

**FINAL REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE  
WAR AND THE RELIGIOUS OUTLOOK**

**RELIGION AMONG AMERICAN MEN. (Ready.)**

**THE MISSIONARY OUTLOOK IN THE LIGHT OF THE WAR. (Ready.)**

**THE CHURCH AND INDUSTRIAL RECONSTRUCTION.**

**THE TEACHING WORK OF THE CHURCH IN THE LIGHT OF THE  
PRESENT SITUATION.**

**PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN UNITY IN THE LIGHT OF THE WAR.**

**THE  
MISSIONARY OUTLOOK  
IN THE LIGHT OF  
THE WAR**

**THE COMMITTEE ON THE WAR  
AND THE RELIGIOUS OUTLOOK**

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## CHAPTER II

### WHAT FOREIGN MISSIONS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO AN EFFECTIVE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

Even among those who hold the war in awed remembrance and seek to conserve all the ideal values for which the mighty sacrifice was made, there are great fears whether there are agencies at work that can make a league of nations really effective. They see unblasted rocks on which it may split—suspicion, animosity, selfishness, indifference. There are many and long chapters in the history of international relations in the past that will have to be forgotten or overlooked. Any effective league of nations must be underwritten with a spirit which, in spite of the spread of democracy, is by no means dominant in our modern life. Yet that safeguarding spirit is actually present in the world and is more widely diffused than is sometimes supposed. It is the very moving spring of the foreign missionary enterprise.

The service of foreign missions to an effective league of nations is not connected with any particular form of such a league. Details of international covenants are open to thoughtful discussion and it is wholly possible that men with equal passion for the outcome may differ about the practical wisdom of a given proposal. There is no peril in that. The peril is in men who do not want international friendship, or who want it in only a half-hearted fashion, or who are cynical as to its possibility and who therefore sow seeds of international suspicion and ill will. It is a peril of the spirit, not of method. The education of the judgment may be carried on by many agencies; the change of spirit on which the final success

of any league of nations waits must be committed to spiritual agencies.

Nor is the service of foreign missions to a league of nations to be found in the direct work of its representatives in various parts of the world. It has been well said that "the American missionary fairly exudes democracy wherever he goes." His method and his message, the Book he presents and the Gospel he preaches, are all faced toward fundamentally democratic ends. Yet it is no part of his conscious business to change modes of government or to effect political organization. Careless people will not distinguish between the ideas he represents and their outworking in particular events. This is the fault in an explanation given by a Japanese paper in Chosen, quoted in a document issued by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America: "The stirring up of the minds of the Koreans is the sin of the American missionaries. This uprising is their work. . . . There are a good many shallow-minded people among the missionaries and they make the minds of the Koreans bad and they plant the seeds of democracy. So the greater part of the 300,000 Korean Christians do not like the union of Japan and Korea, but they are waiting for the opportunity for freedom." Of course that is both true and false. Christian ideas inevitably work themselves out into the desire for freedom, but those who teach them may differ sharply from those who learn them as to the way in which they should be given practical effectiveness. No teacher can be held responsible for mistaken methods of putting his own teaching into practice. Missions face toward freedom and in so far oppose injustice and oppression, but missionaries may not on that account commit themselves to revolutions or plan new forms of government. The service of foreign missions to an effective league of nations is not to be found in the direct work which its personnel may render in that special cause. Its contribution is far deeper and



more fundamental, even though made in less conspicuous ways.

1. The first service which foreign missions renders to an effective league of nations is *in the developing of a body of people committed to the idea of brotherhood in all nations.*

It is no more important to have such a body of people in the receiving than in the sending nations. The whole missionary enterprise depends on the existence in Christian lands of men who carry on their hearts the needs of other men and who feel responsibility for the meeting of those needs. The radius of their brotherhood must be that of the human race. It is a brotherhood which looks outward for its expression but upward for its warrant—a brotherhood born of the Christian religion, resting on the common Fatherhood of God and the universality of Jesus Christ, and proceeding upon the assumption that the unit for our social thinking must be humanity.

It is an immeasurable asset for any international organization that in every land of the earth today there exists a body of men, larger or smaller, to whom it is natural to think of others in terms of brotherhood and friendship, whose habit of mind is to think of the merits instead of the demerits of men of other nations, who would rather believe well than ill of men around the globe, who understand the spiritual language spoken by men of other tongues. Such groups have actually been built up by foreign missions all over the world. They put any great movement for the good of humanity in the position in which nascent Christianity found itself in the spread over the whole earth of the Jewish race, as a result of which there was everywhere a small or large group to whom the new doctrine could be presented intelligibly, among whom actually it did ordinarily take its first root. As a result of foreign missions thousands of men in all lands are already in league with one another at the deeper levels of life.

2. Foreign missions serves the prospects of a league of nations also *in developing the spiritual force of service and sacrifice on which the effectiveness of such a league fundamentally depends.*

The danger to an effective league is not primarily governmental or political. It is spiritual. It is the hearts of men that are in the way of it. The war has furnished a new motive for proclaiming the gospel of regeneration. A league of nations must be underwritten for safety by a league of unselfish hearts. It is no new thing to have nations concerned for each other. Strong nations have been looking out for weaker ones since the beginning of record, but it is a comparatively new thing for strong nations to look out for the weaker primarily for the good of the weaker. The very possibility of it is scouted by many people. Living by the brazen rule of selfishness they forget the Golden Rule of fellowship, which measures what we do for others by what we would have others do for us; and that finer diamond rule of sacrifice, the rule of Christ's own life, "not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life." If an ideal and perfect league of nations were to be directed by selfish men, it would presently become only a more efficient way of exploiting weak nations in the interest of the strong.

Over against this spirit of self-seeking the Christian Gospel sets the spirit of service and sacrifice. Any league that is consonant with its spirit will not be an agency for wielding the strong arm over the weak, but for placing the strong arm under the weak until they gain strength within themselves. No effective international relations can be established without risks and possible cost. The abiding complaint of John Hay was that he could not get treaties ratified unless he could prove to the satisfaction of a certain group of senators that the United States would gain more than the other nation. Unless their own country had some larger profit than other nations, they counted it unpatriotic to enter into

the treaty. That attitude is not confined to senatorial thinking nor to America. In the past we have had nationalism for aggression, as in the case of Germany; for distinction, as in Tagore's plea for India and Japan; and for defense, as in early American history. The need now is for a nationalism that shall be for service. It is the one type of nationalism that will make the full success of a league of nations possible.

The spirit of sacrifice must be formed in all nations. Everywhere, quietly, insistently, forcefully, men who believe in the spirit of service and sacrifice as over against the spirit of selfishness and distrust of others must propagate their faith. But where is there any adequate basis for such a spirit except in the Gospel of Christ? And where is such a spirit so marked as in foreign missions? Foreign missions is the test of it and the greatest single manifestation of it anywhere. The missionaries themselves are exemplifying it—they are on foreign fields for other men's sakes. The Gaekwar of Baroda told a visitor that he was thinking of calling together the Christian missionaries and asking them how to improve the quality of the native Hindu priesthood and added, "Then I want to call the priests together and say to them, 'Look at the missionaries. See the sacrifices they are making to help our people. You ought to go out and do the same kind of work.'" In every non-Christian land the Christians constitute the one group whose faith carries this spirit as part of its inescapable logic. It is the religion of sacrifice, it centers in the Cross and issues in a cross. It demands that we bear one another's burdens if we are to fulfil the law of Christ.

And a league of nations that is really to bind together the nations of the world must have exactly that spirit. For the league is in itself only a piece of lifeless machinery. All its value will depend on the extent to which the spirit of the nations that enter it is truly Christian. Lord Robert Cecil went to the heart of the matter when

he said in a recent address that if we depend for peace on the League of Nations alone we are living in a fools' paradise, since the only final solution is in the principles of Christ.

3. Foreign missions contributes to a league of nations *the attitude of faith that is absolutely essential to its success.*

One of the serious obstacles to the realization of a new world order is that there are so many who believe it to be impossible. Human nature, they say, does not change. The beginning of a new order of life, therefore, depends on the generation of sufficient faith to make it possible to proceed. But this is one of the points where the Christian Gospel has its most significant contribution to make. It sounds a great note of faith both in God and in the unrealized possibilities of human nature.

And foreign missions is itself the most striking example that the Church has seen of the validity of this method of approach. The whole history of missions is but the application of the principle of faith to situations that, humanly speaking, seemed impossible. Its triumphs are the world's greatest evidence that racial differences are not necessarily a barrier to brotherhood, that international friendship is actually possible, that men of diverse races will respond to motives of trust and good will. The history of foreign missions is also a great refutation of the lack of faith implied in the saying that human nature cannot be changed. The spirit of Christ, carried by foreign missions to many lands, has already gone far in really changing human nature. It has certainly released mighty recreative influences in what was formerly called the unchanging East. It has given us new assurance that it is just for the sake of changing nature—leading it out of selfishness and sin into service and love—that Christianity exists.

4. Foreign missions contributes to the effectiveness of a league of nations *by developing a spirit of mutual un-*

*derstanding that encourages rational methods of dealing with differences in human relations.*

It is idle to expect that the hardships, and difficulties, and horrors of war will prevent its recurrence when the occasion arises again, if no other and more effective way of gaining the result has been found. And no proposed league of nations has ever pretended to make war entirely impossible. No intelligent man can offer such hostages to the future as that. All that can be put into any covenant is such machinery as will delay hasty decision until the slow processes of mutual understanding and adjustment can have their chance.

But both the accomplishing of this delay and the working of those forces are operations in the field of the spirit. Nations must want to avoid war, must believe in other ways of adjusting differences, must prefer those ways. And here also Christianity has a contribution to make, especially so in the international phase of it that we call foreign missions. For, in the first place, Christianity deepens men's sense of horror for war, since in the light of the Christian conception of the brotherhood of men within one Kingdom of God all war becomes a family strife, with all the shame that that involves. Christianity, therefore, challenges the causes that are ordinarily pleaded as necessitating war and tends to diminish the occasions that can be regarded as justifying it. In the second place, the work that Christianity has done through foreign missions emphasizes the possibility of securing mutual understanding and adjustment among those who seriously differ on many important points. It has shown that Christian brotherhood is possible, even though there are so many diversities among Christians that they do not think alike. It is of course true that the exponents of Christianity have violated this spirit many times, both in Western nations and on the mission field, and have tried to settle differences by force, or by ostracism, or by refusal of fellowship. But its genius is against them.

Something fine in any Christian heart is outraged when one man cannot differ from another without coming to blows or forfeiting the spirit of love. And foreign missions is spreading that spirit throughout the world, forming in all nations bodies of men who are ready to recognize differences and to deal with them in openness and sincerity until ways can be found of mutual service. It tells the world of a God whose love for it is not based on its goodness but flows out to it in its badness, of a Christ who died for men while they were yet sinners, of a brotherhood called to a world-wide mission because other men need it. In the presence of such a faith only patience and forbearance with men whom we count wrong are logical. If a league of nations is to be most effective, it must be maintained by nations with just such a faith.

5. Foreign missions contributes to a league of nations a *common interest and the bond of a common religious faith, without which a full and permanent brotherhood is impossible.*

Men and nations come together only because they have things in common. The extent of their unity depends on the importance of the things that thus bind them together. So a league of nations depends on the existence of a sufficiently strong common bond—something that will transcend geographical lines and give men otherwise separated a common interest, which will seem too great to be broken by collisions of a minor sort. What is this unifying principle to be? For many years it was supposed that the commercial and financial intertwining among nations would prevent war. Some people think it will do so in the future. But financial and commercial interests have a hard struggle to keep from being merely selfish. They are not generally born of good will and the spirit of service, so they are quite as likely to lead to war as to prevent it. What is needed is a tie which reaches the deepest levels of life. The Edinburgh Conference was

solemnizing in its significance at just this point. There gathered men of many minds and from all nations, as diverse as men could well be, speaking all the tongues of the world or representing others who did so. Yet a supreme interest had been found which was common to them all. They were all concerned to get the same great end accomplished. It was not an end that obliterated distinctions or reduced all nations to a common level, but it rose above distinctions and gave a unity that ran deeper than a common level.

The fundamental human interests are religious interests. It is a common faith that is the largest common concern. There is nothing else compelling and dynamic enough to bind the world together. It is indeed doubtful whether there can ever be the fullest and most permanent brotherhood without a common religion.

And it is foreign missions that gives the common faith on which a genuine family of nations can be built. Universal Christianity is the only sufficient basis for world democracy. It sets before the world the ideal of the Kingdom of God, embracing all nations upon the earth in the sway of the spirit of Christ and calling all nations to a great program of mutual service as the will of God. Men who have caught the zest of that program will be ready for the very relation among countries that a league of nations must have. They do not carry out their program for the sake of a league of nations, but find in a league the political counterpart of their religious faith.

In this discussion of the contribution that Christian missions have made and must make to a league of nations, it has been assumed that some such international organization commands the support of all men who are committed to the Christian way of life and have caught the vision of the coming of the world-wide Kingdom of God upon the earth. It has not been assumed, however,

that we yet have in any covenant for a league that has been proposed all the elements which the full expression of Christian faith would demand. Many hold that the League in its present form affords no adequate assurance either of religious liberty or of liberty to carry on missionary work. It may not guarantee that equality of treatment of all races which is called for by the spirit of Christian brotherhood. The scheme of mandatories may become only a means for the exploitation of weak peoples, unless it is safeguarded by motives of service and good will. In these and other points the Christians of the world will still have occasion, after a beginning of the League has actually been secured, to give their best effort to making the external organization conform increasingly to the mind and spirit of Jesus Christ.

The most direct service, however, that the average Christian can render to a league of nations is in the strengthening and extension of the foreign mission program. The spirit in which the missionary enterprise is born, the spirit which it brings to birth, the spirit in which it lives, is the spirit on which an effective league of nations must depend. The groups that support it, the groups that it develops in the nations, the groups that it binds together, are the groups to which an effective league must look for its fullest support. The Gospel which foreign missions proclaims assumes the essential oneness of the human race, holds that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth," and sets before the world the ideal of one family of nations constituting His Kingdom. And at the center of that Gospel stands a figure who embodies in Himself the principle of sacrifice and service which is the only principle on which an effective league of nations can proceed.