christian*, and that no ordinary service should be considered complete which did not plead amongst other things for the spread of the gospel.

"We are beginning, though only beginning, to see what the Lord would have us do. He is opening the whole world to our easy access, and as he opens the way, he is opening our eyes to see it, and to see his beckoning hand."

One thought occurs to us in reading our own standards and this admirable encyclical letter. Why has not the newly awakened Presbyterian Church added to its Confession of Faith and Directory for Worship a brief and earnest statement of the Church's duty to a perishing world? And why did not this Lambeth Conference, in its wisdom and missionary zeal, propose the addition of a distinctively missionary prayer to the Prayer Book?

Our conclusion from the above facts is, that our Church must in the future as in the past depend chiefly on the Bible, and not on our standards, for missionary inspiration. And in the Bible we find enough, and more than enough, to put life into our dry bones.

Christ's last command, "go teach all nations," should be reiterated in our homes, our Sunday-schools, our Young People's societies, and our pulpits, until it shall no longer be true in our Church, as the 194 bishops confess it to be true in theirs, that "the body as a whole has taken no part" in the foreign missionary work.

It may be said *we* "have slumbered" as well as our British brethren.

"The cause of missions is the cause of Jesus Christ," and why should not *every member received into our churches covenant*

to aid this cause by his gifts, his services and his prayers?

Why is it that the "body as a whole has taken no part in Foreign Missions," and been content to leave it to "individuals and societies"?

Fifty years ago, in my childhood, it was even more "left to individuals and societies" than now.

There were monthly concerts of prayer, and the appeals of Scudder, Poor and Stoddard stirred the churches, but the children had hardly begun to be reached by the means of Scriptural missionary education.

I distinctly recall the remark of Mrs. S. C. Perkins in Philadelphia in 1878, in speaking of the then growing Women's Work in Missions: "We have now enlisted the women and the girls, but we have not reached the men and the boys. Something is needed to enlist the boys in missions, in order to insure the interest of the next generation of men."

The Young People's societies have now taken the boys in hand, and their missionary educational feature is one of the most hopeful signs of our times.

The foreign missionary character of the Bible should be taught to all the youth in our Sunday-schools and Endeavor societies. We should emphasize the Scriptural ground and sanction for the missionary work. Let the young feel and believe that their interest in the work grows out of the fact that it is God's command, God's plan and an essential part of Christianity, and not out of special appeals or thrilling missionary reports.

An eminent politician said, "a great nation cannot have a little war," nor can a great Church, the Church of the omnipotent Christ, be satisfied with a little work of missions.

The best army in Europe is the best educated army and the best missionary church is the one best rooted and grounded in the word of God and the Scriptural sanction for missions.

The Bible gives us the glowing words of prophecy and promise; the example of Christ; his last command; the promise of the Spirit; the life and labors of the apostles, and makes it clear that the missionary work is the work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Church of Antioch, the first church founded outside of Jerusalem, was a typical

missionary church. It selected its two best men and sent them forth to preach the gospel, evidently regarding this as their first and highest duty.

It is well to train our children in the Catechism, but we cannot depend on any of our creeds or Catechisms for our missionary inspiration. It must come from the fountain head.

The Church at home needs to hold on to God's word to prevent reaction amid financial reverses and disappointed hopes. The missionary abroad needs the same, in heathen and Mohammedan lands, when confronted with darkness and ignorance, the difficulties of a new language, and the gigantic obstacles which oppose him at every step. What else, but the word of God, the "marching orders," of Christ, the great Captain, can sustain him?

Sight does not sustain him. There is little or no sight as yet. His inspiration must come from faith, faith not in the pledges of a Board or a Church, or in the sympathy of loving friends at home, but faith in the command and promises of Christ, the glorified Redeemer.

Let the Church then enter on an educational campaign, education for missions, education drawn from the Church's textbook, the word of God.

---

## FOREIGN MISSIONS AND THE BIBLE.

EDWARD W. GILMAN, D.D.,

*Corresponding Secretary of the American Bible Society.*

Assuming that the warrant for Foreign Missions is found in the Bible, it is pertinent to ask what the missions have to do with the Book itself.

There can be no doubt that it was the plan of our ascending Lord to have the foundations of his terrestrial dominion laid in written records of his earthly ministry. He commanded his disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel, that is, to proclaim good news of salvation with a summons to faith and duty. Disciples were to be made and then taught to do whatsoever he had commanded his followers. It was in obedience to that command that they went everywhere giving oral utterance to

the gospel. It was in further compliance with it that before the witnesses of his ascension passed from earth, the written gospels appeared, attesting for all time the grand facts which they record. If "the Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of man," the Scriptures of the New Testament principally teach what men are to believe concerning Jesus Christ and what duty he requires of them; and that revelation of truth and duty, made in the very words which the Holy Ghost has inspired, is a divinely appointed agency for subduing the world to Christ. Said the Rev. Dr. Storrs in a recent address at New Haven: "The power to transform the world is in the New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ as accompanied by the energy of the Holy Spirit." The Christian missionary of to-day goes to Africa, it may be, or to India, with enthusiasm kindled by a book, with assurance founded on a book, with faith inspired by a book, with the supreme object of winning men to believe in the Lord of whom that book tells and submit themselves to his sway. Were it not for the book there would be no mission, and the missionary himself would be a pagan and an idolater.

If the missionary is a wise man he will follow among pagan people the course pursued by the apostles of our Lord; that is to say, he will go among them, telling as best he can "the old, old story of Jesus and his love," and winning men to discipleship; but his oral statement will surely need to be supplemented by something in writing or in print, it may be first a parable, then a chapter, then one gospel after another, until they have in their own possession the authentic narrative as told by the four evangelists and all the other Scriptures which are able to make men wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. This is easy to say, but hard to do; harder than one thinks who has not tried it; but this is just what has been done by Protestant missionaries all around the world, and what must still be done until the everlasting gospel has been told in all human tongues.

Great help in all this comes from having a book completed eighteen hundred years ago and accepted by all Christian people as of divine origin and undisputed authority, which does not now need to be composed or