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A Worthy New Era Program For Foreign Missions

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A WORTHY NEW ERA PROGRAM FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS.

A really worthy New Era Program for foreign missions would be nothing less than an effort to determine and to do our whole foreign missionary duty. If it is a five year program which is contemplated the right way to arrive at it would be first to decide if possible upon our whole obligation and then to determine how much of this whole obligation could be undertaken and accomplished in five years. It is easy in such discussions to draw up mathematical statements of calculated duty and these are not without their value, but let any one try to apply such modes of statement to the Apostolic Church and its work and he will realize how inadequate and irrelevant they may be. One Saint Paul is worth a whole arithmetic.

And yet if duty is to be done in a real world it must be capable of being stated. There are four terms in which it may be expressed. These can not confine the free action of the Spirit of God, but they can unfold the lines of human obedience.

1. A worthy New Era Program can be stated in geographical terms. The foreign mission fields of our Church fall in six great areas, in each of which there is need for lateral expansion.

(1) Latin America. We are at work in six Latin American lands, Mexico, Guatemala, Colombia, Venezuela, Chile, and Brazil. By the new plans allocating responsibility for the work in Mexico to the different Boards, we are made responsible with the Southern Presbyterians for all the work in eight great states south of Mexico City. There are no other strong church missions in Guatemala and Venezuela, and, with the

exception of one station of independent workers in Colombia, that great field is left wholly to us. The Methodist and Presbyterian Missions divide Chile, and in the immense states of central and southern Brazil allotted to us we are almost wholly alone. Matto Grosso is a state the size of Texas, with more live stock than Texas and with room for the population of an empire. From Bahia our missionaries itinerate westward from the Atlantic Ocean to the Andes Mountains, across a territory as far as from New York to Omaha. In this Latin American area there ought to be at least six new stations in immediate contemplation. The doors are wide open and the heart of Latin America is friendly to us and will grow more friendly if we are just and brotherly and self-controlled in our political and commercial relations with Mexico and all our other Southern neighbors.

(2) Africa. Our mission in Western Africa is in the territory which belonged to Germany and is now in the possession of France. The Peace Treaty provides as follows with regard to the German missions in Africa and elsewhere:

“The Allied and Associated Powers agree that where Christian religious missions were being maintained by German societies or persons in territory belonging to them, or of which the government is entrusted to them in accordance with the present Treaty, the property which these missions or missionary societies possessed, including that of trading societies whose profits were devoted to the support of missions, shall continue to be devoted to missionary purposes. In order to ensure the due execution of this undertaking, the Allied and Associated Governments will hand over such property to boards of trustees appointed by or ap-

proved by the Governments and composed of persons holding the faith of the mission whose property is involved.

“The Allied and Associated Governments, while continuing to maintain full control as to the individuals by whom the missions are conducted, will safeguard the interests of such missions.

“Germany, taking note of the above undertaking, agrees to accept all arrangements made or to be made by the Allied or Associated Governments concerned for carrying on the work of the said missions or trading societies and waives all claims on their behalf.”

In accordance with this provision, it appears to be the purpose of France to exclude the German missionaries from Cameroun. In that case the great work of the Gossner and Basle missions will have to be taken over until their readmission, by the French Evangelical Church or by ourselves. That will mean a great growth of our work northward in addition to the steady development which should be required interiorwards.

(3). Japan and Chosen. The need of Christianizing Japan becomes every year more clear and urgent. The immense power for good of a Christian Japan and the immense power for evil of a pagan Japan constitute an appeal and a warning to the Christian Church. The Japan mission wants to be able to occupy adequately its great field in central and western Japan and in the rapidly developing new section in the Hokkaido. The Chosen mission wants to cover its field both in Chosen and in Manchuria, whither the Koreans have emigrated by the hundred thousand. And such missions want to occupy, not new territory only, but accessible and unoccupied regions of the life and thought of the people such,

for example, as the press in Japan, which reaches the whole nation and through which an efficient newspaper evangelism would touch millions of people who will never hear a preacher.

(4) China. There are seven missions of our Church in China, two in the north, North China and Shantung; three in the center, Central China, Kiangnan and Hunan; and two in the south. South China and Hainan. Two new stations have been asked for for four years and should be opened at once in Shouchou in Anhwei Province and in the Lien Chow peninsula in Kwang-tung just opposite the Island of Hainan. Nearly one-third of our whole foreign missionary staff is in China, but one-fourth of the population of the world is there, and this generation should see the outposts of the Christian Church established in every city of China which should be occupied by foreign missionaries.

(5) The Philippine Islands and Siam. The two are not grouped together arbitrarily. Their similarities are significant and their dissimilarities—free peoples both of them, though Siam is the most absolute government in the world and its people slow to use their liberty. Almost all of the Visayan group, save part of Panay and Occidental Negros and all of the southern section of Luzon below Manila—the whole heart of the Philippines have fallen to our responsibility. The central points have been touched, but the network of occupation needs to be doubled. And in Siam are some of our largest untouched obligations. Of the eighteen provinces of Siam, which is left to us as our exclusive field, only six are entered with mission stations, and north of Siam in Burma and southern China are millions of the Tai people, among whom a new and efficient mission should be at once established.

(6) India, Persia, and Syria. Here is nearly another quarter of the population of the world. In India there are scores of districts, each needing its own staff, and there are whole levels of population now ductile, and to be won or lost within a decade. In Persia a new mission should be developed from Meshed, which would reach Turkestan and Afghanistan, and another one in south-western Persia which would cover now untouched tribes. The ravages of the war must be repaired in Azerbaijan, where the Urumia station has been destroyed, and in western and central Persia three new stations should be developed. The Syria mission calls for an extension of its work north and westward to embrace Aleppo and Mardin and to reach onward to join the West Persia work at Mosul and the Dutch Reformed work at Bagdad.

Here there are calls for lateral extension demanding the opening of three or four new missions and a score of new stations. And these are not far away calls nor conjured up needs. For years the missions have been urging these advances. They demand their place in a worthy New Era Program.

2. A worthy New Era Program must be stated also, and most of all, in terms of men and women.

Twelve years ago, when the men of our Church sought to face our full foreign missionary responsibility in the Omaha Convention, they estimated that there would be need of 4,000 men and women. That meant quadrupling the present staff. For the next five years it would not be too much to propose that the staff should be doubled if a really worthy program is to be carried through. We have now 1364 missionaries. In 1896 there were 668. In other words it took 23 years to double the staff of 668. Is five years too short a time in which to double the staff of 1919? The

China missions asked last year for 213 new missionaries; the India missions for 76; the Persia missions are asking for 66. In June, 1919, at the time of the New Missionaries' Conference, the following cablegram was received from Tabriz:

"Send this summer four evangelistic men, five women, two educationally trained men, two women, one trained nurse, one agricultural man, one short term woman, two men teachers, (additional to Labaree, Coan, Wilson, McKinney), latter evangelistic not educational. Opportunities unprecedented."

The Japan mission asks for 65 new missionaries in the next five years. There are great differences in responsiveness in different fields and in the same field at different times. A great deal depends also on the strength of the native forces. They are the central element in the whole problem. Our task is not to send out and support from America enough foreign missionaries to evangelize the world. It is to plant the Gospel as a living power in each land and race, and let it work out through the people of each nation by its own divine and vital force. It is to the initial work that foreign missionaries are called, and for our Church's foreign missions to do their part we should doubtless double the staff in five years and quadruple it in ten.

3. A worthy New Era program must be stated also in terms of agencies and equipment.

The first agency and the first equipment is the foreign missionary himself, but beyond him are the native agencies just referred to. There are now 6806 native preachers and teachers and other workers connected financially with the missions, and there are hundreds more who are employed by the self-supporting churches. Among these men are some of the ablest and most

devoted Christian men in the world—Uemura and Ibuka in Japan; Kil in Chosen, Ding li Meh in China; Sirai ud Din, Mukerji, and Roy in India; Alvaro Reis, Pereira, and Erasmo Braga in Brazil; and scores of other good men and good women. These are the rich fruitage of missionary work in the past and the surest promise of its future. Such workers should be multiplied in a far greater ratio than the foreign missionaries.

Besides this increase, the educational and medical and literary agents should be increasingly strengthened. In the foreign field we are maintaining in whole or in part 20 colleges and universities and 92 high schools, and, in addition, not less than 15 theological seminaries, 6 medical schools, and agricultural, engineering and industrial schools. These institutions need equipment and endowment, if they are to be adequately and solidly established, of not less than \$10,000,000 as our share of their support. Our 79 hospitals and 110 dispensaries are caring for 365,000 patients annually. We have single hospitals in America which care for one-tenth this number annually and require ten times the entire budget of all the medical work of the Board. The new conditions which are setting in will require a trebling of the expense of this work at least. An adequate enlargement of the work would double that again. And the call for an increase of the literature agencies swells each year. In Japan 98 per cent of the children of school age are in school, and the whole population will soon be literate. Christianity ought to use the press to carry Christian truth into every home in Japan. In many Latin American lands printed matter is carried postage free to encourage reading. A half million a year would be a modest sum to spend on the press and the publishing house as agencies of Christian propaganda.

And there is the additional property equipment needed—missionaries to be housed in unsanitary lands, hospitals and schools and churches to be built. The missions are asking for more than \$10,000,000 worth of new property in the next five years.

4. And now in terms of money what does all this mean?

The figures which have been submitted to the Executive Commission of the General Assembly and approved by its Budget Committee for the year 1920 are as follows:

Missionaries now in Service.	\$2,000,000
150 additional missionaries annually	250,000
Native work and workers...	1,250,000
New property	1,867,759
Higher educational endowment	1,169,833
New Stations	25,000
New Missions	200,000
Administration	240,000
Deficit of 1919	468,538
	\$7,462,130

This does not represent nearly all that the missions are asking under the inspiration of the hope that the Church now intends to deal adequately with its foreign mission task, but it is a careful and temperate requisition for the opening year of a worthy New Era program for foreign missions.

5. Does the Church now intend to deal adequately with its foreign mission task?

The present conditions which we confront call us to do so. The letter which the Board addressed to the New Era Committee in setting forth the budget above, mentioned some of these conditions:

(1) It would seem from our experience this year that we will be able to find a larger number of missionary candidates than were available before the war, and that we can plan, accordingly, for an increasing reinforcement of our missions with the confidence that the men and women can be found.

(2) The effects of the war on the non-Christian people are still impossible of calculation. We can already see evil results as well as good. The central fact, however, is that the whole mission field is more open and accessible than it has ever been and that even in the Moham-medan world the opportunities, as the West Persia mission has cabled, are unprecedented.

(3) It seems likely that the Treaty of Peace most unfortunately, will greatly curtail, if not in large part prevent, continuance of the foreign missions of the German churches. If the German Christians are not allowed to carry on this work for the present, it must be maintained for them by other Churches until they can take it up again. This will involve our missions in enlarged responsibilities in West Africa, Persia, Syria, and perhaps in China and India.

(4) The element of exchange is more unfavorable than it was a year ago and requires the Board to secure a large amount of American gold to meet obligations which a few years ago could be calculated at one-half the present exchange rates. In addition to the heavy exchange loss in China and Persia which continues, the yen in Japan and the rupee in India have both advanced in cost.

(5) The cost of living, of travel, of supplies, and of almost all other items of expense have increased in the mission fields

far more rapidly even than in America. Travel and freight charges should of course fall, but other costs are likely still further to increase.

(6) The new moral responsibilities which have come to America in consequence of the war, the absolute need of inter-racial sympathy and justice, products of the missionary enterprise, if the League of Nations or any peaceful international order is to be established, the clear demonstration of the Gospel as the sole salvation for the peoples, all increase the obligation to plan the foreign Missionary program of our Church with courage and faith.

The tradition of the fathers calls to us out of the past with a new and clear insistence. They dared to plan boldly at the beginning without our resources at home, without our opportunities abroad. They thought in terms of continents and of all mankind, and the Church to them was in the world for the purpose of world evangelization. This was their normal declaration in the General Assembly of 1847—"The Presbyterian Church is a Missionary Society, the object of which is to aid in the conversion of the world, and every member of this Church is a member for life of said Society and bound to do all in his power for the accomplishment of this object." And in 1867 the Assembly declared again—"This Assembly regards the whole Church as a Missionary Society whose main work is to spread the knowledge of salvation." What was the Church's business, then is its business now. It is worthy of recognition as Christ's Church just so far as it marks out for itself and carries through a worthy program of obedience to the missionary program of our Lord.

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