



E KEY TO THE
ONARY PROBLEM

ANDREW MURRAY

EMMANUEL



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THE KEY
TO
THE MISSIONARY PROBLEM

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Note of Commendation

WITH all my heart I commend this volume to the perusal, the thought, and the prayers of all ministers of Christ and His flock. It is an appeal to the inmost soul of the pastor, and at the same time a suggestion for the most practical possible application of his activities.

The great Christian who writes it puts his main propositions with an urgency which, just here and there, as it seems to me, invites the recollection of other sides of truth. His contention that the missionary enterprise of the Church is its supreme call, seems in places to become an assertion that it is its one real call. But no deep-sighted reader will really mistake those places. And every reader who has indeed his eyes towards the will of God, will rise from the perusal, or rather kneel down after it, asking, "Lord, what wouldest Thou have me to do?"

HANDLEY DUNELM.

4th January 1902.

D

“The Love of Christ constraineth us”

“Oh! if we could make this missionary problem a personal one, if we could fill the hearts of the people with a personal love for the Saviour who died for them, the indifference of Christendom would disappear, and the kingdom of Christ would appear.”

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THE KEY TO THE MISSIONARY PROBLEM



CHAPTER I

The Ecumenical Missionary Conference

IT was my privilege to be invited to speak at the great Ecumenical Missionary Conference held at New York in April 1900. The circumstances of our country, in which war had just broken out, were such that I did not feel at liberty to leave. When an urgent letter from Mr. Moody, pressing me to come, and after the Conference to stay over for the Northfield gatherings, reopened the question, I still was kept from going.

But the invitation gave occasion to much thought and prayer. Had I a message for that meeting? Would I be able to give that message so clearly as to make it worth while to go all that distance? Would it be possible, amid the great variety of sub-

jects, to secure quiet, time, and undivided attention for that which appeared to me the one thing needful?

It was amid such questionings that the thought that had long occupied my mind became clearer, and that I felt that the one point on which I could have wished to speak was this: **How the Church could be roused to know and do our Lord's will for the salvation of men?** I had read with much interest the volume that had been issued in preparation for the Conference: I had received the impression that while, and very naturally, the chief attention was directed to the work in the field, the work at home, in the fitting of the Church for doing its part faithfully, hardly had the place given it which its importance demands. There is no more spiritual and mysterious truth than that Christ our Head is actually and entirely dependent upon the members of His body for carrying out the plans which He, as Head, has formed. It is only spiritual men, and a Church in which spiritual men have influence, that is capable of rightly carrying out Christ's commands. The clearest argument, the most forcible appeals, avail little, where this is not understood and aimed at as the true standard of Christian devotion. I do feel very deeply that, to the friends of missions, striving to take large views of the purpose of God and His kingdom, there is no question

of more urgent importance than this: **How is the Church to be reached and led on to place herself, with every member and with all her powers, at her Lord's disposal for the work for which He has destined her and depends on her?** In the Preliminary Report of which I spoke, the subject was hardly alluded to.

When I received the two volumes of the Report of the Conference, I naturally turned at once to see in how far and in what way the question had been dealt with. I found many important suggestions as to how the interest in missions may be increased. But, if I may venture to say it, the root-evil, the real cause of so much lack of interest, and the way in which that evil should be met, was hardly dealt with. While indirectly and implicitly it was admitted that there was something wrong with the greater part of professing Christians, the real seriousness and sinfulness of the neglect of our Lord's command, as indicating a low state of religious life, and the problem as to what the missionary societies could do to effect a change, certainly did not take that prominent place which I thought they deserved.

1. Of the suggestions made for securing for missions their due place in the work of the Church, and in the heart of believers, the first dealt specially with the ministry. In an address on **The Pastor**

in relation to the Foreign Field, Dr. Pentecost opened with these words—

“To the pastor belongs the privilege and the responsibility of solving the foreign missionary problem. Until the pastors of our Churches wake up to the truth of this proposition, and the foreign work becomes a passion in their own hearts and consciences, our Boards may do what they can, by way of devising forward movements or organising new methods for exploiting the Churches for money, yet the chariot wheels of foreign missions will drive heavily.”

He then went on to prove that every pastor holds his office under Christ's commission, and can only fulfil it when,

“As a missionary bishop, he counts the whole world his fold. The pastor of the smallest church has the power to make his influence felt around the world. No pastor is worthy of his office who does not put himself into sympathy with the magnificent breadth of the great commission, and draw inspiration and zeal from its world-wide sweep. The pastor is not only the instructor, but the leader of his congregation. He must not only care for their souls, but direct their activities. If there are churches that give not and pray not for foreign missions, it is because they have pastors who are false and recreant to the command of Christ. I am almost warranted in saying that, as no congregation can long resist the enthusiasm of a really enthusiastic pastor, so, on the other hand, no congregation can rise above cold indifference or lack of conviction on this matter on the part of the pastor.”

The address closed with the sentence with which it began—

“To the pastor belongs the privilege and the responsibility of solving the foreign missionary problem.”

Dr. Cuthbert Hall spoke on **The Young Men of the Future Ministry—how fire them with the missionary passion?**

“The passion of a Christlike love for lives develops in the soul of a Christian disciple from the presence in himself of powers and activities that reflect the mind of Christ. These are: a clear vision of what the world is and needs; a deep feeling of compassion towards the world; active effort for the world, even to giving His life a ransom for many. Out of this triad of powers issued the passion of His love of human lives—the boundless, fathomless, deathless love of Christ for man. The minister of Christ may speak with the tongues of men and of angels, may have all knowledge, may have a faith that could remove mountains—if he have not the passion of a Christlike love, he has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.

“The problem of the divinity school is this: not how to train an occasional man for the foreign field, but how to kindle the missionary passion in every man that passes through the school, that he may thereby become an able minister of Christ. The primary and essential thing is that there shall be within the school a sacred altar of missionary passion, whereat the torch of every man shall be kindled, and the lip of every man shall be touched with the living coal. For the sake of the man who possibly has gifts for service abroad, the divinity school should be hot with zeal for evangelisation, should be

charged with solemn anxiety for the world's condition, so that no man can live within its walls without facing for himself the solemn question, Is it Christ's will for me that I go forth to serve Him in the regions beyond?

"As for the man who shall enter the pastorate at home, he requires the missionary passion to make him great in sympathy, apostolic in his view of Christ and Christianity. To overcome the resistance of ignorance and prejudice, to awaken the attention of apathetic minds, which are blinded to the large question of the world's evangelisation, to educate the Church's intelligence, to raise at home the supplies that shall maintain the work of God abroad, the pastor needs nothing less than the missionary passion. **But the man who is thus to conquer must first himself be conquered and set on fire of God.**

"The study of missions is slowly rising to the rank of a theological discipline. But the study of missions as a discipline of the divinity school cannot by itself bring to pass that setting on fire of the future ministry with the missionary passion. I see other forces at work which make for that glorious end. I see developing a new conception of the ministry that must attract toward it many of the most gifted and consecrated of our young men. In many a college to-day are found the very flower of our youth, to whom the ministry appears not as a reserved and gloomy world of ecclesiastical technicalities, but as the King's own highway to joyful and abundant service. I see a spirit developing among our young men that portends a vast accession of missionary enthusiasm for the ministry of the future. Personal consecration for personal service is a conception of living that grows more and more attractive to a multitude of our finest minds.

Out of this class of minds shall be gathered the ministry of the future. It shall be a Christ-filled ministry, beholding the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, worshipping Him with the enthusiasm of an absolutely fearless affection, and presenting Him as the only Name under heaven whereby men can be saved. It shall be a missionary ministry, full of passion to redeem, clear-eyed to discover the ongoing of Christ's work, faithful in its stewardship at home and abroad, apostolic in its assurance that Christ has ordained it to bear much fruit, apostolic in its eagerness to spread far and wide the gospel of the risen and ascended Lord, apostolic in its hope that the unseen and crowned Saviour shall surely come again."

Other speakers emphasised as strongly the responsibility of pastors. Rev. J. F. Daly, of the Free Church of Scotland, said—

"Until the clergy are afire, it is useless to expect the laity to be so. There is not a single instance of a minister really interested in foreign missions, praying and working for them, who has not met with an encouraging response at length from a certain number of his people" (vol. i. p. 132).

D. Brewer Eddy of the Yale Band said—

"The importance of leadership must be emphasised. Let us put to usury that talent which sets others to work. You are the leaders. We, six millions of young people in this land, are willing to follow you, if you will guide us. This is the responsibility of the pastor. The most definite impression, perhaps, of the Yale Band is this: that the praise or the responsibility and blame for present conditions in our Missionary Boards must be laid at the doors

of the pastors. . . . If you base your appeal on grounds of pastor's pride, or of individual church benevolence, or of denominational loyalty, our young people will return a reward commensurate with the grounds from which such an appeal is made. But come to us with the deepest spiritual note you can sound, with a message from the very life of the Master we are learning to love more and more, and we six millions will follow you to the best of our ability " (vol. i. p. 182).

Mr. S. Earl Taylor said—

"Until our pastors are ready to back this enterprise, there will never be a missionary spirit adequate to the needs of the generation. Where the pastor helps, almost any plan will succeed; where he is opposed, scarcely anything will succeed. While godly pastors in all parts of the country have been helping the students as they have worked in the churches, we are told here and in Great Britain that the greatest obstacle in arousing the home church is the pastor, who is afraid his salary will be cut down " (vol. i. p. 141).

The Hon. S. B. Capen—

"There is one condition absolutely essential to success. While I believe we must expect our Christian men to have a large share in planning for this better organisation, we shall still need devoted pastors to lead in its execution. The pastors are to be the leaders still in this mighty work, and a consecrated pastor will always mean a consecrated church. In this new epoch of missionary work the pastors of this generation, if they only will, may be the leaders in this holy war for righteousness in all the earth " (vol. i. p. 189).

Rev. D. S. MacKay—

“A special appeal, to be effective, must have not only behind it, but in it, pulsating through it, the persuasive personality of the local pastor. To scatter a few leaflets in the pews, and simply call attention to them, is one of the surest ways by which a pastor can kill a special appeal. The effectiveness of the appeal depends, in the last instance, on the pastor who with loving zeal sends home the plea. I do not deprecate in any way the helpfulness of missionary agents from time to time in our pulpits, but it is the fidelity of the local pastor, translating the special appeal into an individual message to his own people, that is, after all, the secret of success in the commissariat of foreign missions” (vol. i. p. 192).

The responsibility all these speakers throw upon the ministry is something very serious, and raises questions of the deepest interest. As to what place a pastor is to give missions in his preaching, there may be difference of opinion. Rev. J. F. Daly said—

“In the Church I represent we have drawn up a scheme which secures to each congregation a visit from a missionary on a Sunday once in six years. Good organisation should secure: (1) A visit of a missionary once in three years on a Sunday; (2) a visit of a presbyterial deputation—say minister, elder, and a lady, if possible—the year following; and a sermon on missions by the pastor the year after that. A committee of presbytery should be appointed to see these arrangements carried through. Under these auspices a large public missionary meeting should be held annually at some influential centre in the district, and addressed by several

missionaries. But even with all such ideal organisation there are still classes who may be overlooked."

Bishop Hendrix said—

"Andrew Fuller, when alarmed at the spiritual lethargy of his church, preached a sermon on the duty of the Church to give the gospel to the world; and as he broadened their intellectual life, and quickened their zeal, and stirred their purpose, he followed it up the following Sabbath with a sermon on the duty of the Church to give the gospel to the world. The third Sabbath the same theme was presented from his desk, and then men began to inquire: 'Then, if the gospel can save the world, can it not save our own children, our own community?' and from that missionary sermon there sprang one of the most memorable revivals in the history of any church."

It is one thing for a minister to be an advocate and supporter of missions: it is another and very different thing for him to understand that they are the chief end of the Church, and therefore the chief end for which his congregation exists. It is only when this truth masters him in its spiritual power, that he will be able to give the subject of missions its true place in his ministry. As he sees how every believer is called to witness to Christ's love and claim, how the healthy spiritual life depends on the share the believer takes in work for his Lord, how he has to lead the congregation on to make the extension of Christ's kingdom the highest object of its corporate existence, he will feel how

nothing can enable it to carry this out but a definite consecration to be filled with the Spirit and the love of Christ. And as he then thinks of all the ignorance and worldliness and unbelief that he has to contend with, he will learn that his missionary enthusiasm must be nothing less than the enthusiasm of the Holy Spirit filling him with an intense love to Christ, an intense faith in His power, an intense desire to lead all His disciples to give their lives to making Jesus King over the whole earth.

The more earnestly we study missions in the light of the pastors' responsibility, the more we shall see that everything depends upon the personal life being wholly under the power of love to Christ, as the constraining power of our work. With the pastor, at least, it will be found that the missionary problem is a personal one.

2. Next to the influence of the Pastor and Pulpit in arousing the interest in missions, the second place was given to the Pen and the Press. The necessity of preparing, and circulating, and securing the study of mission literature was forcibly put from various points of view.

“Information is the fuel without which the fire cannot burn. Fuel is not fire, and cannot of itself create fire ; but where there is fire, fuel is indispensable to keep it burning, or to make it burn with greater intensity.

“An informed Church will be a transformed Church

Possibly one of the greatest factors in the development of missionary interest is the systematic study of missions."

And the address closes with this weighty paragraph:

"Missionary influence is twofold in its influence. The torch we hold up for others, illuminates our own path. The Church is watching, and working, and praying for immortal souls. Our representatives are out in the thickest of the battle. It is a struggle between the forces of life and death. Are we so swathed in our environment that we care for no tidings of this contest with heathenism and the forces of darkness? If we are in earnest to plant the Church of Christ in the ends of the earth, let us hear the report of progress and pass it on."

"Ignorance is the source of weakness in missionary effort. Know, and you will believe. Know, and you will pray. Know, and you will help in the front rank."

"A word on the demand that missionary publications should be interesting and attractive, like the so-called 'popular' magazines. What makes any publication popular? Why is it that during the recent campaigns in South Africa crowds of people jostled one another before the bulletin boards of the War Office? Unquestionably the intensity of the interest felt is because of the issues involved, affecting British prestige and power. **IF Christians were as loyal to their King, IF they had a like eagerness for the establishment of His sovereignty over the regions which He claims, then would messages from the battle-line be scanned with avidity. No tidings of this sort would be counted dull. Just here lies the difficulty in reference to missionary publications. They will command the attention of those only who are at one with Christ in His world-wide redemptive work. Given**

a Church whose members, in fact as well as in profession, are seeking first the kingdom of God, and they will demand, and will have, fresh and full tidings of the progress of that kingdom throughout the earth. IF once a quickened love for our Lord and His kingdom fill the hearts of His people, reports from the field of contest will be welcomed with eager acclaim."

Rev. Dr. Rankin—

"When we have made our magazines as good as we can, what next? Then the pastors should come and tell the people of this literature. They should put it before them with such earnestness that they feel that this is something they cannot neglect. Let our pastors confer with good women of the Churches, and let these take the magazines out among the people. Let our pastors glory in the mission literature. Let them feel that it is in advance of everything in telling the story of what is transpiring in the earth."

Dr. A. W. Halsey—

"It was said of the late Keith Falconer by one of his instructors, that he approached the world of ideas as great observers approach the world of nature: **with wonder, with reverence, with humility.** In some such spirit must the pastor approach the study of missionary literature. As you study the literature of missions, the conviction deepens that though you are reading the lives of Christians of many denominations and varied attainments, engaged in a great variety of work in different lands, yet the one fact that confronts you is that these missionaries believe in the presence of the Spirit of God. The pastor who neglects such literature robs his people of their birthright and 'wrongs his own soul.'"

3. The third great means of wakening interest was that of personal influence exercised through organisation. Much was well said of the importance of having children, girls, boys, young people, women, all separately gathered under the influence of leaders who could guide aright their training for the love and service of the kingdom; and much, too, of the power woman is already exercising, and must exercise still more largely, in receiving and passing on the wonderful love of Jesus Christ within the Churches of the home lands, to train and prepare the future Church for giving itself to its work. Take this passage by Mrs. T. B. Hargrove—

“The Church is truly but thinking the thoughts of Christ after Him when she recognises the importance of the child in the development of His kingdom on earth, for did He not give children the chief place in the new dispensation, and affirm that the only way a man might understand God’s truth was in getting back to his child-way of thinking. Truly, of children, and of men and women of childlike natures, is His kingdom here and hereafter to be made up.

“The young people’s societies of the Church are so many training schools where the workers of the future are being prepared to take the places of the veterans of to-day. Much time can be saved and greater efficiency secured if our girls uninterruptedly pursue the same methods of work, and labour for the same direct ends in their young people’s societies, as will engross their attention as missionary workers in after years. A gentleman

walking over a beautifully-kept farm one day with his friend, the owner, and admiring the skill and care everywhere manifested, centred his attention upon the magnificent sheep, and with great earnestness asked how he had succeeded in rearing such flocks. The simple answer was, 'I take care of my lambs, sir.' Did not the great Shepherd of Israel bid His people follow the same rule? How shall we take care of the lambs? By keeping both juvenile and young people's societies under the care of good shepherds. They must have our very best; if the choice must come between superior and inferior leaders for adult or young people's work, always give the young people the preference. The crying need of the women's foreign missionary societies to-day, all over this broad land in every Church, is well-qualified superintendents of juvenile and young people's societies. Women are needed for this duty who love children and young people for their own sake, and for Christ's sake: women of much experience, but young in heart; women who feel themselves commissioned of Christ to 'feed My lambs'; women who count not time dear to themselves if by any means they may win souls for the Master. But these earnest intelligent superintendents need help. The adult societies must look upon the juvenile and young people's societies as a mother upon her daughters: she must not leave them exclusively to the care of the lady managers. Each adult member must look after the children and young girls near and dear to herself, and seek to lead them from juvenile to young people's, and from young people's to the adults' societies. Oh that the work of foreign missions were really on the hearts of our women! No weariness or toil is spared, or self-denial counted, when the heart is really enlisted.

"Each lady superintendent should make it her first aim to inspire in every individual child real love for Christ and for the heathen. Perhaps the training of the young in their homes, in the schools and societies, is more defective just here than in any other one point.

"Hearts truly won for Christ in the juvenile society, and tended lovingly and intelligently in the young people's society, will, in the great majority of cases, bring into our adult organisations Marys whose alabaster boxes of precious perfume will be broken at the Master's feet, and their fragrance reach to the uttermost parts of the earth.

"The nineteenth century has brought to woman many open doors, but none is of greater moment than this door, old as motherhood, but presented by this century under another phase: the training of young minds and hearts in the avenues of public service for Christ, and for the world He died to redeem. Let each Christian woman choose as her motto, 'I cannot live without the highest use of life'; and let each realise that one of life's highest uses is the development into noble Christian womanhood and manhood of the young people of our Churches, and address herself thereto" (vol. i. pp. 135, 136).

There is a great deal of much value in connection with organisation that will be found in the Report, to which I cannot here refer. What I have quoted is enough to show how much will have to be done before the Church has fully availed itself of this wonderful power.

The above three headings will, I think, be found to cover all that was said in reference to the rousing

of the Church to carry out her Lord's command. If our students could be trained in an atmosphere of missionary enthusiasm, and our pastors brought to believe that the great aim of the existence of their congregations is to make Christ known to every creature; if our people could be got to read and take an interest in the news of the kingdom and its extension; if we could so get our Christian men and women of devotion to organise our young people, that their training in the missionary service were part of their education in the love of Christ and the life of godliness;—there would be reason to hope that the work would be accomplished, and within thirty years every man and woman in the world have the gospel brought within their reach, and actually offered to them.

But throughout all the addresses there is the secret admission that in all these respects there is reason for anxiety. The complaints as to the lack of the missionary ideal and passion in very many pastors and students, the lack of interest in the majority of members in the tidings of this great war, the need and the call there is for many, many more, to come and shepherd the young into the life of missionary devotion,—all prove that at the back of all these needs is a deeper need. There is need of a great revival of spiritual life, of true fervent devotion to our Lord Jesus, of entire

consecration to His service. It is only in a Church in which this spirit of revival has at least begun, that there is any hope of any very radical change in the relation of the majority of our Christian people to mission work.

I confess that I had hoped that this question, as the one of paramount importance in view of the possibility of carrying out Christ's command at once, would have engaged the attention of the Conference. When the Student Volunteer Movement issued their Appeal to the Churches, announcing the watchword they had adopted, "The Evangelisation of the World in this Generation," their message met with a most cordial welcome and response. Must we now wait for them to come a second time, and ask the Church to consider what the great hindrance is that holds Christ's people back from coming forward and meeting the emergency with the enthusiasm which He has a right to claim? Is it not time that some representative body appeal to all fellow-Christians, and call for an inquiry into the nature and extent of the disease that is so paralysing the Church, and the conditions of restoration to health and strength? To know what is wrong, with confession and humiliation to turn from it to the loving Lord, would bring new life to the Church, and altogether new power to the work that has to be done.

It is under the impression of thoughts like these

that I feel led to write this little book. I know that it is no easy task humbly, wisely, lovingly, and yet faithfully and effectually, to speak of what appears lacking or sinful in the Church. And yet I am sure that there are many who would welcome help in answering the question: Is there any prospect, any real possibility, of such a revival in the Church that proof will be given that, as a whole, and in every congregation where the full gospel is preached, her only aim will be to carry the gospel to every creature? And if so, what is the path that will lead to this great change, and what are the steps to be taken by those who lead the missions of the Church?

May God by His Holy Spirit guide us to the vision of His will concerning His Church, to the faith in His power and promise, and to the obedience that will walk in any path He opens up.

CHAPTER II

Foreign Missions:

A Test of the State of the Church

IN the previous chapter the question has been raised, What can be done so to quicken the spiritual life of the Church that the missionary cause shall have all that hearty sympathy and support which it claims? In seeking to answer that question our first duty is to form an accurate estimate of what its real relation to mission work is.

Let us devote this chapter to considering the state of the Church. We take, as the basis of our study, passages from an address of Mr. Mott's at the Conference. The frequent use of the word **IF** points us to that in which the Church has failed in her duty, suggests what the state is in which she should and could be found, invites to an inquiry into the cause of failure, and leads us to ask what the cure for such a condition is.

“The Moravians have done more in proportion to their ability than any other body of Christians. **IF** members

of Protestant Churches in Great Britain and America gave in like proportion, then missionary contributions would aggregate £12,000,000, or a fourfold increase. **And IF they went out as missionaries in corresponding numbers, we would have a force of nearly 400,000 foreign workers, which is vastly more than the number of missionaries estimated as necessary to achieve the evangelisation of the world in this generation. The question is, What has there been in connection with the work which is not reproducible ?**

“The world-wide proclamation of the gospel awaits accomplishment by this generation, **IF it shall have the obedience and determination to attempt the task. We are not justified in saying that there is a single country on the face of the earth where the Church, IF she seriously desires, cannot send ambassadors of Christ to proclaim His message.**

“Contrast the one hundred and thirty-five millions of members of Protestant Churches with the few thousands constituting the despised sect which on the day of Pentecost began the work. As we recall the achievements of that infant Church, can we question the ability of the Christians of our day, **IF they were unitedly to resolve to accomplish it, in this present generation, to give all mankind an opportunity to know Christ, the Saviour and Lord ?**

“The money-power of the Church is enormous. **IF only one-fourth of members of Protestant Churches gave but one cent a day, it would yield over twenty-five million pounds, as contrasted with the less than four million pounds of the past year.**

“The Bible Societies are not less than eighty in number. **IF the work is properly promoted, before this generation closes, each inhabitant of Asia and**

Africa will be able to read or hear in his own tongue of the wonderful works of God.

“The various Christian young people’s organisations include, in North America alone, fully six million members. These young people themselves, **IF properly educated and guided**, are able to raise each year a sum large enough to support all the foreign missionaries required to accomplish the evangelisation of the world.

“Sunday schools contain over twenty million scholars. **IF these were trained** to give a penny per week, it would yield an amount greater than the present total missionary gifts of Christendom.

“There are now probably two hundred thousand soldiers at the Cape. We have all been impressed by the exhibition of the unity and power of the British Empire; we have been deeply moved by the example of the republics, as we have seen old men and boys going out to fight the battles of their country; and yet, when it is suggested that all Protestant Christendom unite in sending out fifty thousand missionaries, it is impracticable and visionary: **it would be too severe a strain on the resources of the Church.**

“Was it not Bishop Thoburn who said that **IF this Conference and those whom it represents will do their duty**, within the first decade of the new century ten millions of souls might be gathered into the Church of Christ? And was it not Dr. Chamberlain who affirmed the possibility of bringing India under the sway of Christ within the lifetime of some, at least, in this assembly?”

In an address of Mr. Robert Speer we read—

“The aim of foreign missions is to make Jesus Christ known to the world. The Church could do the work, **IF it would, if this aim ruled its spirit.** I was glad to

read, on the first page of our programme, those dying words of Simeon Calhoun: 'It is my deep conviction, and I say it again and again, that **IF the Church of Christ were what she ought to be**, twenty years would not pass away till the story of the cross would be uttered in the ears of every living man.'

And—to quote only one more instance—Rev. W. Perkins, Secretary of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, London, said—

“Great as are the results of Foreign Missions, over which we rejoice and give thanks, **they would have been a hundredfold greater**, IF the Church had been what she ought to be in the two great matters of prayer and beneficence.”

We all know the force of the word IF. It suggests the cause from which certain effects follow. It points to the conditions needed to ensure the results we desire. In the passages we have quoted, and in different forms of expression frequently recurring in missionary literature, we find the same thought incessantly repeated: it tells us how certainly and speedily the evangelisation of the world would be accomplished, were it not for the failure of the Church in doing the part that has been assigned her by God.

It avails little that these statements are made: let us see what the lessons are we ought to learn, and what can be done to roll away the reproach resting on us as a Church of Christ. These IFS suggest, as we have said, four questions: Is the

Church really at fault, and wherein? Was it possible for her to have done what is claimed? What was the cause of the failure? How is deliverance from the evil to be found?

1. These IFS all indicate something wrong in **the Church** in reference to Christ's command to evangelise the world. Note the words we have emphasised in the type, and the indictment they contain. **The Church has not "the obedience and determination to attempt the task"** to proclaim the gospel within this generation to every creature. **She does not "seriously desire"** to proclaim the gospel in every country on the face of the earth. The Christians of our day are not **"unitedly resolved to accomplish it."** Were the Church of our day doing the work, or proving herself ready to do it, there would be no need of this repeated appeal to the IF. One-fourth of the members of Protestant Churches are **not ready to "give one halfpenny a day."** We are not ready to see that the work of Bible circulation is **"properly promoted."** The Christian young people of America are able to raise the money sufficient for all the missionaries needed to evangelise the world, but the Church is **not "properly guiding and educating"** them for this. Sunday scholars could do so much—they are not being trained to it. Protestant Christendom counts it **"impracticable and vision-**

ary" to give fifty thousand men to the foreign work for the service of Christ Jesus and His kingdom: it would be "too great a strain on the resources of the Church." The Conference and the Churches it represents are not ready to "do their duty." The Church is not willing "to make Jesus known to the world." This aim does not "rule its spirit." In this matter the Church of Christ is not "what she ought to be."

These charges against the Church were not brought by infidels or enemies, but by some of the Church's most faithful servants. They were uttered in presence of thousands of missionaries and mission friends. If untrue, they would have been denied and refuted. But no one could deny them. In this matter, however devotedly a small part of the Church is doing its utmost, in the great majority of its members it is not what it should be. It does not desire truly to have Christ made known to every creature as speedily as possible. This aim does not rule its spirit—it is not prepared to do its duty.

The charge is unutterably solemn, is simply awful. It will not do to listen and then lay it aside and forget. Everyone who loves Christ's Church, who loves Christ Jesus his Lord, who loves the souls that are perishing through this neglect, ought to pause and consider what it means. That Christ should have given His life in serving us, and

asked us to give our life in serving Him; that Christ should have given His dying love into our hearts, and asked us to bear it and impart it to others; that Christ should in His love have died for all, and have rendered Himself dependent on us to let them know of that love; that Christ should have endured the agony of the cross for the joy of winning and saving the perishing, and should have counted on our love to delight in making Him happy and bringing Him His reward; and that the great majority of those who profess to owe everything to His dying love, should be utterly indifferent either as to gratifying Him or blessing their fellow-men by winning them to that love—surely it cannot be true that His love has ever been a reality to them, or they could not so neglect their calling. Or it must be that they have never been taught aright what they have been redeemed for: the Church, in calling them to seek salvation for themselves, must have kept hidden from them the great purpose for which they were redeemed—that they should live to save others. But, whatever be the cause, here is the solemn fact,—a Church, purchased by the blood of the Son of God to be His messenger to a dying world, for the greater part failing entirely in understanding or fulfilling its calling. No words can express, no mind can grasp, the terrible meaning and consequences of the failure and condem-

nation involved in the simple IFS of which we speak.

2. And let us not think that it is owing to some fatal necessity, some natural impossibility, that it is so. These IFS point to **what is the Church's actual destiny.** Dreamers speak of impossibilities, and calculate what might be done if they came true. We are listening to men who are speaking words of soberness and truth. These IFS suggest **what is certainly and divinely possible.** They point us to the Church of Pentecost.

“To evangelise the world in this generation is possible,” they say, “in view of the achievements of the Christians of the first generation. They did more to accomplish the work than has any succeeding generation. In studying the secret of what they accomplished, one is led to the conclusion that they employed no vitally important method which cannot be used to-day, and that they availed themselves of no power which we cannot utilise.”

The mighty power of God and His Holy Spirit are ours as theirs. The power of His dying love in the heart; of a triumphant faith in Christ; of simple, bold, personal testimony; of patient suffering; of absolute passionate consecration; the heavenly power that overcomes the world and makes us more than conquerors through Him that loved us—all these belong to us as much as to them.

“It is possible to evangelise the world in this generation, in view of recent missionary achievements of the

Church. The most striking example is that of the Moravians. If the members of Protestant Churches went out in numbers corresponding to those they have sent out, we would have a force of nearly 400,000 foreign workers, which is vastly more than the number estimated as necessary to achieve the task."

The Moravian Church is one of the smallest in number and poorest in means of all the Churches. What it has done is a proof that the whole Church, when once she rouses herself to her calling, most assuredly can accomplish the work. In view of the opportunities which the Church has in the open doors in every country of the world, of the enormous resources the Church possesses in the wealth of her members, in the numbers of workers over which the Church has disposal, and the faith that to send them out would, instead of weakening it, bring quickening and strength, it is absolutely within the power of the Church to bring the gospel to every creature within this generation. Let us take time to come under the full power of this great thought, suggested to us by those who are pleading with us. It will give force to what has been said in regard to the terrible failure of the Church. It will prepare us for discovering how to deal with the evil.

3. These IFS invite us to an inquiry as to the causes of the terrible failure. How comes it that the Church of Christ has been so utterly

unfaithful? Does not our Protestant Christendom profess, and that honestly, to acknowledge Christ as its Lord, and God's holy word as the law of its life? Is it not our boast that we are in the true succession of the Pentecostal Church, the heir of all its promises and powers? Are we not the children of the Reformation, in possession of the great truths that every living man has a right to God's word as taught him by God's Spirit, and a free access, through Christ, to God's pardoning grace? And is it not the very sum and centre of our profession, that we acknowledge Jesus as Master and Lord, and have given ourselves to do what He says? And how comes it that, in the very thing on which Christ's glory most depends, on which His heart of love is most set, the Church should have failed to realise or fulfil its destiny?

It would be easy to mention many causes that co-operate in producing this unfaithfulness. But they may all be summed up in the one answer: **The low spiritual state of the Church as a whole.** The control of the Holy Spirit in power and fulness over the life of believers is essential to the health and strength of the Church. Scripture teaches us how easy it is for a Church and its members to have a sound creed, a faithful observance of religious services and duties, a zeal for the extension of the Church and for works of philan-

thropy which are within the range of human nature, while that which is definitely spiritual, supernatural, and Divine is to a large extent lacking. The spirit of the world, the wisdom and the will of man in the teaching of the word and the guidance of the Church, make it very much like any human institution, with little of the power of the heavenly world and the endless life to be seen in it. In such a Church missions may have a place, though not the place nor the power which is needed for fulfilling the command of Christ. The passion of love to Christ and to souls, the enthusiasm of sacrifice for men, and of faith in the omnipotent Power that can quicken the dead, is wanting.

Among the chief symptoms of this sickly state are worldliness and lack of prayer. If there is one thing that Christ and Scripture insist on, it is that His kingdom is not of this world, that the spirit of the world cannot understand the things of God, that separation from the world in fellowship and conduct, and surrender to the Spirit which is from heaven, is essential to the faithful following of the Lord Jesus. The one universally admitted fact—that the majority of Christians care and give nothing for missions, that a large number give but little and not from the highest motives, is simply a proof of the worldliness in which most Christians

live, and which the Church either does not seek, or is not able, to cast out. It needed Christ to come from heaven to save men out of the world: it needs nothing less than the Spirit of heaven in Christ's disciples to free them from the spirit of the world, to make them willing to sacrifice all to win the world for Christ. It needs the same Spirit, through which Christ gave His life for the world, to revive His Church to win the world for God.

Lack of prayer is another symptom of this sickly state. A worldly spirit in the Christian hinders his praying much. He looks at things in the light of the world. He is not at home in the heavenly places. He does not realise the dark power of sin in those around him, or the urgent need of a direct Divine interposition. He has little faith in the efficacy of prayer, in the need of much and unceasing prayer, in the power there is in him to pray in Christ's name and prevail. True beneficence, the giving from devotion to Christ and for Him, and true prayer, the asking and counting upon Him to bless the gift and bestow His Spirit in His work, are the proof that the worldly spirit is being overcome, and that the soul is being restored to spiritual health. IF the Church is to be what she ought to be, and to do what her Lord asks her to do for the evangelisation of the world, this sickness and failure must be acknowledged, and deliverance sought.

4. These IFS urge us to ask **how such deliverance can be found.** What is to be the cure of this diseased state? A sickly man cannot do a healthy man's work. To help carry Christ's cross to the world needs the vigour of full spiritual health. How is this to be found?

In all return to God for true service and new blessing the first step is always—Confession. The leaders of the Church's mission work, who ought to know the tremendous needs of the world, who understand the meaning and urgency of our Lord's command, who feel the utterly inadequate provision the Church is making for His work—on them rests the solemn duty of lifting up their voice and making God's people know their sin. It is possible that we are all so occupied with our special fields of labour, and the thought of how much is being done, that the extent and guilt of what is *not* being done is comparatively lost sight of. The latest statistics tell us that, at the close of the century, the total of communicants from among the heathen as the fruit of mission work is 1,300,000, and of the "native Christian community, or the number of souls in nominal adherence to Christianity and within direct touch of gospel agencies," is 4,400,000 (Dr. Dennis in *Rep. E. M. C.* vol. ii. p. 423). With a thousand million of heathen and Mohammedans, we are thus in real contact with less than five millions

as against 995 millions still unreached. Until Christians are led to listen, and think, and pray for opened eyes to look upon these fields, "white unto the harvest," intrusted to them, they never will recognise the greatness of the work, their own unfitness, or the urgent need of waiting for a Divine power to fit them for the task.

As we take in this, we shall feel and confess how little the Church has done, and the guilt and shame resting on the body of Christ will become the Lord's burden on us. We rejoice and give thanks for the 15,460 foreign missionaries who are now in the field labouring among the four million of the native Christian community. But what efforts are being made to reach the one thousand million? They are dying at the rate of over thirty million a year—within thirty years they will have passed away into the darkness. What prospect is there that they will be speedily reached? Every society complains of lack of funds. We are told that of Church members one-third neither gives nor cares for the kingdom; that another third gives and does and cares but little, and that not from the right motive; and that even of the remaining third—it is really less than a third—only a small proportion are doing their very utmost, and giving and praying with their whole heart. The disobedience of the Church in the great majority of her members,

her neglect of her Lord's work, her refusal to listen to the appeals to come to His help—is not this a sin and a guilt greater than we think? If the Church is really to waken up out of her sleep, is not the one thing needed, that those to whom God has given the charge of His mission work in the world, in their pleadings lay before the people the utter disproportion between what is being done and what ought to be and can be done, and press home the guilt and the shame of it until an increasing number bow before God in confession and humiliation, and in a cry for pardon and mercy as earnest as when they sought their own salvation?

With the appeal to men there must be the appeal to God. The work is His: He cares for it. The power is His: He gives it. The Church is His: He waits to use it. The world is His: He loves it. He can make His people willing in the day of His power. He will hear the cries of His servants who give Him no rest. He delights to prove His faithfulness in fulfilling His promises. Things cannot go on as they are, if the world is really to be evangelised in this generation. More than five years are already past since the watchword was publicly sounded: in this generation every creature must have the gospel offered to him. Unless there come over the Church a great change, and she give herself to the work in a way she has not yet done, the work cannot

be accomplished. But it can, if God's people will fall upon their face before Him to confess their sin and the sin of their brethren. Let them ask God to reveal the cause of all the failure, and take the message to His Church. Let them preach the great truth, that as the winning of the world to God is the supreme, the one, end of the Church's existence, so the love of souls, the surrender of the whole life to Christ, for His use in the winning of souls, is the duty, is the only healthy life, for every believer. There are tens of thousands of God's children who are not unwilling, yea, rather, who are secretly longing, to serve their Lord, but know not how, or have not the courage to do so.

The time will then come when we shall no longer have to say, **IF the Church were what she ought to be**, but shall find our joy and strength in guiding a prepared people in that arduous but blessed path of bearing Christ's cross to every man on God's earth, and wrestling with the hosts of hell to make way for the kingdom of Christ the conqueror.

CHAPTER III

The Moravian Church and Love to Christ

LET me quote again the words of Mr. Mott—

“The most striking example of achievement on the home field, in the interest of foreign missions, is that of the Moravians. They have done more, in proportion to their ability, than any other body of Christians. IF members of Protestant Churches in Great Britain and America gave in like proportion, then missionary contributions would aggregate over £12,000,000, or a fourfold increase. And if they went out as missionaries in corresponding numbers, we would have a force of nearly 400,000 foreign workers, which is vastly more than the number of missionaries estimated as necessary to achieve the evangelisation of the world. The question is, What is there in connection with the work which is not reproducible?”

In the Conference, the Secretary of the Board of Missions of the Moravian Church in the United States, Rev. P. de Schweinitz, summed up the work of the Church in these words—

“Even to-day the Moravians have for every fifty-eight

communicants in the home churches a missionary in the foreign field, and for every member in the home churches they have more than two members in the congregation gathered from among the heathen. . . . Now, what was the incentive for foreign missionary work which has produced such results? While acknowledging the supreme authority of the great commission, the Moravian Brethren have ever emphasised as their chief incentive the inspiring truth drawn from Isaiah liii. 10-12: making our Lord's suffering the spur to all their activity. From that prophecy they drew their missionary battle-cry: 'To win for the Lamb that was slain, the reward of His sufferings.' We feel that we must compensate Him in some way for the awful sufferings which He endured in working out our salvation. The only way we can reward Him is by bringing souls to Him. When we bring Him souls, that is compensation for the travail of His soul. In no other way can we so effectively bring the suffering Saviour the reward of His passion as by missionary labour, whether we go ourselves or enable others to go. Get this burning thought of 'personal love for the Saviour who redeemed me' into the hearts of all Christians, and you have the most powerful incentive that can be had for missionary effort. Oh, if we could make this missionary problem a personal one! if we could fill the hearts of the people with a personal love for this Saviour who died for them, the indifference of Christendom would disappear, and the kingdom of Christ would appear."

If the appeal to the example of the Moravian Brethren is to exercise any influence, and the Church to be roused to follow in their footsteps, we must find out what the principles were that animated

them, whence the power that enabled them to do so much, and, specially, what the way in which God fitted them for doing that work. We cannot have like effects without like causes. As the conditions of their success are discovered, the cause of failure in the Church of to-day, and the path to restoration, can be found. A short summary of the history of the Moravian Church will be found full of instruction.¹

Its Origin.—Moravia and Bohemia are two provinces in the north-west of the Austrian Empire, bordering on Saxony. In the seventh and eighth centuries they received the knowledge of the gospel first from the Greek, later from the Roman Church. As the former allowed the preaching in the native tongue, and gave them the Bible in their own language, there arose divisions which were the cause of unceasing conflict. Gradually the Roman Church got the upper hand, and from the beginning of the fifteenth century, when John Huss was burnt for preaching the gospel (1415), the country was the scene of terrible persecutions. In course of time those who remained faithful to the gospel gathered together in a village in the north-east of Bohemia, in the valley of Kunwald, where they were allowed

¹ The full history of the ancient Church of the Brethren (1400–1700) will be found in “The History of the Church known as the *Unitas Fratrum*, founded by the Followers of John Huss,” by E. de Schweinitz, Bishop. Bethlehem, Pa.

for a time to live in comparative peace. Here, in 1457, they were known as "The Brethren of the Law of Christ." When their Church was constituted, they assumed the name of "**The United Brethren.**"

Its Discipline.—One of the brightest jewels of the United Church was its discipline. It was not their doctrine, but their life; not their theory, but their practice, that gave them such power. When the Reformers became acquainted with them later, Bucer wrote—

"You alone, in all the world, combine a wholesome discipline with a pure faith. When we compare our Church with yours, we must be ashamed. God preserve to you that which He has given you."

Calvin wrote—

"I congratulate your churches that the Lord, in addition to pure doctrine, has given them so many excellent gifts, and that they maintain such good morals, order, and discipline. We have long since recognised the value of such a system, but cannot in any way attain to it."

And Luther said—

"Tell the brethren that they shall hold fast that which God has given them, and not relinquish their constitution and discipline."

And what was their discipline? "In every detail of their lives—in business, in pleasure, in Christian service, in civil duties—they took the Sermon on the Mount as a lamp to their feet."

They counted the service of God the one thing to live for, and everything was made subservient to this. Their ministers and elders were to keep watch over the flock, to see that all were living to the glory of God. All were to be one brotherhood, helping and encouraging one another in a quiet and godly life.

Its Sufferings.—During the following half-century they lived here in comparative peace, though elsewhere persecution continued. But with the new century the Pope and the King combined against them, and in 1515, just as the Reformation was dawning in Germany, it almost looked as if they would be extinguished. With intervals of toleration, the troubles ever continued, until in 1548 a Royal Edict drove thousands to Poland, where they established a large and prosperous Church. With a new King in 1556 peace returned, and the Brethren's Church was again firmly established, and divided into the three provinces of Bohemia, Moravia, and Poland. By the end of the century the Church had given a Bible to the people, and had fostered education to such a degree that the Bohemian schools had a name in Europe, and the people were accounted the best educated people in the world. In 1609 they obtained the Bohemian Charter, for the first time giving full religious liberty, and in 1616 published their

Order of Discipline, with the full account of the institution of the Church.

Its Suppression.—With the accession of Frederick II. everything suddenly changed. The Day of Blood at Prague, in 1620, witnessed the execution of 27 of the leading nobles. During the six years that followed, Bohemia was a field of blood, and 36,000 families left the country. The population dwindled from 3,000,000 to 1,000,000. The Church of the Brethren was broken up and scattered. During the whole century those who stayed in the country had to worship God in secret, and formed what was called “The Hidden Seed.” When we take up the thread again, in 1722, just a hundred years will have elapsed, during which God only knows what was suffered. And yet even during that period hope was not altogether dead. Comenius, the last bishop of the Church in Moravia, wrote in 1660—

“Experience clearly teaches that particular Churches are sometimes destroyed by the hand of God stretched out in wrath; yet does this come to pass in such a way that other Churches are either planted in their stead, or the same Churches rise in other places. Whether God will deem her worthy to be revived in her native land, or let her die there, and resuscitate her elsewhere, we know not. . . . According to His own promise, the gospel will be brought, by those Christians who have been justly chastened, to the remaining peoples of the

earth; and thus, as of old, our fall will be the riches of the world."

In 1707 similar words were spoken by George Jaeschke, one of the few witnesses to the truth at that time. He was the father of Michael Jaeschke, and grandfather of Augustin and Jakob Neisser, who with their wives and children formed the first party led out to Herrnhut. On his deathbed, at the age of eighty-three, he spoke—

"It may seem as though the final end of the Brethren's Church had come. But, my beloved children, you will see a great deliverance. The remnant will be saved. I do not know whether this deliverance will come to pass here in Moravia, or whether you will have to go out of Babylon; but I do know it will transpire not very long hence. I am inclined to believe that an exodus will take place, and that a refuge will be offered on a spot where you will be able, without fear, to serve the Lord according to His holy word."

A Place of Refuge.¹—The Lord had provided for His people a place of refuge, where the Church of the Brethren would be renewed. It was in 1722 that Christian David received from Count Zinzendorf permission to bring refugees from Moravia to his estate in Saxony. Christian David had been born a Roman Catholic, but could find no rest in his Church. As a soldier in Saxony

¹ See *A Short History of the Moravian Church*. By J. E. Hutton. Moravian Publishing Office.

he found Christ from the teaching of a godly Lutheran pastor. He returned to Moravia to preach the Saviour he had found, and spoke with such power that an awakening followed. Persecution was immediately roused, and the preacher went to find a refuge for the persecuted. When he had obtained Zinzendorf's permission, he returned and led out his first band of ten, with whom he reached Berthelsdorf in June 1722. Time after time this devoted servant of the Lord went back to preach the gospel, and to lead out those who were willing to forsake all. In this way it was not long before some 200 had gathered, many of them of what had been called "the Hidden Seed," the true descendants of the old Brethren. The spot allotted to them had been called Hutberg—the Watch Hill. They called their new settlement Herrnhut—the Lord's Watch. They took the word in its double meaning. The Watch of the Lord over them; the Watch of the Lord to be kept by them in prayer and waiting for His leading, was to be their safety.

The New Leader.—Such was the material God had gathered at Herrnhut to build a house for Himself. Let us turn for a moment to the man whom He had prepared, as a wise master-builder, to superintend the work. Count Zinzendorf was born, May 1700, of godly parents. His father

had on his dying bed taken the child, then only six weeks old, in his arms, and consecrated him to the service of Christ. "Already in my childhood," wrote Zinzendorf, "I loved the Saviour, and had abundant intercourse with Him. In my fourth year I began to seek God earnestly, and determined to become a true servant of Jesus Christ." At Franke's school at Halle, at the age of twelve, he often met missionaries, and his heart was touched with the thought of work for Christ among the heathen. Among the boys at school he founded the "Order of the Mustard Seed." They bound themselves: 1, to be kind to all men; 2, to seek their welfare; 3, to seek to lead them to God and to Christ. As an emblem they had a small shield, with an **Ecce Homo**, and the motto, "His wounds our healing." Each member wore a ring, on which was inscribed, "No man liveth unto himself." Before leaving Halle he entered with an intimate friend into a covenant for the conversion of the heathen, especially such as would not be cared for by others. From Halle he went to Wittenberg, where he held prayer-meetings for the other students, and often spent whole nights in prayer and study of the Bible.

It was about this time that he visited the picture gallery in Düsseldorf. There he saw the

Ecce Homo of Sternberg, with the words underneath—

“All this I did for thee,
What hast thou done for Me?”

His heart was touched. He felt as if he could not answer the question. He turned away more determined than ever to spend his life in the service of his Lord. The vision of that Face never left him. Christ's love became the constraining power of his life. “I have,” he exclaimed, “but one passion—'tis He, and He only.” It was His dying love that fitted Christ for the work God had given Him as the Saviour of men. It was the dying love of Christ mastering his life that fitted Zinzendorf for the work he had to do.

The Revival of the Church.—When Zinzendorf settled on his estate, he devoted himself to the spiritual welfare of his tenants. With three like-minded friends he formed the “League of the Four Brethren.” The object was to proclaim to the world the “universal religion of the Saviour and His family of disciples, the heart-religion in which the Saviour is the central point.” He joined the pastor of the congregation in preaching, in meetings for prayer and singing. He lived for Christ and the souls He had died to save.

In offering the Moravian exiles a refuge on his estate, he had simply thought of giving them a

home, in which, as his tenants, they should earn their livelihood and be free in the exercise of their religion. When it was known that Herrnhut was an asylum for the persecuted, all sorts of religious refugees came to seek a home there. The spirit of discord speedily entered, and there was danger of its becoming the seat of sectarianism and fanaticism. Zinzendorf felt that the time was come for him to intervene. He had faith in the uprightness and earnestness of the Moravian settlers. He gave himself to personal loving dealing with the leaders.

Many of them had felt deeply the sin and pain of division, and had been praying that, by the grace of God, the spirit of true fellowship might be restored. With many tears and prayers, in the love and patience of Jesus Christ, the Count pleaded with those who had erred. There was one point on which the Moravian Brethren (they were more than 200 out of the 300) would not give way. They were unwilling to be taken up in the Lutheran Church, but insisted on having the discipline of the old Moravian Church maintained. The Count was afraid that this might give rise to prejudice and misapprehension in the Church around; but he felt that their claim was just, and resolved at any risk to yield to them. The principles and discipline of the old Church were to

be restored. Zinzendorf drew up the Statutes, Injunctions, and Prohibitions, according to which they were to live.

On 12th May 1727 (just four years after the first arrivals), a memorable day in the history of the Brethren, he called them all together and read them the "Statutes" that had been agreed on. There was to be no more discord. Brotherly love and unity in Christ were to be the golden chains that bound all together. All the members shook hands and pledged themselves to obey the Statutes. That day was the beginning of new life in Herrnhut.

The diary says—

"This day the Count made a covenant with the Lord. The Brethren all promised, one by one, that they would be the Saviour's true followers. Self-will, self-love, disobedience—they bade these farewell. They would seek to be poor in spirit; no one was to seek his own profit before that of others; everyone would give himself to be taught by the Holy Spirit. By the mighty working of God's grace all were not only convinced, but, as it were, carried along and mastered."

On the 12th of May 1748 the Count wrote—

"To-day, twenty-one years ago, the fate of Herrnhut hung in the balance, whether it was to become a sect, or to take its place in the Church of our Saviour. The power of the Holy Spirit, after an address of three or four hours, decided for the latter. The foundation

principle was there laid down, that we were to lay aside the thought of being Reformers, and to look to ourselves. What the Saviour did after that up to the winter cannot be expressed. The whole place was indeed a veritable dwelling of God with men, and on to 13th August it passed into continual praise. It then quieted down, and entered the Sabbath rest."

The 12th of May has been called the birthday of what is henceforth to be known as **The Renewed Church**; the 13th of August was its baptism with the Holy Spirit. After the Statutes had been adopted, and all had bound themselves to a life of obedience and love, the spirit of fellowship and prayer was greatly increased. Misunderstandings, prejudices, secret estrangements, were confessed and put away. Prayer was often in such power that those who had only given external adhesion were convicted, and either changed or inwardly compelled to leave. The Count had had to leave home for a time, and on his return brought with him, 4th August, a copy that he had found of the *History of the Moravian Brethren*, giving the full account of the ancient discipline and order. This caused great joy. It was taken as a token that the God of their fathers was with them. As one of them wrote: "Under the cloud of our fathers we were baptized with their spirit; signs and wonders were seen among us, and there was great grace on the whole neighbourhood." The whole next night was

spent by the Count and the Brethren in prayer, with a great gathering in the hall at midnight. The following days all were conscious in the singing-meetings of a strange overwhelming power. On Sunday, 10th, Pastor Rothe was leading the afternoon meeting at Herrnhut, when he was overpowered and fell on his face before God. The whole congregation bowed under the sense of God's presence, and continued in prayer till midnight. He invited the congregation to the Holy Supper on the next Wednesday, the 13th.

As it was the first communion since the new fellowship, it was resolved to be specially strict with it, and to make use of it "to lead the souls deeper into the death of Christ, into which they had been baptized." The leaders visited every member, seeking in great love to lead them to true heart-searching. In the evening of Tuesday, at the preparation service, several passed from death to life, and the whole community was deeply touched.

"On the Wednesday morning all went to Berthelsdorf. On the way thither, any who had felt estranged from each other afresh bound themselves together. During the singing of the first hymn a wicked man was powerfully convicted. The presentation of the new communicants touched every heart, and when the hymn was sung it could hardly be recognised whether there was more singing or weeping. Several brethren prayed, specially

pleading that, as exiles out of the house of bondage, they knew not what to do, that they desired to be kept free from separation and sectarianism, and besought the Lord to reveal to them the true nature of His Church, so that they might walk unspotted before Him, might not abide alone but be made fruitful. We asked that we might do nothing contrary to the oath of loyalty we had taken to Him, nor in the very least sin against His law of love. We asked that He would keep us in the saving power of His grace, and not allow a single soul to be drawn away to itself and its own merits from that Blood-and-Cross Theology, on which our salvation depends. We celebrated the Lord's Supper with hearts at once bowed down and lifted up. We went home, each of us in great measure lifted up beyond himself, spending this and the following days in great quiet and peace, and learning to love."

Among those present in the church when the communion was held were a number of children. One writes: "I cannot attribute the great revival among the children to anything else but that wonderful outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the communion assembly. The Spirit breathed in power on old and young. Everywhere they were heard, sometimes at night in the field, beseeching the Saviour to pardon their sins and make them His own. The Spirit of grace had indeed been poured out."

The Brethren frequently went out into the neighbourhood to hold fellowship with other Christians, and make Christ known to all who

would come. When one of them at this time was cast into prison for doing so, it caused great joy that they were found worthy to suffer for His sake.

The Prayer Watch.—On the 22nd August the diary says—

“To-day we considered how needful it is that our Church, which is as yet but in its infancy, and has in Satan such a mighty enemy, should guard itself against one who never slumbers day nor night, and have an unceasing holy watch kept against him. We resolved, therefore, to light a freewill offering of intercession which should burn night and day, leaving the matter for the present to God’s working in the hearts of the Brethren. By the 26th the plan had ripened, and twenty-four Brethren and twenty-four sisters engaged each to spend an hour, as fixed for them by lot, in their own room, to bring before God all the needs and interests of those around them. The number was soon increased. But, as in Herrnhut, we wished to leave everything to free grace and have nothing forced, we agreed that when anyone, from poverty of spirit or special business, could not spend the whole hour in prayer, he might instead praise God in spiritual songs, and so bring the sacrifice of praise or of prayer for himself and all saints. These watchers unto prayer met once a week, when all news that had been received from far or near concerning the need of persons, congregations, or nations was communicated, to stir them to praise for answers given, or lead to more hearty and definite prayer.

“In one of the villages around we heard of those who wished to come and share in the revival. We instructed these in our discipline in love and humility.”

Missions.—In the course of the following months some of the Brethren were continually going to places near and more distant, preaching the love of Christ; and their thoughts were continually occupied with the object for which God had so blessed them. The Count stood in communication with all parts of the world, and did not fail to communicate what he heard. At a meeting on 10th February 1728 “he spoke specially of distant lands—Turkey, Morocco, and Greenland. Of Greenland he said that to all human appearances it looks impossible to get an entrance; but he believed that the Lord would give our brethren grace and power to visit these countries. It was a day of the Spirit’s breathing upon us.”

The following four years were times of continual revival. The careful watch kept by the elders and superintendents, the faithful dealing with individual souls according to personal needs, the jealous maintenance of the spirit of brotherly love, the continual watching unto prayer, the going forth of brethren into the neighbouring and more distant regions with the reports brought them, made the assemblies of the Brethren times of great joy and blessing. They were the time of preparation for the mission work that was now to begin.

It came in this way. In 1731 the Count Zinzendorf had gone to Copenhagen to be present at

the crowning of the King of Denmark. One of the nobles there had a slave from the West Indies in his service named Anton. From him Zinzendorf heard of the state of the slaves in the West Indies, specially St. Thomas, a Danish possession. He also met two Greenland converts of the Danish missionary Egede. When he returned, the account he gave of his meeting these men from heathen lands called forth the deepest interest. Two of the Brethren had their hearts touched; and in the evening, as the singing bands were passing the home, and the Count said to a friend that he believed that messengers to West Indies and Greenland would be found among these brethren, they felt encouraged to offer themselves. When this became known, two others came forward for Greenland. A visit from Anton, the slave, deepened the impression; and the account of what the slaves suffered, which they also might have to suffer, only made the fire burn more strongly. If it was difficult to find access to the plantations to teach the slaves, they were ready to sell themselves as slaves so as to reach to the poor heathen souls.

But it was not till a year later, August 1732, that the two first missionaries left. The instructions with which they were sent out were all comprised in the one sentence—to see and be led of the Spirit in all things. They set off on foot, with nothing but a

few shillings in their purse, but strong in the faith of God and His care. The next year, two left for Greenland. In 1734, eighteen left again for Santa Cruz, and in the following year twelve more, to attempt, by colonisation and industrial mission, to help the negroes. And though this experiment cost many precious lives, and was not a success, the Brethren did not lose courage, but, as the tidings of death came, ever sang the psalm of sowing with tears, and out of the death of the seed reaping the abundant harvest.

I could wish to give a short account of the wonderful blessing that marked their work in the West Indies, but space forbids. I must just note one more point in their history. In 1741 an event took place that completed the organisation of the Church of the Brethren, and set its seal to that which is their chief characteristic—devotion to the Lord Jesus. Leonhard Dober had for some years been the chief elder (the title is really the Eldest) of the Church. He and others felt that his special gifts fitted him more for other work. But as the Brethren in synod looked round, they felt how difficult it would be to find a suitable person to fill his place. At once the thought was suggested to many to ask the Saviour to be the Eldest of His little Church, and in answer to prayer they received the assurance that He would accept the charge.

Their one desire was that He would do all that the chief elder had hitherto had to do—would take them as His special possession, concern Himself about every member individually, and care for all their needs. They promised to love and honour Him, to give Him the confidence of their hearts, to know no man as head in the things of the Spirit, and as children to be guided by His mind and will. Of the day on which this decision was made known and accepted at Herrnhut, one writes—

“On the 13th November was the inauguration day of our dear and tenderly beloved Sovereign and Eldest. It was resolved that in honour of our Lord having then condescended to accept this special charge of the Church of His Blood and Cross, there should be a special proclamation of His pardoning grace to all who had wandered away or had fallen. The impression was so deep that at first deep stillness fell upon all, which soon changed into tears of wonder and of joy.”

It was a new and open profession of the place they had always desired that Christ should have, not only in their theology and their personal life, but specially in their Church. The Church had now attained its majority.

Not long after this date there came a time of sifting, in which the Brethren appeared to be entering upon a path that might lead to danger. But He to whose guidance the unconditional surrender

had been made, did not forsake them, and saved them from the threatened evil. And the proclamation of Christ as their only Head became the living expression of their hearts' desire that He alone should be all in all.

Let us now turn to the main object for which the story of the Moravian Church has been told. It has been appealed to as an example. Just recall what we heard. In proportion to its membership, the men it supports and sends out, the money it provides, the converts it has gathered, far exceed what any Church has done. In the first twenty years of its existence it actually sent out more missionaries than the whole Protestant Church had done in 200 years. If other Churches were to provide men and means in the same proportion, it is believed there would be all that is needed to carry the gospel to every creature. And if we ask how it came that this little Church, the least of all, has thus outdone all its older and larger sisters, the answer appears to be this: It alone of all the Churches has actually sought to carry out the great truth, that to **gather in to Christ the souls He died to save is the one object for which the Church exists.** It alone has sought to teach and train every one of its members to count it their first duty to Him who loved them, to give their life to make Him known to others.

This answer at once leads to the further question : What was it that led and fitted this little Church, at a time when it counted but 300 members, thus to see and carry out these great truths? It is only as we get some insight into this that we can find out what is needed if other Churches are to profit by the example. The closing sentence in Mr. Mott's appeal to the example of the Moravians was : "The practical question is, What has there been in connection with the work already accomplished **which is not reproducible?**" The grace of God that wrought it in them is still exceeding abundant with faith and love, which are in Christ Jesus.

If we think of Zinzendorf, whom God had so wonderfully prepared to train and guide the young Church in the path of missions, we see at once what the great moving power was. What marked him above everything was a **tender, childlike, passionate love to our Lord Jesus.** Jesus Christ, the Origin and Inspirer of all mission work, possessed him. The dying love of the Lamb of God had won and filled his heart; the love which had brought Christ to die for sinners had come into his life; he could live for nothing else but to live and, if need be, die for them too. When he took charge of the Moravians, that love, as his teaching and his hymns testify, was the one motive to which

he appealed, the one power he trusted to, the one object for which he sought to win their lives. What teaching and argument and discipline, however needful and fruitful they were, never could have done, the love of Christ did. It melted all into one body; it made all willing to be corrected and instructed; it made all long to put away everything that was sin; it inspired all with the desire to testify of Jesus; it made many ready to sacrifice all in making that love known to others, and so making the heart of Jesus glad.

If the dying love of Christ were to take the place in our Churches and their teaching, in our own hearts and fellowship with each other, which it had in theirs, which it has in God's heart and in Christ's redemption, would it not work a mighty change in our mission work?

Along with this love to Christ, or rather, as the fruit of it, there was in Zinzendorf an intense sense of the need and the value of fellowship. He believed that love, to be enjoyed and to grow strong, and to attain its object, needs expression and communication. He believed that the love of Christ in us needs fellowship with each other for its maintenance in ourselves, as well as for the securing of God's great purpose in it—the comforting and strengthening of our brethren. So he was prepared to take up the strangers God brought to him, and

give himself wholly to them. His reward was great. He was able to give himself into them, and to find himself multiplied in each one. What he said later, "I know of no true Christianity without fellowship," was the principle that begat that intense unity which gave the strength of the leader and the whole body to each of its members. In our modern religion there is a reticence in speaking of our personal relationship to Jesus which often causes great loss. We forget that the majority of men are guided more by sentiment than by intellect: the heart is the great power by which they are meant to be influenced and moulded. It is a question whether we might not take a lesson here from Zinzendorf.

A minister with his congregation, a teacher with his class, a leader in a prayer-meeting or an Endeavour Society, often labours to influence by instruction and encouragement, while he forgets that the hearts crave love, and that nothing can so help to build up the young or the feeble Christian life as the warm fellowship of love in Christ. There are thousands of Christians, wishing to serve their Lord, but not knowing how, who are just waiting to find gatherings where they can be helped to meet under a sense of the presence of our Lord Jesus and His love—where they can be helped to confess that love, and then to yield themselves to it in the faith

that it will constrain and enable them to do anything their Lord needs them to do.

At the Conference it was well said by one—

“The importance of leadership must be emphasised. Let us put to usury that talent which sets another to work. The leader must use definiteness and persistence. The leader must uplift ideals. To be the leader is the responsibility of the pastor. Come to us with the deepest spiritual note you can sound, and we will follow you.” And by another: “We shall need devoted pastors to lead in the execution of this work. The pastors are still the leaders. If they only will, they may be the leaders in this holy war for righteousness in all the earth.” And by still another: “Men become interested not so much in abstract ideas as in individuals who represent their ideas. Victories are won because men follow some leader whom they have learnt to love.”¹

Zinzendorf was indeed a mighty leader, in whose footsteps we still may follow. Every pastor may learn from him the great secret, that the more intensely the fire of God’s love burns in the heart, the more surely will it burn through into those around us. It is the high privilege of every leader to know that God can give him such power over others, that their love to him can open their hearts for receiving more of the life and love and power of God than they could have without him. This is God’s way, to dispense His blessings through single men.

¹ See p. 4: “The pastor is not only the instructor, but the leader of his congregation. He must not only care for their souls, but direct their activities.”

As each leader in his circle realises his privilege of getting himself filled with the missionary fire, the love and devotion to Christ Jesus, and lives up to it, missionary work at home will enter upon a new era. Life and love, passing from the living, loving Christ, through a living, loving disciple, will communicate life and love to those who otherwise are cold and helpless.

Thus much, then, of the leader God had chosen, and the lessons he is meant to teach. What of the followers God had provided for him? What was there that specially fitted them to take the lead among the Churches of the Reformation which they have done? Let their history give the answer. There was first of all that detachment from the world and its hopes, that power of endurance, that simple trust in God, which affliction and persecution are meant to work. These men were literally strangers and pilgrims on earth. They were familiar with the thought and spirit of sacrifice. They had learnt to endure hardship, and to look up to God in every trouble.

It is this spirit which is still needed in the Church. A disregard of what the world deems necessary or desirable; a self-denial that counts all but loss for the sake of knowing Christ and making Him known; a trust in God that looks not

only to His aid in special emergency, but for His guidance at every step and His power in every work;—these were certainly the elements that went far to form Zinzendorf's "Warrior Band," and that still make good soldiers of Christ.

Add to this the discipline, of which they had inherited the general impression from their ancestors, and to which they were led to yield themselves so completely at Herrnhut. It rooted in the view that, to the Christian, religion is the all-important thing. Everything was secondary to the one great consideration—to know and do the will of God, to walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. For the sake of this they were ready to submit to the care and correction of all those appointed to watch over them. Believing literally in the command, "Exhort one another daily," they were willing to be reproved or warned as often as there was sin, either of omission or commission. When they were sent out, they were ready to help each other, to depend upon, to yield to each other. Their fellowship made them strong: the highest in rule begged of his brethren to tell of what they might see amiss, and was willing to confess the slightest shortcoming. The spirit of subjection to one another, of which Scripture speaks so often, brought its rich blessing in sanctifying and strengthening the whole life. To introduce the same discipline in our day may appear

impossible: the same spirit of watchful care of, and loving subjection to, one another is still within the reach of any circle that will seek for it, and will still be a wonderful preparation for effective work in God's kingdom.

But there was something more than this which gave their fellowship its wonderful power. It was the intensity of their united and personal devotion to Jesus Christ, as the Lamb of God, who had purchased them with His blood. All their correction of each other, and their willing confession and giving up of sin, came from this faith in the living Christ, through whom they found "within their heart the peace of God and deliverance from the power of sin." This faith led them to accept and jealously to keep their place as poor sinners, saved by His grace, every day. This faith—cultivated, strengthened every day by fellowship in word and song and prayer—became the food of their life. This faith filled them with such joy that their hearts rejoiced, in the midst of the greatest difficulties, in the triumphant assurance that their Jesus, the Lamb who had died for them, and was now loving and saving and keeping them hour by hour, could conquer the hardest heart, was willing to bless the vilest sinner. In this spirit they met together for near five years, from the time of the first outpouring of the Spirit to the time the first

missionaries went out, worshipping the Son of God, offering themselves to Him, and waiting for Him to make known what He would have of His Church, each one holding himself in readiness to go or do what his Lord should show. Let a congregation, or a prayer-meeting, or a Christian circle seek to have somewhat of this spirit uniting the members, while all continue in prayer that the Lord would show each one His blessed will for them, and you have the beginning of a spirit that will spread. And as different congregations combine in making the worship and faith of the Lord Jesus and devotion to Him the centre of their missionary interest, the number of those who are ready to go forth will speedily increase.

There is one thing more we must not omit to notice—the mighty moving of the Holy Spirit in answer to prayer. We have had the Count's testimony of how confident he was that the birth of the new Church, 12th May 1727, was the work of the Spirit. We have read of the overwhelming sense of the Holy Spirit's presence in which it received its baptism from on high. Many a time after this during the following four years the diary testifies of special experience of the deep movings of the Holy Spirit. This was mostly when they were gathered in prayer before their Lord, the Slain Lamb. The prayer watch they appointed, so as to

keep up day and night a continual sacrifice of supplication, proves how they understood Heaven's first law to be, that the measure of blessing and power will depend upon the measure of prayer. They saw and rejoiced exceedingly in the Lamb upon the Throne—how could they but trust Him to fill the mouths and hearts so widely opened to Him?

As at Pentecost, united prayer, rewarded with the gift of the Spirit, was the entrance into the life of witness and victory, so at Herrnhut too. It is the law of all mission work. If the example of the Moravian Brethren is to stir us to jealousy, if we are to learn from them what it is to believe that we only exist to win for Jesus the souls He died to save, and to train our members to the thought that everyone must be ready for His service, we must learn the lesson of much prayer and of a definite surrender to have our whole life under the leading of the Holy Spirit.

When we point to the example of the Brethren, the question is sometimes asked whether they have retained their first fire, whether their missionaries and members are living on a higher spiritual level than the Churches around them. The answer is very simple. Like every other Church, the Brethren have had their times of decline and revival. They were too closely one with the Church

around them not to suffer with it when the cold of winter came. The force of our appeal is not weakened but strengthened by this fact. Its point is this: The three great principles taught by the Holy Spirit in a time of His mighty working,—that the Church exists only for extending the kingdom, that every member must be trained to take part in it, and that the personal experience of the love of Christ is the power that fits for this: to these principles the Brethren have remained true, and it is in this respect that their example speaks to us with such power.

The Church of Christ owes more to the Church of the Brethren than is generally known. From her John Wesley received that joyful assurance of acceptance which gave his preaching such power, and fitted him as God's instrument, not only to found the Wesleyan Church, but to take such a part in the revival of evangelical religion in England. To the Brethren William Carey owed part of his inspiration for the missionary cause. When pleading with his brethren, he backed his proposals by the experience of the Moravians, and laid upon the table early numbers of their *Periodical Accounts*. His companion, William Ward, recorded the profound impression produced on his mind by these *Accounts*, and exclaimed, "Thank you, Moravians! you have done me good. If I am ever a missionary

worth a straw, I shall, under our Saviour, owe it to you." The story of the wondrous grace of God in the Church of the Brethren may still show us the path, and inspire the courage, to seek and find new blessing for the world.

CHAPTER IV

The Church Missionary Society and the Deepening of the Spiritual Life

THE remarkable blessing vouchsafed to the Church Missionary Society, by which, within the short period of twelve years, its income was raised from two to three hundred thousand pounds, and the number of the labourers more than trebled, was more than once referred to in the Conference meetings. Mr. Eugene Stock spoke as follows:—

“In the year 1887 the Church Missionary Society, under special circumstances, came to the resolution, in the teeth of its Finance Board, to refuse no candidate who appeared to be God-called, on financial grounds. On this ground, not excitement, not gush—I believe I may truly say that—but on the plain, simple, business principle that if God calls a man, the Lord will allow him to go, and the Lord will find the money; and we have a right then if, as far as man can judge, this man or this woman is called of God to go, we have a right to say, ‘O Lord, we look to Thee to enable us to send this man or this woman.’ Now, if anyone had said to us on that

memorable day, when we were all on our knees in prayer on this subject—we didn't know what we were doing, it was no credit to us at all—but if anyone had said to us, 'You will treble your force in thirteen years,' the answer would have been, 'Impossible!' And if anybody had gone on and said, 'Well, but you will,' then the answer would have been, 'There will be no money to send them; it is impossible.' But the impossible thing has been done, the staff has been trebled, and the money has been found. God sent it.

"Let me remind you of this: I do not care what Christian enterprise it is, I do not care what Christian work it is, if it be a work such as saying a word in season to your brother, in your bank, in your office, in your store—it is not an easy thing to do, is it? If it be to say a kindly word for Jesus to that young girl whom you know, who is going to be ruined and you want to rescue her from danger—it is not an easy thing, is it? Some would say, 'I cannot.' Now, whether it be a little thing like that, or whether it be the great work of all the boards and societies in America going in for a policy of faith in the Lord, I want you to write upon any of these enterprises three mottoes. First—imagine it written in letters of fire across this hall, 'With men it is impossible.' That is true. Secondly, 'With God all things are possible.' Isn't that true? What is the third?—'All things are possible to him that believeth.'

"Perhaps you will hardly believe it when I tell you what our constituency is. Not one-fourth of the Church of England, not more than one-fourth of our congregations, give any support to the Church Missionary Society, and yet, as a matter of fact, we are the largest society, although we represent but a section of the Church.

Why is that? It is because of the enthusiasm of praying people. It is because of the enthusiasm of those who believe that, outside of all organisations, the gospel of Christ is the power of God and of salvation. We hold to the rightful independence of any Christians to band themselves together to teach the gospel as the Lord shall teach them."

When we speak of what has been done by the Moravian Church or the Church of Pentecost, the force of the two examples is often lost in the thought that these belong to the past. The C.M.S. gives its witness as to what God is doing under our very eyes in awakening His people to do what otherwise appeared impossible, and enabling them to give men and money to an extent unknown before. If we are really to profit by this lesson, and to labour that the whole Church give to God what He asks for the extension of His kingdom, let us inquire what the path was by which the C.M.S. was led to the great increase of blessing and of labour.

The Centenary History of the Society tells the story. It proves that, as much as we need to pray for the power of the Holy Spirit on missionaries and their work, we need to pray for the leaders of mission work, and for the Churches which support them, that all devising of means and methods, that all appeals for men and money, that all meetings for awakening interest or uniting in prayer, may be

in true dependence on the power of the Holy Spirit. In the long run the spiritual tone of the missionaries and the mission congregations abroad cannot be higher than that of the home Church out of which it is born. As this truth comes into full prominence, it will be felt that no less important than the efforts of Mission Societies or Boards on behalf of the heathen, and the messengers sent out to them, that the work may be in Divine power, is the work of quickening and elevating the Church at home with its members and ministers, that their interest and aid in the work may equally be in the power of the Spirit.

The principal lesson the C.M.S. History teaches is that its great forward movement was intimately connected with a deep revival of the spiritual life, and the teaching of a higher standard of devotion to the Lord Jesus. The only way to waken true, deep, spiritual, permanent missionary interest, is not to aim at this itself, so much as to lead believers to a more complete separation from the world, and to an entire consecration of themselves, with all they have, to their Lord and His service.

The History¹ traces the movement back to 1882,

¹ *The History of the Church Missionary Society*, by Eugene Stock, 3 vols. A wonderful and intensely interesting record of God's leading and blessing. There is an admirable abridgment in a shilling volume, *One Hundred Years, A Short History*.

when Mr. Moody's visit to Cambridge resulted in the powerful conversion of a number of students.

“There are now devoted clergymen and laymen, both at home and abroad, who owe ‘their own selves’ to that visit of Mr. Moody’s. The C.M.S. owe a whole succession of missionaries to the influences of that period. . . . One of the most important events of the period was, both a fruit, indirectly, of Moody’s work, and a fruitful parent of other and larger movements. This was the going forth of the famous ‘Cambridge Seven’ to China. The influence of such a band of men going to China as missionaries was irresistible. No such event had occurred before, and no event of the century has done so much to arouse the minds of Christian men to the claims of the field and the nobility of the missionary vocation. The gift of such a band—for truly it was a gift from God—was a just reward to Mr. Hudson Taylor and his colleagues for the genuine unselfishness with which they had always pleaded the cause of China and the world, and not of their own particular organisation, and for the deep spirituality which had always marked their meetings. And that spirituality marked most emphatically the densely-crowded meetings in different places at which these seven men said farewell. They told, modestly and yet fearlessly, of the Lord’s goodness to them, and of the joy of serving Him; and they appealed to young men, not for their Mission, but for their Divine Master. No such missionary meetings had ever been known as the farewell gathering at Exeter Hall on 4th February 1885. We have become familiar since then with meetings more or less of the same type, but it was a new thing then. In many ways the C.M.S. owes a deep debt of gratitude to the C.I.M. and the Cambridge Seven. The Lord

Himself spoke through them, and it was by His grace that the Society had ears to hear."

The next influence which the History mentions is that of Keswick. Special reference is made to the accession of Dr. Handley Moule to the ranks of the Keswick speakers. In 1884 he had written publicly expressing an opinion unfavourable to its teaching, as presented in a book by Rev. E. Hopkins. A little later he wrote again, saying that, after meeting Mr. Hopkins, he was now convinced that the teaching was not inconsistent with his own views, and not liable to the criticisms then current.

"Then followed this striking and touching confession : — 'Never, I say it earnestly and deliberately, have I heard teaching more alien from Perfectionist error, more justly balanced in its statement of possibilities and limits. And then, never have I been so brought personally face to face with the infinitely important reality of self-surrender to the Lord, and the promises of His Divine action as the Keeper of the spirit committed to Him ; an action which only intensifies the holy work of watching and prayer. . . . Of personal details I must not speak ; it is enough to say that those few days were a crisis never to be forgotten in the spiritual life of at least one much-needing Christian.' "

And later he wrote—

"I was brought, not many years ago, amidst much misgiving and unjustified prejudice, to listen for myself to what was said at a meeting conducted by Mr. Evan Hopkins. 'He who searcheth the hearts' found me out

indeed that evening, and then, too, He showed me, then and there, something of His most gracious power to conquer and to keep, in answer to the 'confidence of self-despair,' in a way not known by me experimentally before. Who am I that I should speak of it? But how can I be silent?"

There is one more event must be noticed, to understand how God was preparing the way for the accomplishment of His plans. For the first few years of its existence, Keswick had no direct connection with missions. When Mr. Reginald Radcliffe pleaded for their admission to the programme, all he could obtain was the loan of the tent on the Saturday. At the next year's meeting an appeal from a C.M.S. missionary, asking for Christian ladies with private means to come as missionaries to the Holy Land, touched many hearts. By another year the Chairman of the Convention had grasped and enunciated the great principle "that Consecration and the Evangelisation of the World ought to go together," and missionary meetings were included in the official programme. At the Saturday meeting of that year a £10 note, sent in by a young man "to help to send out a Keswick missionary," helped to lay the foundation of the fund from which Keswick missionaries have been sent forth, and missionaries in connection with different societies supported.

We now return to the History of the Society. The year 1885 is spoken of as a memorable one. In January 1885 the usual Annual Conference of the Association Secretaries was held at the Church Missionary Home.

“At that Conference the spiritual character of the meetings held by Mr. Hudson Taylor and his Cambridge recruits was referred to, and the idea was thrown out of arranging special gatherings simultaneously in different centres, to plead the claims, not of the Society, but of the Divine Lord and Saviour to the entire obedience and devotion of His servants. The suggestion was not warmly welcomed at first. There was a not quite unnatural feeling that it was rather beneath the dignity of the ‘grand old Society’ to copy the China Inland Mission! But it was this suggestion that bore fruit in the February Simultaneous Meetings in 1886 and 1887.”

A weekly prayer-meeting was begun in the Church Missionary Home. Doubts were entertained whether it would be possible to keep it up regularly. But now the historian writes—

“But who, after fourteen years’ experience, would stop it now? What should we do without it? Only in eternity shall we know what the Society owes to the Thursday prayer-meetings.”

In the same month, a few weeks after the great farewell meeting in Exeter Hall to the Cambridge band, another meeting for men was held there, gathered by the Y.M.C.A. to give the C.M.S. the opportunity for pleading the cause of missions.

“In one respect the meeting marked the commencement of a new aim in missionary meetings. For the first time the Society’s name did not head the bills. The heading was, ‘The Claims of the Heathen and Mohammedan World.’ A small thing in itself, but it was the token of a revolution. From that time the C.M.S. has striven to raise its meetings above the level of an aim to collect money for a Society; and the whole missionary cause in the world has been lifted by that simple change on to a higher platform. But let it not be forgotten that the example had already been set by Mr. Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission. From them the C.M.S. learned the lesson.

“We must not leave Exeter Hall without hearing a few of Dr. Moule’s words. For that meeting was one of the most memorable in the whole history of the Society, and he tells us why: ‘There never is a missionary meeting but it is or ought to be full of the presence of the Lord. But is not this meeting? Do we not all feel it? What has gathered us together here? No mere, however sacred, annual invitation, which we expect, but the movement of the Spirit of God visibly in the world and in the Church. We are indeed at a time when God is making Himself felt in the spirit, in the life, in the faith, in the work of men, making Himself felt, not with new energy, for it is always the same, but in ways in which we cannot but trace His blessed hand with peculiar clearness. I believe this is a very great evening; it may be a very great evening for many souls here to-night. It is a great evening for many a missionary field; of that I am sure. It is a great evening for the worn-out heart, and many a faithful missionary will thank God in his distant work as he hears of to-night. I believe it is a great evening

for our dear Church Missionary Society, and, if possible, for our yet dearer Church of England, dearer to us, nearer to our hearts, more satisfying to our thoughts, with every accession that we have of the knowledge of our Lord and of His grace and of His power for His service; dear to us, satisfying to us, in its mighty doctrine, in its holy order, in its blessed fixity of principle, when that is rightly appealed to in its own words, and in its glorious largeness and liberty of heart.

“‘But,’ he went on, ‘we are not here to-night to praise the Church of England, nor the C.M.S. We are in the presence of our King; let us concentrate our thoughts upon Him and upon His will.

“‘Dear friends, I would speak myself in the sense of His divine presence, the presence which is peace, but which is awful solemnity too, and remembering for the speaker, as well as for the hearers, that His demand upon every one of His servants is “surrender at discretion”—no conditions, no terms, nothing but the yielding of our will and of our life to Him to do His will in the strength of His might. You know, in the old feudal days, when the vassal did his homage to his lord, he did this; he put his hands together, and put them within the hands of his lord, in token of absolute submission to his will and readiness for activity in his work. That is the only true position for a Christian’s hands, the hands and heart and will, the spirit and life—the only true position; not one, but both, quite within the hands of the Sovereign, the infinitely more than feudal Lord, the Despot, the glorious, absolute, unconstitutional Despot of His servants, the infinitely trustworthy, infinitely sovereign Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, let me seize this moment to say what I had not meant to say, that

this comes as a personal appeal to-night to every one of us here by the fact of the meeting, comes to you young men who are here in such masses and multitudes, not merely because you are here for a great and interesting occasion ; you are here before the unseen, the real, the personal Lord Jesus Christ. He is here to you ; He is now speaking to you through this meeting as His voice ; and you will have to say something to Him, whatever it is, in reply,—as to whether for His service, whether at home or abroad, whether in the commonest round of the most ordinary life till you die, or whether in the high places of the field, you are prepared to live as those that have put their hands in His, and have recognised distinctly that the centre of your life is shifted off self on to Jesus Christ, and that you have distinctly laid down underneath His feet all those desires to attract notice for self's sake, to get praise, even the least item, that shall terminate in self. You belong to Him if you are His ; you are to live as those that belong to Him. All your gains of every kind are to go into your Master's purse, and He is to decide where, and how, and how long you are to serve.'

“ Let it be remembered that this speech was delivered only six months after that crisis in the speaker's spiritual history which was described, in his own words, in our 84th chapter. Can we not hear in the utterance of March the echo of what he tells us he had learned in September ?—the echo heard also in the exquisite hymn he wrote at that very time—

“ My glorious Victor, Prince Divine,
Clasp these surrendered hands in Thine
At length my will is all Thine own,
Glad vassal of a Saviour's throne ! ”

“But the great subject of thought and prayer as the year 1885 was running out its course was the coming campaign of Simultaneous Meetings, which, having been at first fixed for November, but pushed aside by the General Election, was now to be undertaken in February 1886. The scheme, at first coldly received by the C.M.S. circle, had gradually won its way to general acceptance; and no less than one hundred and sixty clergymen and laymen had promised to be among the deputations to the various centres.

“Every effort was made by letters, papers, and articles in the periodicals to instruct the C.M.S. circle regarding the object of the campaign, namely, not to make collections for the C.M.S., not to push the Society as such at all, but to arouse the consciences of Christian people to their solemn duty to their Lord and His cause, whatever the particular agency they might want to use and to help. An extract from one article in the *Intelligencer* will illustrate the point:—

“We earnestly hope that the speakers, one and all, will deliberately and fearlessly take the highest ground in their speeches. The occasion is not one for even such passing pleasantries as may legitimately and even advantageously relieve the ordinary meeting. Questions of geography, commerce, etc., will be quite out of place. So will everything controversial. Mere descriptions of the native peoples, their social customs and religious rites, will fail utterly of the great object in view. The attitude of the speakers before the audience should be such as might be expressed in the words, “I have a message from God unto thee.” The evangelisation of the world—the greatest of all works in the light of eternity—how is it to be compassed? what are its claims upon us?—this

is the theme for our speakers on this occasion. Such a theme does not preclude the personal narrative of a missionary, or actual illustrations of any kind from the field. We lately heard a lady medical missionary of the Church of England Zenana Society tell in the simplest way the story of her own work at a drawing-room meeting. She preached no sermon; she delivered no "discourse"; it was plain narrative, with a very few words of appeal at the end. But the tone and spirit and language and grouping of facts were such, that we have rarely, if ever, seen so deep an impression apparently produced. The feeling at the end was not, "That was a nice speech," or "How well she did it!" or "She seems a very excellent and earnest person," or even, "Really, it must be a useful Society. I think I must subscribe." But it was—"Truly this is the Lord's work, marvellous in our eyes; and yet He calls us to share in it; not one of us is exempt; and, God helping us, we will from this day work and pray and testify to others as we have never done before." We do not want great displays of eloquence at our February meetings, but we want *that*.'

"The February Simultaneous Meetings were held in one hundred and seventy towns in England and Wales; London and Ireland being deferred to be taken separately. At a preliminary conference Mr. Blackwood said that, as in planning the meetings we were in sympathy with the Divine purpose, we might be assured of the Divine presence, go forward depending on Divine power, and expect the fulfilment of the Divine promise. The week was an unfortunate one in one respect, namely, that all the Bishops were meeting at Lambeth, so that most of them could take no personal part. But several did contrive to do so, and others wrote sympathetic letters.

Archbishop Benson, in particular, promised his 'daily prayers through the week for the Simultaneous Meetings,' and added one of his many phrases that stick,—'We shall feel the effect.' The words are simple enough, but they proved the exact truth. For the meetings themselves were not all successful; it was, as a writer expressed it, 'a day of small towns,' and although from more than half the places the report was, 'Never such a meeting before in ——,' yet when one reads those reports now, the feeling is, 'Was that all?' But most assuredly we have 'felt the effect.' The movement as a whole was greater than the aggregate of its parts. The simultaneousness of the meetings told. Public attention was aroused. Missions were seen to be no mere charity asking for money, but to be a great and holy cause demanding, and deserving, a front place in the Church's thoughts and in the thoughts of every Christian.

"Lastly, we come to another of the pre-eminently important events of the year 1887—the adoption of the Policy of Faith.

"It was on this wise. The remarkable missionary meeting at the Keswick Convention in the July of that year was noticed earlier. Its influence on the Society's employment of women missionaries we shall see hereafter. But on the Monday following that memorable Saturday, Mr. Webb-Peploe and Mr. James Johnston of Lagos returned to London, and at the ordinary C.M.S. Committee meeting on the Tuesday, informed the Society of what they had seen and heard. A solemn impression was produced, and earnest prayer was offered that God would guide what might possibly turn out to be an important missionary impulse—and guide the Society also in its relations to the spiritual movements of the

day. After the vacation, the General Committee again reviewed the position, in the light of a report from the Estimates Committee, warning the Society that candidates were multiplying faster than funds. The discussions on both occasions were conducted with much gravity and reverence, and with an evident desire to know and to do the will of the Lord. On the one hand it was argued that the work should be limited by the funds at the Society's disposal. On the other hand, it was urged that the men now coming forward more freely were unmistakably men sent by God, and, if so, was it not a reasonable faith to claim from Him, in all humility, the means to maintain them, and to be assured that He would certainly provide them in His own way? Ultimately, after fervent prayer, it was determined to refuse no candidate, and to keep back no missionary ready to sail, merely on financial grounds.

“No one knew at the time that this was only reverting to the policy emphatically announced by the committee in the Annual Report of 1883. That fact was not discovered till ten years after this. God was again leading the Committee by a way that they knew not. Nor did anyone dream of what the results would be of this decision of 1887. Seven years passed away before they were realised. But God gave the Society grace to adhere to the resolution, and to trust Him; and that trust He abundantly rewarded, as we shall see by and by.

“Meanwhile, under a deep sense of the need of such special grace, and of diffusing in the C.M.S. circle a spirit of humble faith and unreserved dedication to Christ's service, it was arranged to hold a Whole-Day Devotional Gathering in Exeter Hall. This gathering was held on 11th January 1888. There were three meetings.

“Of the six speakers, four were of the most prominent Keswick leaders. The three subjects of the day were Spiritual Shortcomings, Spiritual Possibilities, and Spiritual Determinations. To not a few who were present all day it was a day of much spiritual instruction and profit. The Committee had invited their friends ‘to humble themselves before God for all shortcomings and mixed motives and lack of zeal and love, to consecrate themselves solemnly to His service, and to plead for His rich blessing,’ and to that invitation a heartfelt response was given.

“So we close the record of those three memorable years. It is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.”

The fact that of the six speakers four were of the Keswick leaders—Messrs. Handley Moule, Webb-Peploe, C. A. Fox, and E. Hopkins—proves how closely the movement for the deepening of spiritual life at Keswick, and the quickening of the missionary spirit in the Society, were allied. It proclaims as with trumpet voice the great truth, that, if the Church is to be aroused to do her duty towards the evangelisation of the world, there must not only be the missionary appeal, but that living experience of the Spirit’s power which will fit the speakers for appealing to the right motive, and the Christian Church for yielding to it personal and whole-hearted devotion to Jesus Christ and His service.

In coming to the year 1890 the historian writes—

“This History has dwelt before upon the influence of

the Keswick Convention on the Society, and it is another indirect result of that influence which must now be noticed. In July 1890 it so happened that several evangelical clergymen who had been supposed to stand rather aloof from the Keswick movement were present at the Convention for the first time, the most of them as listeners. A conversation on the needs of the C.M.S. led to a private Conference, at which were also present some of the Convention leaders, who were also supporters of the Society. The result was the drawing up of a letter to be sent to the C.M.S. Committee, which was signed by those present, and dispatched by those present to Mr. Wigram in London. This document came to be known afterwards as 'The Keswick Letter,' though it in no way emanated from the Convention, but from a band of tried friends of the Society only. No doubt, however, it was inspired by the influence of the solemn and stirring meetings which had been taking place. The Voice of the Lord had been very plainly heard that week. The sin of 'limiting the Holy One of Israel,' the claims of Christ upon all that His people are and have, the mighty possibilities of a faith that rests not on man, but on Him alone, had all been set forth before the assembled crowds with great power, and the application was obvious, not to individual lives only, but also to the work of the Church in the world. In that sense, the term 'Keswick Letter' was correct.

"The letter called attention to the pressing needs of India, the recent appeal for China sent home by the Shanghai Missionary Conference, and the African tribes discovered in Mr. Stanley's latest journey. 'The case,' it said, 'when viewed in all lights, is so startling that it justifies an advance on a large scale under the directing hand of God,' and it proceeded to suggest the issue of an

appeal for one thousand missionaries 'within the next few years.' No period was named; some said 'By the centenary'; others an even shorter time; but the letter itself left this open. 'We are far,' the letter added, 'from desiring that the standard of spiritual life and teaching should be lowered; on the contrary, we urge that no one should be accepted for any department of the work who has not given proof of a desire to seek souls, and of a power to win them to Christ.' The letter was dated the 25th; it was received by the C.M.S. Committee by the 29th. A grateful and cordial resolution was at once passed, and further consideration deferred until after the recess. Meanwhile critics and objectors quickly made their views known. What would become of the home-heathen if everybody went abroad? It did not seem to occur to the propounders of this question that, supposing one thousand of the five thousand parishes contributing to the C.M.S. to be earnest supporters, the letter asked only for one worker from each parish! In truth, the utter failure of some evangelical churchmen to see the enormous disproportion of workers devoted to home work in comparison with foreign work, was never more sadly conspicuous.

"In October the committee set to work, making careful inquiries into the needs, and appointing sub-committees to consider suggestions. In December, many friends having asked for a more definite expression of the Committee's opinion regarding the suggestion of one thousand missionaries, they adopted a string of important resolutions on the general outlook of the missionary enterprise, the urgent need of labourers, and the duty of scrupulously maintaining a high standard in the acceptance of candidates, while they affirmed that if 'the

Church's responsibilities to her Divine Head were duly recognised by the tens of thousands of members of the C.M.S., they would not rest satisfied with sending out only one thousand additional workers.¹

"It cannot be said that these appeals led to any speedy and definite result. Nor can it be said that the thought of the thousand missionaries remained long in the mind of the Committee, and its fulfilment watched. Nevertheless the Lord Himself had His own purposes, which were ripening though scarcely noticed. Before the Centenary Year opened, 1899, more than eight hundred names had been added to the roll—clergymen, laymen, wives, and single women, and all probabilities point to the number of one thousand being exceeded before ten years have elapsed since the Keswick Letter was written. This would be three times the number added in the preceding years.

"After a statement of how the Keswick Letter had led to the adoption of the system of appropriated contributions, by which many thousands of pounds had been added to the Society's income yearly—in the year ending March 1898, £5700—the historian adds: 'The Keswick Letter of 1890 did, directly or indirectly, a greater work than even its signatories expected. It was, in fact, merely an instrument in God's hand for setting in motion or giving an impetus to certain influences, which have had a large share in the recent progress of the C.M.S. In all its advances the Society may well say with St. Paul, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."'"

Before laying aside the History of the Society, just one more paragraph from its closing chapter—

¹ In the C.M.S. Report for 1901 we read: "The number of additional workers sent out in the ten years was exactly *one thousand and two*."

“ We have learned in our long survey that missionary advance depends upon spiritual life. Evangelical Orthodoxy is powerless in itself to spread the gospel. Unimpeachable Protestant teaching in the pulpit, and the plainest of church services, may be seen in combination with entire neglect of the Lord’s great Commission. Let the Holy Ghost Himself stir the heart and enlighten the eyes, and the conversion of the unconverted becomes a matter of anxious concern. And so we have seen in these pages how much the modern development of missions owes to the spiritual movements of the day. In a word, Consecration and the Evangelisation of the World go together. The latter depends upon the former. This History has shown us how the missionary impulse a hundred years ago sprang from the Methodist Revival; how the early German missionaries were the fruit of the Pietist movement on the Continent; how the recent growth of missionary zeal in the Church of England is due in no small degree to the influence of an American evangelist, and a free-lance China missionary, neither of them a member of the Church. God has shown us that He is a Sovereign, and that He works according to His Will, sometimes by means of the most unlikely instruments—because it has pleased Him to fill those instruments with His Spirit.”

We have seen in the story of Dr. Moule, in the Keswick Letter, in the prominent place given to Keswick speakers at some of the turning-points in the History of the C.M.S., how close was the connection between the Keswick Movement for the deepening of the spiritual life and the quickening missionary life and enthusiasm in the Society. God

does not stereotype movements and methods through which He sends blessing. But He would have His children in each case learn what the secret source of the blessing was. What was the power in the case of the Keswick Convention, and the blessing it wrought? The answer may be found in the expression—the Deepening of the Spiritual Life.

No one can understand the value of Keswick who does not give full weight to the deep sense in many believers of a lack in the spiritual life, and the faith that a definite deepening and strengthening of it is possible. The consciousness of that lack was generally felt in connection with the painful experience of the power of sin in daily life. The memoirs of the first originator of the Convention, Canon Battersby, and of the latest and youngest accession to its platform, Rev. G. H. C. M'Gregor, both prove this. They were both men of marked godliness in life and devotion to their Master's work. But there was always a secret dissatisfaction and self-condemnation. How was it, they asked, that temper, selfishness, worldliness so often gained the upper hand, and robbed the soul of its peace? All their struggles and prayers appeared vain; deliverance appeared impossible. They heard men testify of having been once in the same state, but having found that it was owing to their not knowing Christ's full power to save. They were told that

there was a deliverance from the power of sin which Christ can give, not as a removal of the sinful taint out of the nature, but in virtue of His own presence and keeping power. As they listened they saw how little they had believed in that power of Christ as a real continual experience. They saw in God's word that it was what Christ could do and would do, and that on their part nothing was needed but a new—and now, in the assurance that He would fit for it, a full—surrender to His keeping and service. They yielded, they believed, they intrusted themselves in a way they had never known before, and they testified that Christ was faithful, and brought them into a life of communion, of peace and strength in His own keeping, that they had never known before. And it was the living testimony of these and many others that gave the Keswick platform its wonderful attractiveness and power. Men stood there as living witnesses to the power of Christ to save from the power of sin in daily life.

Around the three words, Sin, Faith, Consecration—deep conviction of sin was often the first sign that the teaching was laying hold—the whole Keswick teaching continually circles. George M'Gregor wrote from Keswick—

“I have learned innumerable lessons, principally these: my own sinfulness and shortcoming. I have

been searched through and through, and bared and exposed, and searched by God's light. And then I have learned the unsearchableness of Christ. How Christ is magnified here, you can have scarcely any idea. And I have learned the absolute necessity of obedience. Given obedience and faith, nothing is impossible."

Speaking of his nervous temperament, manifesting itself in quick temper, and the thought that it is a cross to be borne, his biographer says—

"At Keswick he learnt to think differently about this. There he learned, as never before, to understand that yielding to any evil tendency, however deeply rooted in one's nature, were it hereditary twenty times over, is **Sin**. And God does not mean His children to live in any kind of sin, or of yielding to sin. He calls men to holiness, and when He so calls He does not mock them by impossibilities. In his season of self-abasement at Keswick, Mr. M'Gregor had a special sense of the evil, and made a special confession to God of this besetting sin of temper. And when after these days of consecration he left Keswick, certainly, to a large extent, the evil temper was left behind. From that time he was really, in this respect, a different man."

Paul wrote of the Corinthians that, because there was among them strife and division, they were still carnal and not spiritual. One chief mark of the desire to be truly spiritual is the desire not to sin, to be delivered from the common sins of which the average Christianity is so tolerant. When this desire ripens into faith the soul is brought into an

altogether fresh and much clearer consciousness of Christ's power to save, and learns how broad and deep is the meaning of faith, as it lives by the faith of Him who loved and gave Himself, and now lives in us, and is Himself our Keeper. The new experience of what Christ has done for oneself leads to a larger trust in what He can do for others, and gives a point and a courage in testifying of Him, which brings a new tone into a man's preaching or speaking. Christ becomes more distinctly the centre of all thought and all work, at once the source, the subject, the strength of all our witness. With this the claim of Christ and His service to our devotion and loyalty and entire surrender becomes clearer, and it is seen that entire consecration, which at conversion was scarce understood, is at once our simple duty and our highest privilege. And work for Christ, or rather a life wholly given up to live for Him and for the souls He loves, becomes the unceasing aim of the liberated soul.

In its teaching of these truths Keswick is naturally led to lay emphasis on the mighty saving power of Christ, on the sin of limiting Him, on the call to honour Him by an unbounded trust, and on His claims to a life wholly devoted to His will and service. The transition from the thought of faith and consecration, as related to personal blessing, to their application to a life given up to winning souls

to the Saviour, is simple and sure. And many have found that what at first was sought for the sake of personal blessing, becomes the power for living to be a blessing to others. **And so the deepening of the Christian life becomes the power of a new devotion to missions and the Kingdom of our Lord.**

It is this thought that the story of the C.M.S. teaches. This is the lesson the whole Church of Christ may learn from it in its search after the key to the missionary problem. Many can never attend a Convention. It may appear difficult or impossible to move our large churches or societies simultaneously, so as to get the life really deepened and fitted for the tremendous work that has been undertaken in the name of this generation. Let the beginning be made with single congregations. Let the pastor learn and teach that all failure in caring, and giving, and praying, and living for missions, is owing to a **feeble superficial spiritual life.** Let him call upon his people to follow him as he seeks to lead them to a deeper spiritual life. Let him speak of sin, and Christ as a Saviour from it; of faith in Christ as able to do more than we have experienced or expected; of entire consecration, the giving up of our will and all we have, to be wholly under the control of our Lord, as the only door to abiding happiness and to true service. Let him plead with his people, by

the love and honour of Christ, by the need of the heathen, by the inconceivable privilege of being made the channel of the Divine life to the souls of men, to come and be whole-hearted for Christ. Let him speak of work for Christ among those near or far off as the one thing by which we can prove our faith and love. Let him gather the people to pray for the Holy Spirit's working in themselves to fit them for mission work. Let him encourage the faith that, to hearts that give themselves in simplicity to their Lord, expecting His guidance, He will show what He would have them do. As the deepening of the spiritual life and the devotion to mission work are together sought after, the one will react on the other, because both have their root in Jesus Christ Himself, revealed afresh as Saviour and Lord.

When such a new revelation of Christ takes place, and a new relationship is established, prayer becomes the spontaneous turning of the soul, or of a company of believers, to Him who has proved His power to them, and from whom they know that the power will come for all they have to do, and on all the work that is done. For the sad complaint of lack of time or heart for much prayer, for the vain call to more prayer, there is but one cure—the deepening of the spiritual life. The missionary problem is a personal one. Lead men to the deliverance there is

in Christ from the half-hearted, worldly life in which they have lived, back to the "first love" of a personal attachment and devotion to the living, loving Christ, and to see that there is no life worth living but that of devotion to His kingdom, and prayer, secret and united, will flow, and the blessing it draws down from heaven will prepare the Church to labour as it has never yet done, and to see blessing above all we can ask or think.¹

¹ This very day, as I am reading these pages over regarding the connection between the spiritual life and the deepening of mission interest, I have a letter from a young minister telling me of such blessing received by himself and his people during the ten days of united prayer between Ascension and Whitsunday. He writes: "Personally, the blessing has been great too. As never before we understood the acceptance of the Holy Spirit by faith." And then he adds later on: "Part of the blessing received is an altogether new and deep interest in missions. Hence my first sermon after Whitsunday was a mission one. Through the power of the Spirit more than one has been convinced of our terribly sinful state in doing next to nothing for that glorious work."

The missionary problem is a personal one. Seek the deepening of the spiritual life, and missionary consecration will follow.

CHAPTER V

The China Inland Mission and the Power of Believing Prayer

IN the New York Conference, the China Inland Mission was more than once mentioned. Under the leadership of one man of faith God had, in the course of thirty years, led out 600 missionaries into the field, without any guarantee for funds for their support beyond what God might give in answer to believing prayer. We have already seen how strongly the historian of the C.M.S. speaks of the blessing that Society owes to the China Inland Mission in stirring it to give the Policy of Faith a large place in its work. If the Church at large is to profit by the example, it is well that all Christians who take part in the support of Missions should know what was the secret of its power. There need be no copying of its methods and organisation. There is urgent need everywhere throughout the Church of learning from every side what the way is in which the

power of God can be brought into our mission work.

At the New York Conference Mr. Hudson Taylor spoke of the source of power for Christian missions, and gave an instance of what the power of believing prayer is. I quote at some length from his speech—

“God Himself is the great source of power. Power belongeth unto God. . . . Further, God’s power is available power. We are a supernatural people, born again by a supernatural birth, kept by a supernatural power, sustained on supernatural food, taught by a supernatural Teacher from a supernatural book. We are led by a supernatural Captain in right paths to assured victories. The risen Saviour, ere He ascended on high, said to His disciples, ‘Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you.’ Not many days after this, in answer to united and continued prayer, the Holy Ghost did come upon them, and they were all filled. Praise God, He remains with us still. The power given is not a gift from the Holy Ghost. He Himself is the power. To-day He is as truly available and as mighty in power as He was on the day of Pentecost. But has the whole Church ever, since the days before Pentecost, put aside every other work and waited for Him for ten days, that that power might be manifested? Has there not been a source of failure here? We have given too much attention to methods and to machinery and to resources, and too little to the Source of Power—the filling with the Holy Ghost. This, I think, you will agree with me, is the great weakness, has been the great weakness, of our service in the past, and, unless remedied, will be the great weakness in the future. We are commanded to be filled

with the Spirit. If we are not filled, we are living in disobedience and sin, and the cause of our sin is the cause of Israel's sin of old—the sin of unbelief.

“It is not lost time to wait upon God. May I refer to a small gathering of about a dozen men in which I was permitted to take part some years ago, in November 1886. We in the China Inland Mission were feeling greatly the need of Divine guidance in the matter of organisation in the field and in the matter of reinforcement, and we came together before our Conference to spend eight days in united waiting upon God, four alternate days being days of fasting as well as prayer. This was November 1886 when we gathered together; we were led to pray for a hundred missionaries to be sent out by our English Board in the year 1887, from January to December. And, further than this, our income had not been elastic for some years; it had been about £22,000; and we had, in connection with that Forward Movement, to ask God for £10,000, say \$50,000, in addition to the income of the previous year. More than this, we were guided to pray that this might be given in large sums, so that the force of our staff might not be unduly occupied in the acknowledgment of contributions. What was the result? God sent us offers of service from over six hundred men and women during the following year, and those who were deemed to be ready and suitable were accepted, and were sent out to China; and it proved that at the end of the year exactly one hundred had gone. What about the income? God did not give us exactly the £10,000 we asked for, but He gave us £11,000, and that £11,000 came in eleven contributions: the smallest was £500, say \$2500, the largest was \$12,500, or £2500. We had a thanksgiving for the men and the money that were coming in Novem-

ber 1886, but they were all received and sent out before the end of December 1887.

“The power of the living God is available power. We may call upon Him in the name of Christ, with the assurance that if we are taught by the Spirit in our prayers, those prayers will be answered.”

Where and how had the secret of such believing prayer been learnt? Was it a gift bestowed by the Divine favour on a chosen one, which others cannot expect to receive? or was it the result of training and practising, the reward of faithfulness in little things, to teach us that we too can walk in the same path? It was indeed a gift, as every grace is a gift of God bestowed in different measure as He pleases. But it was at the same time the outcome of a life of trial and obedience, by which the gift that had been but as a little, hidden, unconscious seed had been developed and had grown strong, that all God's children might be encouraged to walk in his footsteps, in the assurance that to each one in his measure the path of prevailing prayer stands open. Listen to the story of how it was learnt:—

“Not many months after my conversion, having a leisure afternoon, I retired to my chamber to spend it largely in communion with God. Well do I remember that occasion. How, in the gladness of my heart, I poured out my soul before God; and, again and again confessing my grateful love to Him who had done everything for me,—who had saved me when I had given up all hope

and even wish for salvation,—I besought Him to give me some work to do for Him, as an outlet for love and gratitude: some self-denying service, no matter what it might be, however trying or however trivial—something with which He would be pleased, and that I might do directly for Him who had done so much for me. Well do I remember, as in unreserved consecration I put myself, my life, my friends, my all upon the altar, the deep solemnity that came over my soul with the assurance that my offering was accepted. The presence of God became unutterably real and blessed; and though but a child of fifteen, I remember stretching myself on the ground, and lying there silent before Him with unspeakable awe and unspeakable joy. For what service I was accepted I know not; but a deep consciousness that I was no longer my own took possession of me, which has never since been effaced. Within a few months of this time of consecration the impression was wrought into my soul that it was in China the Lord wanted me.”

Consecration is ever the outcome of a powerful conversion, and the secret of a life in which power in prayer and faith are to be acquired. Some are inclined to look upon it as an attainment and an end: its true value consists in its being a beginning, a putting oneself into God's hands to prepare for His service. It is only the entrance into the higher class of the school where God Himself teaches how He would be served.

Hudson Taylor had still much to learn ere he could become the man of faith who could be a witness to what God can do. In thinking of going to China

he felt that he wanted to do so in faith, trusting God for the supply of his needs. If he was to trust Him there, why not learn to trust Him in England? Failure in China might be fatal: he would ask God to teach him at home how to walk in faith. He resolved, though in receipt of a salary as a doctor's assistant in the dispensary, never to ask for it when due: he would learn to trust God for it. He understood the command, "Owe no man anything," to be meant literally: however great his need might be, he would speak to none but God about it. Two stories out of his experience at this time show the schooling through which his faith was trained.

"At Hull my kind employer, busily occupied, wished me to remind him when my salary became due. I determined to ask God to bring the fact to his recollection, and so encourage me by answering prayer. At the end of a certain quarter, when my salary was due, one Saturday night I found myself possessed of only a single coin—one half-crown piece. Still I had hitherto had no lack, and I continued in prayer.

"That Sunday was a very happy one. After Divine service in the morning, the rest of the day was filled with gospel work in lodging-houses in the lowest part of the town as usual. It seemed as though heaven had begun below. After my last service at ten o'clock that night, a poor man asked me to go and pray with his wife, as she was dying, and the priest had refused to come without a payment of one shilling and sixpence, which the man could not produce, as the family were starving. It flashed into my

mind at once that all the money I possessed was the solitary half-crown, and that it was in one coin, and, moreover, that though I had gruel sufficient for supper and for breakfast, I had nothing for dinner the next day.

“At once there was a stoppage of the flow of joy in my heart. Instead of reproving myself, I began to reprove the poor man. I found he had applied to the relieving officer, and had been told to come at eleven the next morning; but he feared his wife might not live through the night. ‘Ah,’ thought I, ‘if only I had two shillings and a sixpence instead of this half-crown, how gladly would I give these poor people one shilling!’ The truth of the matter was that I could trust God plus one shilling and sixpence, but could not trust Him only, without any money.

“My conductor led me into a court where, on my last visit, I had been roughly handled. I followed up a miserable flight of stairs, and into a wretched room, and oh, what a sight presented itself to us! Four or five starved-looking children stood about, and on a wretched pallet lay the poor mother, with a tiny babe, thirty-six hours old, moaning at her side. ‘Ah,’ thought I, ‘if I had two shillings and a sixpence instead of half a crown, how gladly would I give one shilling and sixpence of it.’ Still unbelief prevented me from relieving their distress at the cost of all I possessed.

“Strange to say, I could not comfort these poor people. I told them not to be cast down, for they had a kind, loving Father in heaven; but something said to me, ‘You hypocrite, speaking about a kind, loving Father when you are not prepared to trust Him without half a crown!’ I was nearly choked. If I had only had a florin and a sixpence!—but I was not yet ready to trust God without the sixpence.

"In those days prayer was a delight to me; and I tried to pray, but when I opened my lips with 'Our Father which art in heaven,' prayer seemed a mockery, and I passed through such a time of conflict as I have never experienced before or since. I arose from my knees in great distress of mind.

"The poor father turned to me and said, 'Sir, if you can help us, for God's sake, do!' and the word flashed into my mind, 'Give to him that asketh of thee'; and in the word of a king there is power. Slowly taking the half-crown from my pocket, I gave it to the man, saying that I was giving him my all, but that God was really a Father and might be trusted. All the joy came back to my heart, and the hindrance to blessing was gone—gone, I trust, for ever.

"Not only was the woman's life saved, but I was saved too. My Christian life might have been a wreck had the striving of God's Spirit not been obeyed. As I went home, my heart as light as my pocket, the lonely streets resounded with a hymn of praise. As I knelt at my bedside, I reminded the Lord that 'he who giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord'; and with peace within and peace without, I spent a restful night.

"Next morning, at breakfast, I was surprised to see my landlady come in with a letter in her hand. I could not recognise the handwriting or the postmark, and where it came from I could not tell. On opening the envelope I found, inside a sheet of blank paper, a pair of kid gloves, and as I opened them, half a sovereign fell to the ground. 'Praise the Lord!' I exclaimed; 'four hundred per cent. for twelve hours' investment! How glad the merchants of Hull would be to lend their money at such a rate!' I then and there determined that a bank which could not

break should have my savings,—a determination I have not yet learned to regret.”

A second trial of faith occurred some days later.

“This remarkable deliverance was a great joy to me, but still ten shillings will not go very far, and the larger sum still remained due to me. I continued pleading with God that He would graciously remind my employer that my salary was overdue. It was not the want of money that troubled me, but the thought in my mind was this: ‘Can I go to China? or will my want of faith prove an obstacle to this much-prized service?’

“When Saturday evening came, a payment was due to my landlady. Ought I not, for her sake, to speak about the salary? I gave much time on Thursday and Friday to earnest wrestling in prayer with God, and by Saturday morning I received an assurance that to wait God’s time was best. So I waited, my heart at rest and the burden gone.

“That afternoon, as I was watching a pan in which a decoction was boiling, the doctor came in from his rounds, and, as he was wont, began to speak of the things of God. Suddenly, without any introduction, he said, ‘By the bye, Taylor, is not your salary due again?’ My emotion may be imagined! I told him, as quietly as I could, that it was overdue some little time. How thankful I felt! God had surely heard my prayer. Presently he continued, ‘I am so sorry you did not remind me, for I sent all the money I had to the bank this afternoon; otherwise I would pay you at once.’ It is impossible to describe my revulsion of feeling, and I was glad to get away without the doctor perceiving my emotion.

“I then sought my little sanctum, and poured out my heart before the Lord, till calmness and even joy were

restored to me. I felt that God was going to work in His own way.

“That evening was spent in preparing for my work on the morrow, and it was about ten o’clock before I got ready to go home. There seemed no help for that night; perhaps on Monday God would interpose for me. Just as I was leaving, I heard the doctor come in, laughing heartily to himself. Entering the surgery, he asked for his ledger, telling me that one of his richest patients had just been to pay his bill—was it not an odd thing to do? I too was highly amused that a man rolling in wealth should come so late to pay a bill which might any time have been met by a cheque. The account was duly receipted in the ledger, and the doctor about to leave, when he suddenly handed me some of the bank-notes, saying, ‘By the way, Taylor, you might as well take these notes, and I can give you the balance next week.’ Again I was left to go back to my own little closet to praise the Lord with a joyful heart that, after all, I might go to China.”

These two incidents prove what training is needed in private ere men are allowed in public to become witnesses to the power of faith in God and the prevailing prayer for which it fits. They teach us that, if our public united mission work is really to be a work in which the power of believing prayer is to be signally displayed, the faith of individual believers must have its roots deeply fixed in true consecration to God, and an entire dependence upon His mighty power working through us.

In 1854 Mr. Taylor left England for China. After labouring for five years he was compelled to

return home on account of failing health. During his stay at home he prayed much for five labourers to go to Ningpo, where he had been stationed. Part of the time was spent in bringing out a revised New Testament in the dialect of the people among whom he had lived, with references. He tells how, in doing this work, he only thought of the use it would be to the native Christians. He discovered later on, that, had it not been for that time of close intercourse with God's word, he would have been quite unprepared to form a mission like the C.I.M.

“In the study of that Divine Word I learned that to obtain successful workers, not elaborate appeals for help, but first earnest prayer to God to thrust forth labourers, and secondly the deepening of the spiritual life of the Church, so that men should be unable to stay at home, were what was needed. I saw that the apostolic plan was not to be concerned about ways and means, but to go and do the work, trusting in His sure word who has said, ‘Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.’”

The more Mr. Taylor prayed and studied God's word and the needs of China, the utter helplessness of its heathendom began to weigh as a heavy burden on his mind. A request came to him to write a series of articles for a missionary magazine. As he wrote them he began to feel how terrible

that need was, and how utterly the Lord's last command was being ignored by His Church. The careful study of the whole subject brought out how there were eleven vast interior provinces, each with its tens of millions, without a single resident Protestant missionary. Gradually the truth dawned upon him that to overtake the evangelisation of inland China a new and special agency was needed. He spoke to various representatives of leading missionary societies, but was met by difficulties, either financial or political. The money was wanting, or it was not possible to penetrate into the interior before the country had become more open. Gradually the thought came, as he felt how little the Church had learnt to trust the promises of God, "Well, if you see these things more clearly than others, why not go forward yourself, and trust God to accomplish His purposes through you? Go yourself to inland China. What is to hinder your obtaining the men and the means?" The thought raised a controversy in his soul, which gradually affected his health. The story is thus told:—

"I saw," Mr. Taylor says, "that in answer to prayer the workers needed would certainly be given, and their support secured, because asked for in the precious name of Jesus, which is worthy; but there a trembling unbelief crept in.

"Suppose that workers are given,' I asked myself doubtfully, 'and that they succeed in reaching inland

China: what then? Trials will come, and conflicts such as they have never dreamed of at home. Their faith may fail, and they may even be tempted to reproach one for having brought them into such a plight. Have I strength and ability to cope with such difficulties as these?' And the answer, of course, was always 'No!'

"It was just a bringing in of self through unbelief, the devil getting one to feel that while faith and prayer might lead one into the dilemma, one would be left to get out of it as best one might. And I failed to see that the Power that gave the labourers would be quite sufficient also to sustain them, under any circumstances, no matter how trying.

"Meanwhile the awful realisation was burned into my very soul that, a million a month, in China the heathen were dying without God. 'If you would pray for preachers,' came the dread conviction, 'they might have a chance of hearing the glorious gospel; but still they pass away without it, simply because you have not faith to claim for them heralds of the Cross.'"

Week after week the conflict went on, until the strain became so intense that sleep almost forsook him, and it seemed as if reason itself must fail. Rest was impossible by day or night. The thought of China's millions was always before his mind, and of what the gospel might bring them of blessing if only they could come in contact with it. And yet he could not yield and accept the position and responsibility that would have ended all the strife.

"How inconsistent unbelief always is!" Mr. Taylor continues. "I had no doubt that if I prayed for fellow-workers they would be given me. I had no doubt that in answer to prayer the means for our going forth would

also be supplied, and that doors would be opened in un-reached parts of the Empire. But I had not then learned to trust God fully for keeping power and grace for myself, so that it was not to be wondered at that I found a difficulty in trusting Him to keep any others who might be led to go out with me.

"Yet what was I to do? The feeling of blood-guiltiness became more and more intense. Simply because I refused to ask for them, the labourers did not come forward, did not go out to China; and every day tens of thousands in that vast land were living and dying with no knowledge of the way of salvation."

The burden upon his mind began to tell upon Mr. Taylor's health, and he went down to Brighton, at the invitation of a friend, to take a rest at the sea.

When Sunday morning came, hundreds of happy church-goers thronged the streets, but Mr. Taylor could only think of the need of the vast land to which his life was given.

"More than a thousand souls in China," he thought, "will be swept into eternity while the people of God, with so many privileges, are gathered here in the morning services to-day!"

The incubus of heathendom was upon him, and was almost more than his soul could bear. In great distress of mind, he left the quiet house and went down to the forsaken beach. It was a lovely summer morning; the tide was out; and far away upon the silent sands he met the crisis of his life, alone with God.

At first there was no light, and the conflict was intense. The only ray of comfort he could obtain was from the strange reflection: "Well, if God, in answer to prayer, does give a band of men for inland China, and they go

and reach those distant regions, and they should all die of starvation even, they will all go straight to heaven; and if only one heathen soul is saved, it would be well worth while!" But the thought was agony, for still he could not see that God, if He gave the labourers, would be sure to keep them, even in inland China.

All at once the thought came, "Why burdened thus? If you are obeying God, all the responsibility must rest with Him, and not with you."

What an unspeakable relief!

"Very well," was the immediate, glad reply; "Thou, Lord, shalt be responsible for them, and for me too!" And the burden, from that moment, was all gone.

Then and there Mr. Hudson Taylor surrendered himself to God for His service, and lifted up his heart in prayer for fellow-labourers—two for each of the inland provinces, and two for Mongolia. His Bible was in his hand, and there, upon the margin of the precious volume, he recorded the momentous transaction that had taken place between his soul and God. Few and simple are the words he uses; but, oh, how full of meaning!—

"Prayed for twenty-four willing skilful labourers at Brighton, June 25th, 1865."

"How restfully I turned away when this was done! The conflict was all ended. Peace and gladness filled my soul. I felt like flying up the steep hill to the house. And how I did sleep that night! My dear wife thought that Brighton had done wonders for me; and so it had."

I have quoted thus much of the story of Hudson Taylor's inner life, because it reveals to us the secret source from whence power for true mission work must come. "That the heathen are fellow-heirs and

fellow-members of the body and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel " is a great spiritual mystery, " which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men as it hath now been revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit." Any man can understand the missionary command or the missionary argument as Scripture sets it forth, but it needs a spiritual mind to apprehend it in its true spiritual meaning and power. What Paul writes of it is as true now as it was then : " The mystery hath now been manifested to His saints, to whom God was pleased to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles." It needs Divine teaching, it needs the revelation of the Holy Spirit, to give a true apprehension of what is the mystery of God. Mr. Hudson Taylor's experience shows us how God trains a man to believe in Him, to wait on Him, to give himself up entirely to His will and service, however great the difficulty may be. The Church needs to learn the lesson, our missionary meetings and our mission sermons must aim at teaching the lesson, that, as individuals give themselves wholly to God to bear the burden of the perishing in the faith of His redeeming love. He will fit them for being used in the service of His kingdom. It was a solemn thing for the Son of God to come to save the world : He had to bear

its sins and to die for it. It is no less a solemn thing for us to take part in the work of soul-saving: it needs that we, in faith and love, bear the burden of souls, and, if need be, give our lives for their salvation. And it needs close intercourse with God, and a full surrender to His guidance, to fit us to do His work.

Let me give just one more incident to illustrate the way in which Mr. Taylor sought, in his meetings, to bring Christians into personal contact with God. The first party of twenty-two, including children, was ready to go to China, when the following incident occurred:—

“In the month of April I was asked to give a lecture on China at Totteridge, a village near London, and willingly consented to do so, on condition that there should be no collection, and that this should be announced on the bills. Mr. Puget, who invited me, and who kindly presided as chairman, said he had never before heard of such a stipulation. He accepted it, however, and the bills were issued for May 2nd.

“With the aid of a large map, something of the extent, population, and deep spiritual need of China was presented to the people, many of whom were much impressed. At the close of the meeting the chairman said that at my request there had been no collection, but he felt there were many present who would be distressed and burdened if not allowed to contribute something to the good work proposed. He trusted that as this suggestion emanated entirely from himself, and expressed the feelings of the audience, I should not object to it. I begged, however,

that the condition agreed upon should not be altered, pointing out that the very reason given by the chairman was, to my mind, one of the strongest for not making any collection. My desire was not that those present might be relieved by giving then and there such contributions as might be convenient under the influence of present emotion, but that each one should go home really burdened with a sense of China's deep need, and go to ask of God what He would have them do. If, after thought and prayer, they were satisfied that a pecuniary contribution was all He wanted of them, this could be given to any society having missionaries at work in China, or might be posted to our London address. But perhaps in many cases what God was asking was not a money contribution, but personal consecration to His service abroad, or the gift of a dear son or daughter, more precious far than gold.

"I added that I thought the tendency of a collection was to leave upon the mind the impression that the all-important thing was money, whereas no amount of money could convert a single soul. The supreme need was that men and women filled with the Holy Spirit should give **themselves** to the work, and for the support of such there would never be a lack of funds.

"As my wish was evidently strong, the chairman kindly yielded, and closed the meeting. He told me, however, at the supper-table that he thought I was sadly mistaken, and that some little contributions had been put into his hand for the mission.

"Next morning, at breakfast, my kind host came in a little late, and said he had passed a restless night. After the meal was over he asked me into his study, and, handing me the contributions of the previous evening,

remarked: 'I thought yesterday, Mr. Taylor, that you were wrong about the collection, but now I am convinced you are right. As I considered in the night that stream of souls in China, ever passing onward to the dark, I could only cry, as you suggested, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" I believe I have obtained the guidance I sought; and here it is.' He handed me, as he spoke, a cheque for five hundred pounds, adding that if there had been a collection he would have given a few guineas towards it, but that this cheque was the result of having spent no small part of the night in prayer.

"I need scarcely say how surprised and thankful I was for the gift. A letter had reached me at the breakfast-table that very morning from the shipping agents, in which they stated that they could offer us the whole passenger accommodation of the *Lammermuir*. I went, on my way home, to see the ship, found it every way suitable, and paid the cheque on account. Thus did the Lord encourage our hearts in Himself."¹

We are studying the missionary problem. We are seeking the answer to its most important question—How can the Church be spiritually quickened to do the work with its whole heart, in the power which God can give? We have been trying to learn from those whom God has specially used and blessed what the secret of their strength is. God has set forth Hudson Taylor

¹ These extracts are taken from *The Story of the China Inland Mission*, by M. Geraldine Guinness, 2 vols., one of the most instructive of mission narratives. One would hope that either an abridgment or a cheaper edition may bring its precious teaching to many who have not yet read it.

as an example of what He can do for a young man who gives himself wholly to live by faith in God as he seeks to do God's work. We have learnt that the missionary problem is a personal one. Hudson Taylor's training for fellowship with God was an intensely personal one. If the missionary problem—how to win the world for God—is only to be solved by each individual believer giving himself personally to the work, we may learn from this servant of God wherein this personal element consists.

It is easy to say that it consists in the prevailing prayer of faith. But how can every believer be trained for this? The lesson is very clear. We have seen the path in which the power of believing prayer came to him. He gave himself wholly to God's work: this gave him the confidence that God would care for him and all his work. Faith cannot grow strong except by exercise. Difficulties are the exercise-ground of faith: they give it nourishment and strength. A believer who does not realise the difficulty of mission work, because he is not intensely interested in it, cannot taste the privilege of believing, persevering, prevailing prayer. We want to train every believer to take such an interest in the progress of the work of God's kingdom that he may feel and bear the burden of its great need, that he may realise the impossibility of its being done without God's own power, that he may learn to cry for more men

and money, and the Spirit's power, and the ingathering of souls.

Strong desire, personal interest and effort, faith in God's power of working in answer to our prayer: these are the conditions of that prevailing prayer, in which every believer can have a share. We need, in our missionary meetings and sermons, to aim at cultivating this. We need to encourage the humblest believer to know that he can do much for God's cause. The poor widow did more than she knew by the devotion her gift manifested. Let our mission work not only rest on the amount of the gifts we receive, but on the spirit of devotion which offers believing prayer with them. Let it be seen, in our ministers and leaders, in our Churches and societies, that faith in God's working, and continual prayer to secure that working, is the chief element in our hopes, and the Church will become what she should be, and God will say to her, "Believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these."

CHAPTER VI

The Church of Pentecost and the Holy Spirit

WE have looked at three cases in which we have seen how wonderfully God has led His servants in modern times into the secret of power and blessing in the mission field. Let us now go back to Pentecost, and there see how, in the birth of the Christian Church, are revealed the great root-principles in which, through all ages, it will find the law of its service and its triumph over the powers of darkness.

We have already quoted the words in which Mr. Mott appealed to the example of the pentecostal Church:—

“It is possible to evangelise the world in this generation—in view of the achievements of the Christians of the first generation. **They did more to accomplish the evangelisation of the world than any succeeding generation.** The persecutions of the first and second centuries attest how vigorously the faith of Christ must have

been propagated by the first disciples. These achievements seem very remarkable in the light of the fact that at the time of the ascension of Christ the whole number of believers did not exceed a few hundreds. In studying the secret of what they accomplished, one is led to the conclusion that they employed no vitally important method which cannot be used to-day, and that they availed themselves of no power which we also cannot utilise. . . . Think of the remarkable resources the Church of this generation possesses. There are not less than 135 million members of Protestant Churches. Contrast these with the few thousands constituting the small, unacknowledged, despised sect which on the day of Pentecost began the evangelisation of the then known world. As we recall the achievements of that infant Church, can we question the ability of the Christians of our day, **were they unitedly resolved to accomplish it**, so to distribute within the present generation the gospel messengers and agencies that all mankind might have an opportunity to know Christ the Saviour and Lord?"

If this statement be true,—and it is true,—it is a terrible condemnation to the Church of our day. And if the admission of the truth is to have any real influence to stimulate or to guide, it is needful that we take time to come to the deep conviction of wherein the difference between us and them consists, and what it is that can enable us truly to walk in their footsteps, and do our work as they did theirs. Our ascended Lord has not only given us His Holy Spirit, but in the men in whom

He first came to dwell, the living embodiment of what He is able to do for us too. It has been well said that men become interested not so much in abstract ideas, as in individuals who represent these ideas. The Church of the first generation is given us by God as an example and a pledge of what the Holy Spirit can do in men wholly possessed by Him. If the Church of our day is really to be and do what God desires it to be and do, pastors and congregations must be led to study the pentecostal pattern, and to be content with nothing less than an equal devotion to the work of making Christ everywhere known. A tree can only thrive and grow strong by abiding in the root from which it was born. The missionary revival we need and pray for within the Church, ere it is fitted to do its work aright, can only come by a return to Pentecost. The end is ever contained in the beginning, and returns to the beginning. To know what Pentecost means, to have its faith and its Spirit, is the only power to evangelise the world in this generation.

Let us strive to realise our position. The great commission was given in connection with Pentecost, and its fulfilment was made entirely dependent on it. "It behoved . . . that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations; **but** tarry at Jerusalem, until ye be

endued with power from on high." "Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and be My witnesses unto the ends of the earth." The pentecostal commission can only be carried out by a pentecostal Church, in pentecostal power. The charge has been laid against the Church of our day, and admitted, that she is not what she ought to be. It is vain to think of this generation accomplishing the pentecostal commission without a return to the pentecostal state. The great and burning question of the missionary problem is, How can the Church be brought back to the place where the disciples and the early Church were, when, in the power of the Holy Spirit, they did what no other generation since their time has done? The Church of Pentecost was not merely an example and pledge of what God could do, leaving it to us to choose if we would enjoy the same blessing. Nay, it is much more—a revelation of God's will as to what His Church ought to be, and of what is absolutely indispensable if there is to be any real hope of securing obedience to the command to bring the gospel to every creature. The pentecostal state is the only one that satisfies God, the only one that ought to satisfy us.

Like all seed, Pentecost was a fruit too. The fruit not only of Christ's work for us on the cross

and in heaven, but the fruit also of His work in the disciples in preparing them for the reception of the Spirit. The pastor who would learn what the missionary enthusiasm of his ministry ought to be, and how he can communicate it to his people; the leader of a mission circle who would fain find for his band the full equipment for the service of the kingdom; every believer who would personally learn from his Lord the secret of entire devotion to His work, of being filled with His Spirit, and of winning souls to the knowledge of His love—must become a learner in the school in which Christ trained His disciples. There we find how they were fitted to be the vessels and channels of the Spirit on earth, when He should have gone to heaven.

The first coming of the Holy Spirit in power was to a prepared people. For the Church in our day to receive the Spirit in pentecostal power there is a need of the same preparation,—a giving up and forsaking of all that hinders, an emptying and a cleansing, a thirsting and waiting and entire surrender, to which the blessing of the Spirit's power surely comes.

Let us consider what were the chief elements of that training.

1. There was, first of all, a calling out and separation from the ordinary interests and claims of

daily life. The principle that underlies the life of all God's great servants in the previous ages—Abraham and Joseph, Moses and Joshua, David and Elijah—is a taking out of and setting apart of them from their ordinary environment, often by persecution and suffering, that they might be brought into solitude with God alone, and be free and disengaged, from what is otherwise innocent or lawful on earth, to listen to the Divine voice, to receive the Divine revelation, to be changed and fitted by the Divine power for the work they had to do. Even so Christ called His disciples to forsake all, to deny themselves what to others might be perfectly legitimate, and to share with Him His cross and all it would entail. For three years He had them in His training—by His intercourse, by the sight of what He did, by His reproofs and instructions, preparing them to be the recipients and the channels of that Holy Spirit from heaven, who should come to take the place of His earthly presence, and open within them His abiding indwelling. In a sinful world sacrifice is the law of life and of love. The men whom Christ had fitted to become the leaders of the pentecostal Church, and to embody in their lives His own, with the mind and the life of the Spirit, had learnt to give up everything for Christ. As their Lord could not give Himself for us without

sacrificing all, they too had learnt, in giving themselves, to part with all for the sake of His service and kingdom. In that entire self-abandonment of their Lord to one purpose the pentecostal Church had struck its roots deep.

In a time when there is no persecution, when money and comfort and Christian civilisation surround us on every side, when it appears to cost little to be a Christian, many find it difficult to know where the forsaking all to become a disciple comes in, or what shape it will assume. We shall find the answer if we think of the second great element in Christ's training of His disciples.

2. This was an intense personal attachment to Christ, as the chief fruit of their three years' intercourse. When Christ first called them, there was something in Him that attracted them and made that call irresistible. As Christ drew them without their knowing how and why, so He led them by a way and to a goal they knew not. They began by believing in Him as the Messiah: He led them on to know Him as the Son of God, as a Friend, as a Master, as a Redeemer. Of His love to them, or theirs to Him, He said little or nothing till the last night of His life. Then He opened up to them the mystery of His loving them with a Divine love—of His giving His life for them, of the Father's love resting on them, of their loving Him and keeping

His commandments. It was not the disciples who had followed Him with any thought of such an aim: it was Christ who had, by His Divine love, thus, in the course of His three years' training, attached them to Himself. It is this intense personal living attachment to Christ that prepares for receiving the Holy Spirit, and brings that pentecostal power without which the Church cannot hope to conquer the world.

Here we have the answer to the question at the close of our previous paragraph. Detachment comes only through a new and stronger attachment. As a Christian sees that, though he knows so little of his Lord's love, the Lord is ready to lead him on to it in a way he knows not, he becomes willing to turn away from everything that can occupy the heart, and to yield himself, in patient obedient discipleship, to the influences of intercourse with his Lord. He learns to believe that that love can master him. The love of Christ asks and claims the whole heart and life. If we are really to appeal to our Churches to follow in the footsteps of the pentecostal Church, and to claim its power and blessing, do let us encourage them to enter the school in which Christ trained His disciples. When the love of Christ becomes everything to any of us, and we yield ourselves to His love, dying for sinners, to take possession of us and use us, that love will

teach us, it will constrain us, to part with all for this pearl of great price. Detachment from the world, attachment to Christ, are the secrets of pentecostal blessing.

3. Closely connected with this love, as another element of preparation for Pentecost, was the brotherly love which Christ had taught them and wrought in them. He had bound them to Himself, but also to each other. Christ ever dealt with individual men. He calleth His sheep by name. He knows and meets the needs of each. But His work does not end there. He makes them members of His body. The Divine life is a life of love. He leads us into a life of love; He calls us, His Spirit enables us, to love each other as He loved us. His own love is to dwell in us, and bind the body into a living whole. In this is to be the Church's power to convince the world of its Divine origin: a love that is supernatural and Divine. The union this love gives brings strength to each member, multiplying the strength of all by the aid derived from the whole body. It was this love that often made men say, See how they love one another. It was this love, in the unity of the body, that made feeble men and women strong to conquer.

This love was cultivated in close fellowship, both in Christ's lifetime and after the Spirit came. It is this fellowship of love that is often sadly lacking in

a congregation or a society. A hundred men contribute to the same collection for mission work, and partake of the same Holy Supper, and yet know nothing of the interchange of mutual love and spiritual fellowship. When we begin to seek Christ's Spirit in earnest for our mission work, or when we think that His first movings are felt, do let us remember that there is no place where the Spirit works so surely as when we are gathered together with our brethren into the Name of Jesus. To speak together of that name and love has more to do with our spiritual life than we think. To give ourselves to encourage the feeble, to instruct the ignorant, to warn the erring, by telling what Christ is to us, is one of the sure means of drawing down the presence of the Lord, of building the separate members into one body, of rousing the hope of all and preparing them for that blessed outpouring of the Spirit which is indispensable if we are to witness for Christ in power.

4. Is it necessary to speak of faith as one of the chief lessons that was needed for the pentecostal mission work of the first century and of ours? It was not only in His direct teaching of the disciples, but in all He said to others in their hearing, and in all the proofs He gave in their presence of the indispensable need, of the conditions, of the power of faith, that He trained them into the apprehension

of the place it must have in their life and work. We know what faith is. From the first simple faith that hears a promise and believes God's word, to the faith that enters into full and conscious union with our Lord, and abides in Him and does the "greater works," faith is ever one of the first conditions of the power of the Spirit's working. The pentecostal Church received and maintained its blessing and power, did its work, endured its sufferings, and gained its conquests, all through faith.

Faith is such a simple thing that many think it an easy thing. As the power to overcome the world, and cast out Satan, and bring men out of darkness into God's light, it is no easy thing. It implies the renunciation of self, the crucifixion to the world, the ceasing from man with his wisdom and his power, and dependence on God alone. We speak of faith missions, in which faith, in some one of its special aspects is specially prominent. We need to emphasise the great truth that all mission work is to be faith work. And that, if this is to be, we want to begin at the beginning, and seek not only to have the word mixed with faith in them that hear, but to have all our work and prayer mixed with faith too. "By faith Abel offered a better sacrifice." When the offering of money in a collection is as sacred a thing as the offering of prayer, when the faith which is essential to make a

prayer effectual is seen to be just as indispensable to make a gift effectual, we shall find the point of contact in dealing with individual believers, and our missionary meetings and collections will become as helpful to the life of faith as the preaching of the gospel. From the individuals we shall then rise to the various societies or congregations to which they belong, and through these on to leaders and directors and missionaries, until all unite in the one deep and overmastering conviction: Mission work is faith work. When the faith which comes from knowing Christ, in His saving power in ourselves, in His saving power over all, from knowing Him as the Triumphant and Almighty One who Himself will work in them that believe in Him, is acknowledged as indispensable for all our workers at home and abroad, we shall be approaching the new pentecostal era.

5. One more thought. When Christ ascended the throne, one would say the preparation was complete. It was not so. One thing more was needed to finish the work. Even with the three years' training, the mysterious influence of the fellowship with Christ in the death they had seen Him die, the mighty power of the resurrection-life He breathed into them, the wonderful revelations of the forty days all in the power of the New Life, the ascension to the throne and the sitting down at the right

hand of the Father, and Christ's receiving from Him of the Holy Ghost, there is still something needed. It was **the ten days of continued, united prayer and supplication.** I hardly know a passage in Scripture which presents prayer in such a wondrous light. God in heaven has done all that was needed; Christ has finished His work for His disciples and in them: **Pentecost has still to wait ten days for their prayers.** Prayer is to put the finishing touch to the work of preparation. In it is to be found that complete and continuous turning away from earth, that opening of the whole being to God, that rising into heaven, and that abiding in Christ there, which is to prove that these men are indeed prepared vessels for God's Holy Spirit. When Jesus had been glorified, when the Lamb had taken His place in the midst of the throne, the stream of the river of the water of life broke forth from the throne of God and the Lamb, and flowed as streams of living water into and out of **these praying disciples.** It is even as it is written of Christ: "And it came to pass that, Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended upon Him." When every other condition has been fulfilled, prayer, continued prayer, is needed to bring down the blessing. If the pentecostal Church is to be an example, and that cannot be without the pentecostal era being repeated, prayer

must again be the key that opens the windows of heaven. Prayer must be preached and practised as the first and the last duty of a Church that hopes to have the power of God seen in its work. The ten days' continued prayer must teach the lesson that is so simple, and yet so difficult to master, that what little prayer does not obtain, much prayer, earnest believing prayer, prayer continued long enough, will bring down.

It was said in the words we quoted at the beginning of this chapter: "**They availed themselves of no power which we cannot also utilise.**" We have seen what some of these powers are. The power of separation from the world and true self-sacrifice, of intense attachment and devotion to Jesus, of love and fellowship making us one with the saints around us, of faith, of continued prayer—these were the things that fitted the disciples to receive the promise of the Father, and be the fit instruments for the Holy Spirit's mighty work in witnessing for Christ to the uttermost parts of the earth.

We have seen the preparation, the wonderful forming of men to have, in human nature, as Jesus had, the Spirit of God dwelling in them. Think, now, how wonderful this blessing was in itself—the fruit and the crown of Christ's redeeming work. These men, prepared by Christ, were all filled with the Holy Spirit. On earth Christ's body had been the

home of the Spirit and the instrument of His work. They now are His body; they take His place; the Spirit dwells in them as the instruments for His work, the continuance of Christ's own work. The Spirit, through whom God is God, and Father and Son each is what He is, and both are One,—the Spirit, the very life of God, fills them. In the threefold operation of His quickening grace, He enlightens, He sanctifies, He strengthens. That is, He reveals Divine truth, He makes partaker of the holy life and disposition of Christ, and He endues with the Divine power that, in the midst of weakness, labours and suffers and triumphs. As Christ's training was to prepare them, so this endowment was actually to fit them for His work. "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you." God's power for God's work was to be the one condition of success in their undertaking to bring the gospel to every creature, in being Christ's witnesses to the ends of the earth.

"That pentecostal generation did more to accomplish the evangelisation of the world than any succeeding generation." If we are to do as much as they did,—considering the increase in the population of the world and the increase of the Church, we ought to do tenfold more than they did,—we need this one thing: **To be filled with the Holy Spirit, as the Power of God to do the work**

of God! It is not enough that the river of the water of life is still flowing from under the throne of God and the Lamb; it is not enough that we are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in us. The Spirit may be in us, and yet be grieved, or quenched, or resisted, or neglected. Where He is to work in power, He asks the whole being, to fill it. He claims control of the whole life, for it to be led and ruled by Him in everything. He asks that the man shall be a living sacrifice, a whole burnt-offering, to be consumed by the fire of God. If there is to be any hope of our working like the Church of Pentecost, we must have a new era in our missions. There must be a real restoration of the pentecostal life and power in the Church at home. **The power of God for the work of God** must be the watchword of every worker. Then alone will our mission work, both in its extent and its intensity, be able to overtake the thousand millions who are still without the knowledge of Christ.

If the appeal that has been made to the Church, to believe that there is nothing which the pentecostal Church did that we cannot and ought not to do, is to be taken seriously, what are we to do with it? We are confessedly, in an overwhelming majority of our Church members, very far from Pentecost. **What is to be done** to get all our leaders in churches and boards, in societies and committees,

to take up the watchword: **Back to Pentecost: without this the work cannot be done?** Is there no way of reaching our pastors and congregations, and gathering all who feel that God's work is not being done as it should be, into one holy bond of union until the watchword has rung through the Church: **Back to Pentecost: God's Power for God's work: without this the work cannot be done?**

The missionary problem is a personal one. Every believer, in receiving the love of Christ into his heart, has taken in a love that reaches out to the whole world. On every member of the Church the great commission rests: The gospel to every creature. Let each of us begin with himself in seeking for the Church the restoration of her pentecostal power for the work of conquering the world for her King.

It was prayer brought Pentecost—intense, continued, united prayer; prayer that did not cease till it was answered. Such prayer is not an easy thing. Hudson Taylor said at the Conference—

“Not only must the missionaries suffer in going forth, but the Church must go forward in self-denial to the point of suffering. Redemptive work, soul-saving work, cannot be carried on without suffering. If we are simply to pray to the extent of a simple, pleasant, and enjoyable exercise, and know nothing of watching in prayer, and weariness in prayer, we shall not draw down the blessing we may. We shall not sustain our missionaries, who are

overwhelmed with the appalling darkness of heathenism ; we shall not even sufficiently maintain the spiritual life of our own souls. We must serve God even to the point of suffering, and each one ask himself—In what degree, in what point, am I extending, by personal suffering, by personal self-denial even to the point of pain, the kingdom of Christ ?”

Let us give ourselves anew to prayer, that the Church may be restored to her pentecostal state. Let us by faith yield ourselves wholly to the Spirit, and receive Him by faith to fill us. Let us give ourselves to prayer for the power of the Spirit in the life and work of the Church at home and abroad. The pentecostal command to preach the gospel to every creature is urgent, all the more from having been neglected so long. The need of the pentecostal power is urgent beyond all thought. Yet prayer brought it. Prayer still brings it. And few feel how feeble our power of prayer and our power in prayer is. Let us go back and study what it was that fitted these humble fishermen and women to pray so. It was this one thing: Jesus Christ had their whole heart. They had forsaken everything for Him. His love filled them and made them one with Him, and with each other. The fellowship of love strengthened them. Their ascended Lord was everything to them: they could not but pray. Let us pray in secret. Let us unite in love with others, and pray without ceasing, and watch unto prayer

that, for the sake of His Son and a perishing world, God would restore His people to their first estate in the devotion and power and joy of Pentecost.

But—let us ever again remember : The Missionary Problem is a personal one. A passionate love to Jesus Christ, born out of His love, truly possessing each of us personally, will teach us to pray, and to labour, and to suffer. Let us pray for such a love.

CHAPTER VII

The Missionary Problem a Personal One: Every Believer a Soul-Winner

IN the report of the Students' Missionary Conference held in London in January 1900,¹ the Appendix contains a Diagram under the heading, **The Possibilities of Personal Work**. Its object is to prove, by the law of arithmetical progression, how, if there were only one Christian in the world to-day, and he and all succeeding converts were faithful to their calling, within a generation every person in the world might be Christian. The statement made is as follows:—**IF** there were only one Christian in the world, and he worked a year and won a friend for Christ, and **IF** these two continued each year to win another, and **IF** every man thus led into the kingdom led another every year, in thirty-one years every person in the world would be won for Christ. And then follows the table, showing that the result would be,

¹ *Students and the Missionary Problem.*

at the end of the thirty-one years, over two thousand million of Christians.

Some may doubt the wisdom of calculations which lie altogether beyond the range of possibility or the promises of God's word. Others may question the correctness of a calculation which appears to count upon all who become Christians living all through the thirty-one years, while we know that something like one-thirtieth of the earth's population dies each year. Leaving such questions aside, I wish simply to take the principle which forms the basis of the calculation, and to point out what the effect would be if the substantial truth it contains were really believed, and preached, and practised. That truth is this, that Christ meant every believer to be a soul-winner. Or rather, for this is the deeper truth in which the former has its root and strength, that every believer has been saved with the express purpose that he should make the saving of other souls the main, the supreme, end of his existence in the world.

If ever I feel the need of the teaching of the Holy Spirit for myself and my readers, it is when I come to this point. We so easily accept general statements, without realising fully what they imply. It is only when brought face to face with them, and summoned to apply and act upon them, that the secret unbelief comes out that robs them of their

power. It is only when by the Holy Spirit we look away from the state of the Church around us and the great majority of Christians, and wait to realise what actually is the will of our God concerning His people, and what He has actually made possible to them in the grace of His Holy Spirit, that in our teaching within the Church it will become our watchword: **Every believer a soul-winner!** It is this alone will give a sure foundation on which to ground our missionary appeal, and our hope for an immediate and a sufficient response to the call to rise and make Christ known to every creature.

But is this law—**every believer a soul-winner**—literally true and binding? Is it not something outside of the region of “practical politics”? something beyond the reach of the great majority of true but feeble believers? The very fact of this truth being strange to so many, so difficult altogether for any but the spiritual mind to apprehend as possible and obligatory, is the most urgent reason for its being taught. Let us look and see what are the grounds on which it rests.¹

All nature teaches us that it must be so. The law has its root in the very nature of things. It is an essential part of the New Nature. Do we not see

¹ In a little shilling volume just published, I have attempted to enforce the two truths of the duty of every believer, as a member of Christ's body, to work for Him, and of his ability to do so, because God works in him. *Working for God*: Nisbet & Co.

it in every child, how it loves to share and tell out its happiness, and to bring others to share it? Do we not expect to find in every human heart a feeling of compassion for the poor and the suffering? And why should it be thought strange that every child of God is called to take part in making known the happiness he has found, to concern himself about those who are perishing, have compassion on them, and labour for their salvation. **Every believer a soul-winner!** What can be more natural?

Christ called His disciples the light of the world. The believer is an intelligent being—his light does not shine as a blind force of nature, but in the voluntary reaching out of the heart towards those who are in darkness, in the longing desire to bring the light to them, to do all he can do to make them acquainted with Christ Jesus. The illustration of the light is often used of the silent influence which good works and a consistent life may have. It includes this as an essential element, but it means a great deal more. It does not mean, as is often understood, that I am to be content with seeking my own salvation, and that I may trust that my example will do others good. No; even as Christ's example derived its power from the fact that it was a life lived in our service, and given up on our behalf, so the true power of the Christian's influence

lies in the love that gives itself away to seek the happiness of others. As God is Light and Love, it is love that makes the Christian the light of the world. **Every believer a soul-winner**—this is indeed the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

How could it be otherwise? As God is Love, so is he that loveth born of God. Love is God's highest glory, His everlasting blessedness. God's children bear His image, share His blessedness, are the heirs of His glory. But this cannot be in any other way than by their living a life of love. The New Life in them is a life of love; how can it manifest itself but in loving as God loves, in loving those whom God loves? It is God's own love that is shed abroad in our hearts. Christ prayed, "that the love wherewith Thou lovedst Me may be in them." It is the love of Christ, the love with which He loved us, that constrains us. Love cannot change its nature when it flows down from God into us: it still loves the evil and the unworthy. Christ's love has no way, now that He is in heaven, of reaching the souls for whom He died, for whom He longs, but through us. Surely nothing can be more natural and true than the blessed message: **Every believer redeemed to be a soul-winner.**

But why, if it be so simple and so sure, why are so many words needed to prove and enforce it? Alas! because the Church is in a feeble and sickly

state, and tens of thousands of its members have never learnt that this is one of the choicest treasures of their blessed heritage. They were content with the selfish thought of personal salvation, and even in the struggle after holiness never learnt the Divine purpose in their salvation. And there are tens of thousands more who have some thought of its being part of their calling, who yet have looked upon it as a command beyond their strength, and never known that, as a law and a power of their inmost nature, its fulfilment is meant to be, as every function of a healthy body is, a joy and a strength, the path to the full development of their spiritual nature. Even the commandments of our Lord Jesus may be to us as great a burden as the law of Moses, bringing bondage and condemnation, unless we know the blessed twofold secret that brings the power of performance. That secret is first what we have already named—the faith that love is the inward law of our nature, and that the Spirit of God's law is within us to enable us gladly to love, and bless, and save those around us. And then, that it is in the surrender to a life of close following and continual fellowship with the Lord Jesus—rejoicing in Him, forsaking all for Him, yielding all to the service of His love—that our spiritual nature can be strengthened, and the work of winning souls become the highest joy and completion of the Christian life.

To those who in some measure understand this, there is nothing strange in the thought that **Every believer a soul-winner!** ought to be the watchword for every pastor's preaching and every believer's life.

But even this is not all. Many a one will agree that every believer is called upon to live and work for others, but still looks upon this as only a secondary thing, additional and subordinate to the primary interest of working out his own salvation. He has never seen that the very reverse is the truth—that, as with Christ His humility and obedience and being perfected through suffering were entirely subservient to the great purpose of redeeming love in saving men, so the redemption and acceptance and sanctification of a believer are as entirely subordinate to the carrying out in our lives of the same work of loving and saving those around us. **Every believer a soul-winner**—that does not mean only, among other things, but first of all, as the chief reason of his existence. We all agree in saying that the one and supreme end of the Church is to be the bringing of the world to Christ. We know that God gave Him the Church as His body, with the one purpose of its being to its Head what every body is on earth—the living organ or instrument through which the purposes and the work of the head can alone be carried out. What is true

of the Head, is true of the Body; what is true of the Body, is true of each individual member—the very feeblest. As in the Head, Christ Jesus, as in the Body, the Church, so in every believer, the supreme, the sole, end of our being is, the saving of souls. It is in this, above everything, God is glorified. “I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and should bring forth fruit.” In Christ’s election and commission our watchword alone finds its full meaning, **Every believer a soul-winner**, as the one object of life. Christ came to undo what sin had done, in bringing man back to God. This is the object for which each member of His body is to live.

Many may be brought to assent to this truth and yet have to confess that they do not feel its full force. And many a minister may feel how little he is able to preach it, and the grace that will most certainly fit for it, with the same full conviction with which he preaches grace for pardon. It is well that we should give this admission careful consideration. Whence comes the difficulty? This union with the Lord Jesus, this elevation to a participation in His saving work to such an extent that without us He cannot do it, that through us He will and can accomplish it in Divine power, is a deep spiritual mystery. It is an honour altogether too great for our apprehen-

sion ; it is a fellowship and union and partnership in what is the highest manifestation of the Divine life,—its redeeming, saving work,—so intimate and Divine that the Holy Spirit alone can reveal it to us. To simple, childlike souls the reality of it comes without their knowing how. For those who have lived in the Christian life and lost the first love that would have led them into it, and to whom everything has to come by the slow way of the understanding, there is need of humiliation in giving up preconceived opinions, and the confidence of being able to grasp spiritual truths ; need, too, of patient waiting for the Spirit to work such truth in their inmost part. And there is, above all, need of a turning away from the world, with its spirit and wisdom, and a return to closer fellowship with Jesus Christ, from whom alone the light and the love, with the sense and experience of what He can work in us, can come. **Every believer ordained to be first and most a soul-winner.** Simple though the watchword sounds, and easy of acceptance, it will cost much to many before it has mastered them. But when Christ and the Spirit of His life and love in the heart are waited on, we can learn the lesson.

This supreme end for which the Church and each believer alone exists—partnership with God in His saving work—is the crown, the highest

glory, of God's redeeming grace—the preparation for our sitting with Christ on His throne. Such truth can fully enter and hold the heart **only in close and abiding fellowship with Christ.** We are often at a loss to understand this need of much continued communion with God. And yet it is in this no otherwise than with the things of earth. Take the gold put into the furnace. Exposed to an insufficient heat, it gets heated but not melted. Exposed to an intense heat for a short time, and then taken out again, it is not melted. It needs an intense and continuous heat, ere the precious but hard metal is prepared for the goldsmith's work. It is even so with the fire of God's love. They who would know it in its power, they who would be able, in the power of a living faith and experience, to proclaim and convey it to others, must, in contact with the love of Christ that consumed Him, know it in its intensity, and know what it is to tarry in it till their whole being realises that that love can reach all, and melt all, and make even the coldest and feeblest child of God a lover and seeker of souls. In that intense and continuous fire a pastor, a leader, can learn to witness in power to the truth of the watchword—**Every believer a soul-winner.**

Let me for a moment turn again to the illustration of the Head and the Body. The lessons are

so obvious that it needs but little reflection to find them. The head can do nothing but through the body. Each member is as completely under the control of the head as the whole body. If the members, owing to disease, refuse to act, the head is helpless to carry out its plans. The object of the head is, first, to use every member for the preservation and welfare of the whole body, and then to let it take its share in the work the body has to do. If our being members of Christ's body has any meaning,—and, praised be God! it has an infinite meaning,—every believer is in the body to care for the other members, and all to co-operate with the others in working out the plans of the head. Wherever I go, whatever I do, I carry every member of my body with me, and they take part in all I do.

It is no otherwise in the Body of Christ Jesus. Every member has but one object, and, in health, is every moment to fulfil that object—to carry out the work of the Head. The work of our Head in heaven is to gather all the members of His body on earth. In this work every member of the body co-operates; not under the law of a blind force of nature, but under the law of the spirit of life, which connects every believer with his Lord in love, and imparts to him the very disposition and the very strength in which Christ does His work. Each time we read of Christ

the Head, and His body the Church, let us with new emphasis pronounce the watchword—**Every believer, like Christ, a soul-winner.**

And what is now the connection of all this with our missionary discussion? We have said more than once—we seek to make it the keynote of this little book—**The missionary problem is a personal one.** If the Church is really to take up its work, it is not enough that we speak of the obligation resting upon the present generation to make Christ known to everyone who belongs to it. True education must deal with the individual mind. To the general watchword there must be added the personal one. Nelson's signal, "England expects every man to do his duty," was a personal appeal addressed to every man in his fleet. As we seek to find out why, with such millions of Christians, the real army of God that is fighting the hosts of darkness to take from them their prey is so small, the only answer is—lack of heart. The enthusiasm of the kingdom is wanting. And that because there is so little of the enthusiasm of the King. And though much may be done by careful organisation and strict discipline and good generalship to make the best of the troops we have, there is nothing that can so restore confidence and courage as the presence of a beloved King, to whom every heart beats warm in loyalty and devotion.

The Missionary Appeal needs not only by force of argument and encouragement to do its very best with the forces at its disposal: it must go deeper, and seek to deal with the very root of the evil. If there be no desire for soul-winning at home, how can the interest in the distant heathen be truly deep or spiritual? There may be many motives to which we appeal effectively in asking for supplies of men and money,—the compassion of a common humanity, the extirpation of the evils of heathenism, the elevation of fellow-creatures in the scale of being, the claims of our church or society,—the true and highest motive is the only one that will really make our mission work subservient to the spiritual welfare of the Church, and call forth its spiritual power for the work to be done.

If the Missionary Appeal to this generation to bring the gospel to every creature is to be successful, the Church will have to gird itself for the work in a very different way from what it has done. The most serious question the Church has to face just now—in fact, the only real difficulty of the missionary problem—is how it is to be roused as a whole to the greatness and glory of the task intrusted to it, and led to enter upon it with all its heart and strength. And the only answer to that question—the key to the whole situation—appears to be the simple truth: **The missionary**

problem is a personal one. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Author and Leader of Missions. Whoever stands right with Him, and abides in Him, will be ready to know and do His will. It is simply a matter of being near enough to Him to hear His voice, and so devoted to Him and His love as to be ready to do all His will. Christ's whole relation to each of us is an intensely personal one. "He loved me and gave Himself for me." My relation to Him is an entirely personal one. He gave Himself a ransom for me, and I am His, to live for Him and His glory. He has breathed His love into my heart, and I love Him. He tells me that, as a member of His body, He needs me for His service, and in love I gladly yield myself to Him. He wants nothing more than that I should tell this out to others, and prove to them how He loves, and how He enables us to love, and how blessed a life in His love is.

The personal element of the missionary problem must be put in the foreground. The missionary sermon or meeting must give the love of Christ the first place. If Christians are in a low, cold, worldly state, the first object must be, waiting on God in prayer and faith for His Holy Spirit to lead them to a true devotion to Jesus Christ. The apparent loss of time in not coming at once with the ordinary missionary information and argument will soon be

made up. Feeble believers, who are glad to hear and give, must be lifted to the consciousness of the wonderful spiritual privilege of offering themselves to Christ to live for His kingdom. They must be encouraged to believe that the Lord who loves them, greatly prizes their love, and will enable them to bring it Him. They must learn that Christ's dying love asks, and that rightly, a whole-hearted devotion, and that the more they sacrifice, the more will that love possess them. As definitely as we labour to secure the interest and the gifts of each individual, and even more so, must we labour to bring each one into contact with Christ Himself.

At first it may appear as if we are aiming too high. In many a congregation the response may be very feeble. Let the pastor give himself to study the missionary problem in this light. Let him put it to his people, clearly and perseveringly: You have been redeemed to be the witnesses and messengers of Christ's love. To fit you for it, His love has been given you, and shed abroad in your heart. As He loves you, He loves the whole world. He wants those who know it to tell those who know it not. His love to you and to them, your love to Him and to them, call you to do it. It is your highest privilege; it will be your highest happiness and perfection. As Christ gave Himself, give yourself wholly to this work of love.

As the minister seeks to lead his congregation on to this, he may find how little of it he realizes himself. That will be the beginning of blessing. While he is thinking of the need of the heathen, Christ is thinking of his need, and seeking to bring him into the blessing of a new experience of His love. As his own need, and the need of his people, and their impotence to meet the need of the heathen, press upon him, he may learn to pray more than he ever did before for the Holy Spirit to teach him to know and preach the love of Christ. He will begin to see, too, that nothing but a more fervent enthusiasm for Jesus Christ and His love will fit him for making a truly missionary congregation. And he will experience that, while he thought at first only of the extension of the kingdom abroad, the appeal to live wholly for Christ and His love and service will lead to blessing at home.

The missionary problem a personal one, because every believer a soul-winner. This watchword, which was sounded to bring the missionary cause to its true place, will at the same time have formed workers who, under the constraint of the love of Jesus, will be soul-winners at home.

CHAPTER VIII

A Missionary Ministry

IN our opening chapter a number of extracts were given in which the chief responsibility for the solution of the missionary problem was, by common consent, laid upon the ministry. **“To the pastor belongs the privilege and responsibility of the foreign missionary problem.”** These words, apparently indorsed by the whole Conference, point, in connection with the ministry, to a high honour; a serious shortcoming; an urgent duty; and the great need of seeking from God the grace worthily to fulfil its vocation. We need not seek to apportion exactly the measure of responsibility as between the ministry and the membership of the Church; that on the ministry a holy and heavy responsibility rests in this matter, all are agreed. Let all ministers heartily admit and accept it, and prepare themselves to live up to it.

Let us try, first of all, to find the ground on which that responsibility rests. The principles out of

which it grows are simple, and yet of inconceivable importance. They are these four :

That missions are **the chief end of the Church**. That the **chief end of the ministry** is to guide the Church in this work, and fit her for it. **That the chief end of the preaching** in a congregation ought to be to train it to take its part in helping the Church to fulfil her destiny. And **that the chief end of every minister** in this connection ought to be to seek grace to fit himself thoroughly for this work.

Let no one think these statements exaggerated. They appear so because we have been so accustomed to give missions a very subordinate place in our thoughts of the Church and its ministry. We need ever to be brought back to the great central truth, "the mystery of God," that the Church is the body of Christ, as absolutely and exclusively ordained by God to carry out the purpose of His redeeming love in the world as Christ the Head Himself. The Church has, even as Christ, but one object of being—to be the light of the world. As Christ died for every man, as God wills that all men should be saved, so the Spirit of God in the Church knows no object but this—that the gospel be brought to every creature. **Missions are the chief end of the Church**. All the work of the Holy Spirit in converting sinners and sanctifying believers, has this for its one aim—to fit them

for the part that each must at once take in winning back the world to God. Nothing less than what God's eternal purpose, and Christ's dying love, aimed at, can be the aim of the Church.

As we see this to be true, we shall see that **the chief end of the ministry ought to be to fit the Church for this.** Paul writes, "God gave pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints unto (as what these saints have to do) the work of ministering, or serving, unto (as the final aim of this work of the saints) the building up of the body of Christ." It is through the ministering, the loving service of the saints that the body of Christ is to be gathered and built up. And the pastors and teachers are given to perfect the saints for this work of ministering. A Normal School or Training Class is very different from an ordinary school. It seeks not only to train every pupil to acquire and possess knowledge for himself, but to fit him to impart it to others. Each congregation is meant to be a training class. Every believer, without exception, is to be "perfected," to be thoroughly fitted for the work of ministering and taking his part in labour and prayer for those near and far off. In all the pastor's teaching of repentance and conversion, of obedience and holiness, this ought definitely to be his supreme aim—to call men to come and serve God in the noble, holy, Christlike work of saving

the lost and restoring God's kingdom on earth. The chief end of the Church is of necessity the chief end of the ministry.

Out of this follows, naturally, the statement that **the chief end of preaching** ought to be to train every individual believer and every congregation to take its part in helping the Church to fulfil her destiny. This will decide the question as to how often a missionary sermon ought to be preached. As long as we only speak of one every year, it is probable that the chief thought will be the obtaining of a better collection. This may often be obtained without the spiritual life being raised one whit. When missions take their true place as the chief aim of the Church of which the missionary spirit has really taken possession, there may be times when a minister will feel it needful, time after time, to return to the one subject, until the neglected truth begins to master at least some in the congregation. At times, again, it may be that while there is no direct preaching on missions, yet all the teaching on love and faith, on obedience and service, on holiness and conformity to Christ, may be inspired by this one truth—that we are to be “imitators of God, and walk in love, even as Christ loved and gave Himself a sacrifice for us.” Missions are the chief end of the Church, and therefore of the ministry, and therefore of all its preaching.

All this now leads up to what, in view of the responsibility of the minister, is the main point that must be pressed, that **the chief aim of every minister** ought to be to fit himself for this great work. To be the teacher of a Normal College or Training School needs a special training. To inspire and train and help believers is not an easy thing; it does not come from the mere fact of being an earnest Christian, and having had a ministerial training. It is a matter to which larger place ought to be given in our theological seminaries. But even this can only be partial and preparatory. The minister who would combat successfully the selfishness that is content with personal salvation, the worldliness that has no idea of sacrificing all or even anything for Christ, the unbelief that measures its power to help or bless by what it feels and sees, and not by what God and His Spirit can work, and so would lift the Church to know and rejoice in and fulfil her heavenly calling, will find the need of a special training to fit him for this, the highest and holiest part of his vocation.

If the question be asked how the minister is thus to fit himself for carrying out his responsibility, the first answer will usually be, and we may take it first, "By study." In regard to this, many pointed things were said, at the Conference, of the members of the Church, which are specially

applicable to the pastor, as the representative and guide of his people in this.

Mrs. Montgomery—

“We all know that the greatest need in our mission work is the need of a fuller and a deeper realisation of the work of the Holy Spirit Himself with us. But next to that, I believe that our greatest need is a broader and more thoughtful grasp of the subject.”

Mrs. J. T. Gracey—

“Possibly one of the greatest factors in the development of missionary interest is the systematic study of missions.”

Rev. Dr. Halsey began an address on the “Use of Missionary Literature by the Pastor” with the words—

“It was said of the late Keith Falconer, by one of his instructors, that ‘he approached the world of ideas as great observers approach the world of nature—with wonder, with reverence, and with humility.’ In some such spirit must the pastor approach the study of missions.”

These last are golden words. What may have been the reason that the speaker who quoted them added, “In some such spirit must the pastor approach the systematic study of missions”? It can only be because he knows how often, in the study of the Bible or theology, everything is simply regarded as a matter of the intellect, leaving the heart unblessed. It is possible for a man to study

and know the Theory and History of Missions, and yet lack the inspiration that knowledge was meant to give. Let no pastor say that he surely knows how to study. To study nature with wonder and reverence and humility is a great gift—how much more is all this needed in the higher region of the spiritual world, and specially in this, the highest spiritual truth in regard to the destiny of the Church, “the mystery of God”!

Let me quote some words from a great master in education¹ which give emphasis to what was said:—
“All genius begins by coming down, and kneeling, and supplicating, and winning a way in, and nestling at last in the heart of spirit power, and learning all its tenderest perfection by devotion to its service—patient, watchful, long-suffering devotion. And if genius thus stoops to conquer, and cannot conquer without stooping, then any mind can stoop in like manner. Genius begins by loving exceedingly, and through love getting close to the noblest forms of life. All can walk part of the way with genius. A painter quickly masters the commonplace and outside husk of things, and goes on, and perseveres and penetrates into the subject, and loves it, and sees more than others because he loves, and strives to reproduce what he sees. A poet turns his eyes, and all the strength of his passionate, impressive

¹ Edward Thring, *Theory and Practice of Education*.

heart, on the objects which stir his inmost being. And so on, through the whole range, down to the schoolboy in the lowest form, as far as any true work is going on. . . . Teacher and taught must win true power by humbly striving to get close, to win a way by love into the heart of the subject they deal with. This is the highest form of working possible for man.

“From this it follows that the burglar who thinks to break in by force of intellect, and wrest the secret power of spirit beauty from the spirit within, is little likely to win the love that dwells there. The burglar-intellect will for ever be an outcast from the home of higher life. Love must woo love; the loving mind of one willing to be led gets closer and closer to the object of his love, ever clasps with reverent affection the beauty it would make its own, and strives to interpret every work of God or man by this only law that thought-creations obey.”

If such be the spirit to which alone Nature unlocks her secret laws and beauties, how much more do we need, in the mysteries of the heavenly kingdom, to stoop, and gaze, and wait until our hearts are made tender and receptive, and it pleases the Divine love to give us some insight into the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles.

Let us now turn to speak of the study of

missions, as something for which we need the deep humility that is conscious of its ignorance, and has no confidence in its own understanding; the reverent waiting and patience that is willing to gaze and listen to what God's Spirit can reveal in our life; and the love and devotion that gives itself away to be mastered and led by Divine love whither it will.

And what is it a pastor will need specially to study? In the missionary problem there are three great factors. The world in its sin and misery; Christ in His dying love; the Church as the link between the two.

The first thing is: Study the world. Take some of the statistics that tell of its population. Think, for instance, of some three million of the heathen and Mohammedans dying every month; dropping over the precipice in the gloom of thick darkness at the rate of more than one every second. Or take some book that brings you face to face with the sin and degradation and suffering of some special country. Take, for instance, a book like *Across India at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century*, by Miss Lucy Guinness (Rel. Tract Soc.). I know of no book that, by its diagrams, its maps with letterpress, its statistics, so compels the reader to stop and ask himself whether he believes, whether he feels, what he has read. Pause and meditate and pray, asking

God to give you an eye to see and a heart to feel that misery. Think of these 300 millions that they are your British fellow-subjects. Look at the picture of that man worshipping, with a reverence many a Christian knows little of, a cobra cut in stone, until you take in what it means, and cannot forget it. That man is your brother. He has, like you, a nature formed for worship. He does not, like you, know the true God. Will you not sacrifice everything, sacrifice yourself, to save him? Study, sometimes in its great whole, sometimes in its detail, the state of the world, until you begin to feel that God has placed you in this dark world with the one object of studying that darkness, and living and helping those who are dying in it.

And if at times you feel that it is more than you can bear, cry to God to help you to look again, and yet again, until you know that the need of the world makes it the very place where you choose to dwell. But remember always, the strongest intellect, the most vivid imagination, the most earnest study, cannot give you the right sense of these things;—nothing but the Spirit and Love of Jesus, waited on to make you feel what He feels, and love as He loves.

Then comes the second great lesson: Christ's love, dying for these sinners, and now longing to have them won for Him. Oh, do not think you know that dying love, that love resting on and

thirsting for every creature on earth! If it takes time, and a humble, reverent, loving spirit, to enter into the meaning and spirit of nature and its beauty,—what think you, my brother minister, is it an easy thing to enter into the Holiest of All, the sanctuary of God's love, and in very deed have it possess our hearts? Love is needed in the poet who would woo the secrets of nature. The Divine love, Christ's love to every creature, can only be known and felt by the loving heart that gives itself up to it, that reverently waits for it as it pleases to make itself known. If you would study the missionary problem, study it in the heart of Jesus. The missionary problem is a personal one—that is meant of every believer. But it is specially true of the minister, who is to be the pattern, the teacher, of believers. Study, experience, prove the power of the personal relationship, that you may be able to teach well this, the deepest secret of true mission work.

And then with Christ's love there is His power. Study this until the vision of a triumphant Christ, with every enemy at His feet, has cast its light upon the whole earth. The whole work of saving men is Christ's work, as much to-day as on Calvary, as much with each individual conversion as in the propitiation for the sins of all. His Divine power carries on the work in and through His servants.

In studying the possible solution of the problem, in any case of special difficulty, beware of leaving out the omnipotence of Jesus. Humbly, reverently, patiently worship Him, until Christ's love and power become the inspiration of your life.

And the third great lesson to study is—the Church the connecting link between the two, between the dying Saviour and the dying world. And here some of the deepest mysteries of the missionary problem will be found. That the Church should really be the Body on earth of Christ, the Head in heaven, as indispensable to Him as He is to it! That His omnipotence and His infinite redeeming love should have linked themselves, for the fulfilment of His desires, to the weakness of His Church! That the Church should now these hundred years have heard the preaching, **Missions the supreme end of the Church!** and yet be so content with a state in which that end is not counted the supreme thing! And that the Lord should yet be waiting to prove most wonderfully how really He counts His Church one with Himself, and be ready to fill her with His Spirit and power and glory! And that there is abundant ground for a confident faith that the Lord is able and waiting to restore the Church to its pentecostal state, and so fit it for carrying out its pentecostal commission!

In the midst of such study there will grow up

the clearer conviction of how really the Church is His Body, endued with the power of His Spirit, true partaker of His Divine love, the blessed partner of His life and His glory. And the faith will be awakened that if the Church in her members, who see the evil and believe in the Divine possibility of deliverance, will but arise and give themselves, in true renunciation of all, to their Lord, the pentecostal glory can still return.

The world in its Sin and Woe, Christ in His Love and Power, the Church as the Link between the two—these are the three great magnitudes the minister must know if he is to master the missionary problem. In his study he may have to go to Scripture, and to missionary literature, and to books on theology or the spiritual life; but in the long run he will ever have to come back to the truth: the problem is a personal one. It demands a most complete and unreserved giving up of the whole being to live for that world, for that Christ, for that Church. And it demands, as we have already shown, that that personal surrender shall not merely be that of a student who is determined to master some human problem, but of one who, like a true observer of nature, gives himself humbly, reverently, lovingly, to wait, and gaze, and listen till the spirit-world unlocks its secrets. The Living Christ can manifest Himself; He can, to the penitent, patient supplicant,

impart His love in its power. He can make His love ours, that we may feel as He does. He can let the light of His love fall on the world, to reveal at once its need and its hope. He can give the experience in the soul of how close and how real is His union with the believer, and how divinely He can dwell and work in us. The missionary problem is a personal one, to be solved by the power of Christ's love. Let the minister thus study it, and he will learn to preach in new power—Missions, the great work, the supreme end, of Christ, of the Church, of every congregation, of every believer, and, specially, of every minister.

We have said that the first need of the ministry, if it is to fulfil its calling in regard to missions, is to study them. But when light begins to come, and the mind is convinced and the emotions are stirred, these must at once be translated into Action, if the knowledge and sentiment are not to remain barren. And where shall this Action begin? Undoubtedly in prayer, more definite prayer, for missions. It may be for the awakening of the mission spirit in the Church at large, or in his own church, or in special congregations. It may be for some special field or station. It may be for God's leading in regard to his own people or the Church around him. It may be, it must be, for himself very specially, that God would give and ever renew the

mission fire from heaven. Whatever the prayer be—the study must lead at once to more prayer, or the fruit will be comparatively small. Without this, there may be more interest in missions, more work for them, better success in organization and collections, while the real growth of the spiritual life, and of the love of Christ in the soul, is but very small.

Let us turn aside a moment to think of this. In all religions there are two factors—God and man. Religion ever has its character from the degree of prominence which either of these receives. When man's will and work are in the foreground, the spiritual life is feeble; God's presence and power are little known. It is very markedly so in missions. You may have people who read missionary books and faithfully give liberal subscriptions as part of their religion, while there is but little love to Christ or prayer for His kingdom. You may, on the contrary, have humble, simple people, who can give but little, but with that little give their whole heart's love and prayer. The one is the religion in which man is prominent; the other is on a higher and more spiritual level, in which the love of God is the supreme aim. No one needs to watch more earnestly than the minister to see that the missionary enthusiasm he fosters in himself and others is, in very deed, the fire that comes from heaven in

answer to believing prayer to consume the sacrifice. The missionary problem is a personal one. The minister who has solved it for himself will find grace to lead others to find its solution too in the constraining power of Christ's love.

THE GREAT COMMISSION

Every minister holds office under the Great Commission. Each of us is to take to heart the world-wide field committed to our care. In addition to the corner in which we labour, we are responsible for aiding in getting the whole occupied. Each of us ever needs to study our Commission afresh, to see that we rightly understand and truly fulfil it. Let us, in view of the sad failure of the Church, and the cry for the restoration of the pentecostal state, once again listen to the words in which our Lord intrusts us with the commission to see that the message of His love reaches every human being.

And Jesus spake, All power is given unto Me in
heaven and in earth

The All of unlimited power

Jesus reveals Himself as the Omnipotent One, seated at God's right hand, ruling in the midst of His enemies, making His people willing in the day of His power. That was His Coronation day, when He received the Spirit to fill His disciples with power, and make thousands, even of those who had crucified Him, bow at His feet.

In this Jesus, the Triumphant Lord, missions have their origin, their power, their certainty of success. The word He spake made His disciples strong. Let us humbly bow and wait until the vision and the word of the Omnipotent Christ deliver us from every fear, whether of the Church's not being willing in the day of His power, or His enemies not bowing at His feet.

Go ye therefore, teach all nations, and preach the
gospel to every creature

The All of unbounded love

He died for all; His dying love thirsted for all; His love in heaven seeks all. In these words all nations,

every creature, He reveals to His Church the boundless love that is to be the measure of their love. In that word He speaks it into the very heart of His people, and there begins to burn within them a love that cannot rest till every living being knows of Jesus.

Brother ministers! has this love got possession? does it burn in us?

**Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I
have commanded you**

The All of universal obedience

He had taught His disciples the heavenly blessedness of obedience. If ye love Me, keep My commandments: and the Father will send you the Spirit; and the Father will love you; and I will love you; and I will manifest Myself to you; and We will come and make Our abode with you; and ye shall abide in My love; and ye shall be My friends (John xiv. 15). And they were to go out, that the vilest and most hardened, His very enemies and murderers, might be changed and be taught to observe all things whatsoever He had commanded.

Brother ministers! have we understood the high aim of our commission—to lead to a life, and gather into a Church, of universal obedience?

**And lo, I am with you all the days, even unto
the end of the world**

The All of unceasing fellowship

The Commission ends where it began—with Jesus Himself. There it was His Power; here it is His Presence. All the days, and all the day, His Divine abiding fellowship is to be the portion of His obedient disciple. No trials, or difficulties, however dark; no labours, however wearying or fruitless; no opposition or

suffering, however painful; no conscious weakness or unworthiness, however great, can break this promise, or prevent His holy, blessed fellowship with His servant. To every one who accepts the Commission and lives under it, the holy nearness of Jesus is secured.

Brother ministers! let us seek by the Holy Spirit a deeper, a full entrance into our Lord's Commission, and an entire surrender to its service: He will make His promise true.

What was it that enabled these poor fishermen so simply to accept, and so loyally to carry out, this so Divine Commission? Two things.

The one was: Their hearts had been prepared for it by their intense devotion to Jesus. They had learnt to love Him. They had gone down with Him into His death. They had been quickened in His resurrection life. He was their all in all. His words were to them as water to the thirsty.

The other: It was Jesus Himself who spoke the words. Not a book or a messenger, but Jesus Himself. Oh! come, let us rise from the Commission to our Ascended Lord, and wait on Him. And as we patiently bow for Him to reveal first the Power in which He works, then the Love with which He longs for every soul of man, then the blessed obedience He teaches us to claim for Him, and then the joy of His unchanging Presence He bestows, we too shall learn to wait to be clothed with power, and in part help in leading Christ's Church back to its pentecostal fulness of the Spirit for the work it has to do.

CHAPTER IX

A Call to Prayer and Humiliation

IN the previous pages I have more than once had occasion to speak of prayer. As I come to the closing chapters of the book, and review the argument, I feel that all that has been said will profit little, unless it lead up to prayer. As we look at the extent of the field, and the greatness of the work that has yet to be done; at the utterly inadequate force which the Church has as yet in the field, and the absence of any signs that she is ready at once to place herself and all her resources at her Lord's disposal; at our absolute impotence to give life either in the Church at home or the work abroad, and our entire dependence upon the power that comes from above in answer to prayer and faith; at the love of our Lord to His people and to the perishing, and the promises He has given and waits to fulfil—we feel that our only hope is to betake ourselves to prayer. Prayer, more prayer, much prayer, very special

prayer, in the first place, for the work to be done in our home Churches on behalf of foreign missions, is indeed the one great need of the day. "Our help cometh from the Lord, who made heaven and earth."

If I may be allowed to say it, I was somewhat surprised at the little direct mention that was made of prayer as one of the most important factors, the chief source of power, in mission work. Chapter VIII. of the Report is indeed entitled **Prayer and Beneficence**, but almost all the addresses deal chiefly with the latter subject. Mr. Eddy spoke of the unselfish prayer-life as developed by the use of prayer cycles. In a short but suggestive address Mrs. J. H. Randall said—

"One great and imperative need to-day of foreign mission work is the almost forgotten secret of prevailing prayer. Missions have progressed so slowly abroad because piety and prayer have been so shallow at home. Only get people **praying** for mission work, and they **must give**. Nothing but continuous prayer will solve the missionary problems of to-day. God must be inquired of to do these things for them. Ye have not because ye ask not. God has promised great things to His Son and His Church concerning the heathen. God has promised great things to His children in the work of extending and hastening His kingdom. But notice—these promises are conditioned. His Son, His Church, His children, **are to intercede and to sacrifice**. The consequence of habitual intercession will be a new outpouring of the

Holy Spirit upon the individual, the Church, and upon all the missionary work of the world. Whoever prays most, helps most."

If these words are true,—and they are the very truth of God,—surely the first care of the leaders of mission work in our churches and societies, to whom the spiritual training of their members is intrusted by God, should be to seek for grace and wisdom from on high to give prayer the place in all their appeals and exhortations which it has in the will and purpose of God.

Rev. W. Perkins said—

"The Foreign Mission Movement was born in prayer, and prayer is the vital breath by which it lives. . . . Great as the results are of foreign missions, they would have been a hundredfold greater if the Church of Christ had been what she ought to be in the two great matters of prayer and beneficence. . . . What is needed is that the spiritual life of every Christian, and that of the whole Church, should be so deepened, instructed, and inspired by the Holy Ghost, that it shall become as natural and easy to pray daily for foreign missions as to pray for daily bread. . . . There must be wrought in the heart of the Church the conviction that the law of sacrifice is the law of life, and that we must find time for prayer, even though it may mean the withdrawal of time from pleasure and business. Sacrifice alone is fruitful."

"There must be wrought into the heart of the Church by the Spirit of God a penetrating and abiding sense of the world's dire need, its misery and darkness and

despair. A power must come that shall make the need so real, so terrible, that our first feeling shall be one of helplessness in presence of it; our next feeling, 'I must go and pray about it'; and the next, 'I will give up and sacrifice some things that almost are like necessities, in presence of woes like these which Christ died to remove, and for the removal of which He waits, and has waited long.'"

If these words are to be taken seriously, and are to do any good, the great question is surely, How are the leaders of our mission work to waken and to train the Churches to the life of prayer they speak of? If it be true—the results of **Foreign Missions** would have been a hundredfold greater, if the **Church** had been what she ought to have been in the matter of prayer—there can be no more urgent duty resting upon the Church than to give itself to prayer, first of all, that its members at home may be roused and sanctified to take their part in the struggle with the hosts of darkness, "praying with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit." And if it be found that there are multitudes who give but do not pray, or give little and pray little, those who know what prayer is must only pray and labour the more earnestly that the life of Christians may be so deepened by the Holy Ghost, that it shall become "as natural and easy to pray daily for foreign missions as to pray for daily bread." God can do

it. Let it be our definite aim and prayer—God will do it.

I trust that what I have said in regard to the Conference, and the place it gave to the discussion of prayer, will not be misunderstood. In all nature so much depends upon the law of proportion. It is so in the spiritual life too. One finds nowhere Evangelical teaching in which the work of the Holy Spirit, and the power of prayer to secure His working, are not acknowledged. These truths have a place in the articles of our Creed. And yet it is only where they have a first place, and everything else is made subordinate to them, that the Christian life will be truly healthy. And it is only when, in the discussion of how our mission work is to attain greater success, and how the world can best be won for Christ, the power of the Holy Spirit, and the power of believing prayer, indeed get the attention and the prominence that they have in the mind of God, that the supernatural character of our work and its results can be fully apprehended. Of all the questions claiming the care and guidance of the leaders of our mission work at home, there is not one that demands more urgent consideration, that is more difficult of decision, and that will bring a richer reward, than this: **How can the Churches be educated to more persistent, fervent, believing prayer?** Prayer will at once be the means and the proof of

a stronger Christian life, of more devotion to Christ's service, and of the blessing of Heaven descending on our work. Much prayer would be the token that we had found again the path by which the pentecostal Church entered on its triumphant course.

We cannot teach people to pray by telling them to do so. Prayer is the pulse of the life. The call to more prayer must be connected with the deepening of the spiritual life. The two great conditions of true prayer are ever: an urgent sense of need, and a full assurance of a supply for that need. We must bring God's children to see and feel the need. The work intrusted to them, the obligation to do it, the consequence to ourselves, to Christ, to the perishing, of neglecting it, our absolute impotence to do it in our own strength—these great truths must get the mastery, and urge us. And then, on the other side, the love of Christ to us and to the world, our access to God in Him as Intercessor, the certainty of persevering prayer being heard, the blessedness of a life of prayer, and the blessings to the world it can bring—these, too, must live in us and encourage us. We must learn to pray in secret, and wait on God, and take hold on His strength. We must teach Christians to pray in little companies, with the joy and the love and the faith that fellowship brings. We must gather the Church at times in special seasons of prayer, when

the consciousness can be quickened and wrought deep into her life that, as her only and supreme aim is the bringing joy and glory to her Lord in the salvation of souls, so her only and sufficient trust is in Him who, in answer to her prayer, gives His Divine power, and works above what she can ask or think.

In the heading of this chapter I have spoken of **Prayer and Humiliation**. I confess that I somewhat missed this note in the Conference. Incidental mention was frequently made of shortcoming in pastors and laymen, in interest and prayer and beneficence, of the failure of the Church as a whole to do its duty. And yet the solemnity, the awfulness of the neglect of our Lord's commission, of the terrible sin of disobedience to His last command, of the entire lack of sympathy with the desire for gratifying His love or seeking His glory, on the part of the great majority of Christians, was not pressed as some think it should be, and must be, ere a return to the true state can come. There is an optimism that loves to speak of what is bright and hopeful. It thinks that thus thanks are brought to God and courage to His servants. It is above everything afraid of pessimism. And yet optimism and pessimism are errors equally to be avoided. They are equally one-sided; they are both extremes. The Divine wisdom has taught us, "I lead (walk) in the midst of

the paths of judgment." Experience teaches us that, when we have to deal with two apparently conflicting truths, there is but one way to see the true relation, and to be kept from giving either undue prominence. That way is to look first to the one as if it were all, and thoroughly master all it means. Turn then to the other, and grasp as fully all *it* implies. When we know both, we are in a position to walk "in the midst" of the path of truth.

Apply this to missions. On the one side there is, oh! so much to rejoice in, to thank God for, and to take courage from. In the Conference Report this note was often struck. And we never can give God too much praise for what He has wrought during the past century, and specially during the past twenty years. On the other hand, as compared with the work that has been done, there is so much work that has not been done that could have been done, that has not been done for no other reason than that the Church was not what she ought to be. When once we are brought face to face with this truth: Millions are perishing to-day without the knowledge of Christ, and will go on perishing, simply because the Church is not doing the work for which she was redeemed and endowed with God's Spirit, our hearts will spontaneously cry out in humiliation and shame, and make confession of our sin. The sin of blood-guilti-

ness ; the sin of disobedience ; the sin of unbelief ; the sin of selfishness and worldliness, grieving the Holy Spirit and quenching Christ's love in our hearts ; the sin of not living wholly for Christ, for His love and His kingdom—these sins will become a burden greater than we can bear, until we have laid them at our Lord's feet and had them removed by Him.

Let no one say that these are the sins of those who take no, or very little, interest in missions ; at a Conference you speak to those whose whole heart and life are given up to them. In Scripture we find that the men who were most jealous for the honour of God, most diligent in His service, and least guilty of the sin, were the first to confess it and mourn over it. Moses and David, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel—the godliest men of their times—were the men to take up the sin and bring it before God. Is not the sin of the members, the vast majority of them, to be counted as the sin of the whole body ? Are not the most devoted friends of Christ and of missions—the men who in church or society, as committee members, or workers, are the leaders—the very men who, in virtue of their spiritual insight, ought to feel the sin most, to carry it to God, and then to appeal to the erring ones to come and join them in humiliation and confession ? We speak of the need of a pentecostal era : it will have to be preceded by a great putting

away of and turning from sin. It is frequently said, Any very deep spiritual revival in the Church will have to be preceded by a deeper sense of sin. And that cannot be until the men, to whom the Lord gives the deepest sense of the sin of His people, have gathered them with a call to repentance and surrender to full obedience. The Missionary Appeal gives one of the grandest opportunities for convicting Christians of sin, as it points to and brings home the lack of true devotion and entire surrender to God's service, the lack of love and prayer and self-denial and obedience, and uncovers the worldliness and selfishness that lies at the root of all.

This has at all times been God's way. Humiliation precedes restoration and renewal. On the day of Pentecost it was the preaching of "this same Jesus, whom ye have crucified," that broke the hearts, and prepared for the receiving of the Holy Spirit. We still need the same preaching to God's people. "This same Jesus," whose command ye have disobeyed and neglected, whose love ye have despised and grieved, God hath made Him both Lord and Christ. If we are to summon Christians to a life of higher devotion in God's service, the wrong, the shame, the guilt of our present state must be set before them. We never shall win them from the low level of a selfish salvation, to live wholly and only for the love and honour of Christ,

unless the evil of the one be known and forsaken as the entrance to the other. It is when the sin is felt and confessed, that Christ's pardoning love will afresh be felt, and that a new experience of His power and love will become the incentive to make that love known to others. It is the contrite heart God makes alive. It is to the humbled soul He gives more grace. An essential element in a true missionary revival will be the broken heart and the contrite spirit in view of past neglect and sin.

This preaching of humiliation on account of our lack of obedience to Christ's great command will be no easy thing. It will need men who take time to wait before God for the vision of what this sin of the Church really implies. Hudson Taylor spent five years in China, and felt for its heathen darkness, without realising what it is. He spent five years more in England working and praying for China, and still he did not know how great its awful need was. It was only when he began to prepare a statement on China's needs, for publication, that he so felt the full horror of the thick darkness that he could find no rest till God gave him the twenty-four workers he had prayed for, and that he was willing to accept the responsibility to lead them out. We shall need men who will give themselves, in study and prayer and love, to take in all the terrible meaning of the words we

utter so easily—that the Church is disobedient to her Lord's last and great command. As they yield themselves to the awful truth of thirty millions a year dying in hopeless darkness, **because God's people do not care**; of Christ's love seeking in vain to find a channel through us to save the perishing ones, because we refuse to place ourselves at His disposal; of our resting perfectly content with a selfish religion that hopes for heaven with a Christ whose cross it refuses to bear upon earth—these men will begin to feel that they are dealing with a power of darkness in God's children which nothing can penetrate or remove but God's Almighty Power. They will feel that nothing less than the power of the Spirit who convicts of sin can convict or arouse the Church.

In such humiliation the pastors will feel that they must take the lead. The preaching of humiliation cannot be in power, if the pastor has no experience of it. The missionary problem is a personal one—to the pastor too. Both on their own behalf and as representatives of the people, they must take the lead. "Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar and say, Spare Thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them." Is there any one church or parish of which it can in truth be

said that the extension of Christ's kingdom is the one end for which it lives, and that its chief concern is that every man on earth should have the gospel without delay? Is it not admitted on every hand that the Church is not what it should be? ¹ And is it not plain that if this continues so, the evangelisation of the world in this generation will be an impossibility? With the Church as a whole so guilty before God, does there not appear to be a call for every minister to take some part of the blame to himself for this state of things, and to seek with his people to come under the deep conviction that they have not given themselves to Christ with that entire devotion which His love and His work in the world claim? That they have not sufficiently renounced their own interest and ease, and the spirit of the world, with all their strength to carry out the great command of their Lord? And all because their heart and life have not been wholly yielded to the transforming power of Christ's Spirit and love.

¹ Of the Free Church of Scotland Dr. Smith, in his *Short History*, says :—"Only one-third of the communicants give for Foreign Missions. This is still the day of small things with the prayer of faith and labour of love." And of the Church as a whole :—"The most hopeful estimate cannot go farther than this, that in the most Evangelical Churches not more than a third, and in the least active not more than a tenth, of the communicants pray, give, or in any way energeise for the nations whom the Lord charged every one of His members to disciple."

In whatever respect we regard the lamentable state of unfaithfulness in which the greater part of the Church lives, and in which we all in some degree share, there is no possible way for the ministry to remove the evil and promote a better state of things, but by every one of us confessing in the presence of God our lack of that enthusiastic love to Christ, of that whole-hearted surrender to the leading of His Spirit, which would have enabled us to be true witnesses to Him and to His will—that the one work of the Church and the believer is to have every creature know of Him and His love. Nothing can be more reasonable than that every minister, who sees and mourns the worldliness and selfishness of the majority of Christians, and the feebleness in work and prayer of so many who are not indifferent, should suspect himself to some extent to be responsible for this. The ministry has been instituted to secure knowledge of and obedience to Christ's commands in the Church: there is a manifest failure in this: then surely our one need is to confess our shortcoming, and cry to God for a holy, devoted, spiritual ministry, able to lead the Church to fulfil her destiny to bring the gospel to every creature.

When once the spirit of humiliation takes hold upon the ministry, there will be hope for the people. If in the public preaching and praying

the tone of contrition and confession be clear and deep, there will assuredly be a response in the hearts and the inner chambers of all earnest souls; and those who are now our best contributors will feel how much more God asks—and is willing to give, through His Holy Spirit—of fervent love and prevailing prayer, and the full consecration of all to His service. And it will be proved in our mission work: “He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” Repentance is ever the gate of larger blessing.

Listen for a moment to what He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand said to the Church of Ephesus. “I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them that are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for My Name’s sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.” It would be difficult to draw a picture more nearly that of a model Church. What diligence and zeal in good works; what patience in suffering; what purity in discipline; what zeal for orthodoxy; and what unwearied perseverance in it all! And what is best—all for His Name’s sake. And yet the Lord was not satisfied. “Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Re-

member therefore from whence **thou art fallen, and repent**, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and remove thy candlestick out of her place, **except thou repent.**"

The Church had lost its first love. The tenderness and fervour of the first love, of the personal attachment to the Lord Jesus, was now lacking. The works were still being done, **and that in His name**, with the acknowledgment of Him as their Lord, but they were no longer the first works, in the spirit of the first love. He calls them to look back, and remember whence they were fallen, and repent, and do the first works. It is possible to work much and earnestly for Christ and His cause in a way which leaves nothing to be desired, as far as man can judge; but there may be lacking that without which the works are as nothing in His sight—that which He counts the greatest of all—love, the love of a personal attachment to Christ. God is Love. Christ loved us and gave Himself. His love was a tender, holy giving of Himself, a personal friendship and fellowship. That love of His, cherished in the heart in daily close intercourse, responded to by a love that clings to Him, proved by His love pervading all our labour for others—it is this makes our work acceptable. It was this first love and enthusiastic attachment to Christ gave the pentecostal Church its power. It

was this pentecostal love out of which Christ calls them to remember that they were fallen, and to which, in repentance, they were to return. Nothing less can satisfy the heart of Him who loved us. Shall we not give it Him?

It is this pentecostal love to which we must return in our mission work. We saw how God made the Moravian Church the first Church of the Reformation to take the pentecostal stand, and give itself wholly to bringing the gospel to every creature. And we saw that it was love—a passionate, adoring contemplation of Christ's dying love, a passionate desire to make that love known, and, still more, to gratify that love by bringing to it the souls it had died to save—that made that least of the Churches in this respect the greatest of all. As we mourn over the state of the Church, with all its unfaithfulness to Christ and to the perishing souls of heathendom, let us, above all, penitently make confession of this sin—the loss of the first love. Let us remember how even Peter, after his fall out of his first love, could not be restored till the searching question, "Lovest thou Me?" had deeply wounded him, and he penitently, but confidently, had answered, "Thou knowest that I love Thee." And as we repent and mourn the past, let us wait before our Lord with the one prayer: Love, Lord! it is Thy love we need. We know about it; we have

preached of it ; we have sought to find it ; but now we wait in humility and reverence and wonder for Thee, the Loving One, to shed it abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. We look to Thee, at length, to enable us in its power to take the world so into our hearts that, like Thee, we only live and die that love may triumph over every human soul.

CHAPTER X

A Proposal—A Week of Prayer

THE question has come to me very strongly whether it would not be possible, in view of all that was said at the Conference of the shortcoming of pastors in preaching and leading, of members in taking an interest and giving and praying, to gather God's people unitedly to consider the greatness of the work to be done, the call to confession and repentance, the need of an entirely new standard of devotion throughout the Church, and the certainty that in answer to prayer God will open the windows of heaven and pour out His blessing. The Conference was indeed representative of the whole Church; but it is to be feared that but a very small fraction will become acquainted with what was said, or profit by its instruction. The expression was used, "**If this Conference and those whom it represents will do their duty**"— Would there be no possibility of bringing our representatives into contact with their large constituency, so that throughout it all

the sense of unity and obligation, and renewed consecration and hope, might be awakened ?

The first thought that came was whether some of the Committee, who had so enthusiastically laboured on behalf of the mission cause in the Conference, could not be got to devise and carry out some scheme by which the substance and spirit of the many earnest appeals made there might be brought to the notice of all the Churches. It was easy to see what difficulties there would be in the way. To be effective, it would almost need a new organisation, with a large machinery.

But then I was reminded of a world-wide organisation, with all its machinery ready to hand. We have the Evangelical Alliance, and the Week of Prayer in the first week of January. Would it not be something wonderful and blessed if the whole Church could gather at her Lord's feet during a whole week, and devote herself to this one thing—the extension of the kingdom through foreign missions ? There could be no grander opportunity for instruction as to the will of God and His promises ; the greatness of the work and its urgency ; the claim of Christ on the world and every creature in it as His inheritance, and on His people to be the willing messengers of His love. There is not a doubt that it would give an opportunity of enforcing Christ's last command, and rousing the children

of God to prayer and consecration such as it would be difficult to find in any other way.

I have no access here where I write to a copy of the letter in which the missionary at Lodiania first made the proposal for a week of prayer. I would not wonder if it were found that he had in his view more especially foreign missions. But, even if this were not so, the circumstances appear to be such as would fully justify for one year the setting aside of other subjects, and giving **the evangelising of the world as the supreme end of the Church** a prominence which it much needs and well deserves. It may be that in future it will be found that it is a help each year to give some special subject greater prominence. To take one year all the forms of Home Missions, another year National Righteousness, another Our Youth, with all the interests of Home and School and College, may be a means of fixing attention, and wakening interest in greater measure than by keeping to a subject for each day. This is only by the way — in regard to it I make no proposal.

But in regard to the plan of giving the whole week of January 1902, I feel I must make bold to put in an earnest plea. The distance is too great, and the time when the programme must be sent out is too near, to admit of my seeking by private correspondence to ascertain what likelihood there is

of the proposal being accepted. I can only lay my thoughts before the members of the Council of the Alliance, and any of the leaders in mission work who may feel interested in it.

My appeal is simply the summing up of what this book contains. There are many pleas that may be urged. When the Student Volunteer Movement announced its watchword, **The Evangelisation of the World in this Generation**, it met with a hearty response, and was unanimously adopted. This adoption of the watchword brings with it tremendous responsibility. We cannot raise the plea of ignorance. We cannot excuse ourselves by saying that we are doing our utmost. On behalf of the Church we have accepted the obligation, and our first duty is to seek to waken and guide the Church to obey her Lord's command. If there is one lesson that is taught by the Report of the Ecumenical Conference, it is this—that one-third of the members of our Churches are giving nothing, one-third are giving very little, of the remaining third but a small portion is doing all it can. Here is the revelation of a terrible disobedience in a large portion of Christ's body, bringing guilt and judgment on the Church. Can no plan be devised, by united action, to gather as many as possible of God's children together to consider and resolve what can be done ?

This is one plea. Here is another. Of the one thousand million of heathens and Mohammedans who are living without the knowledge of Christ, more than thirty million are dying every year, will die this year, into thick darkness. And that simply because the Church is unfaithful to her calling. Is it not time that we seek to waken every believer we can reach to realise the need, and in the power of Christ's compassion to give themselves to save some ?

The Church herself is losing more than can be told by her unfaithfulness. Her spiritual life is enfeebled ; worldliness and selfishness get the upper hand in millions of her members ; the power of God's Spirit is withheld in her ministrations, and countless prayers remain unanswered because God is robbed of the devotion and service He claims. Would it not bring health and blessing to many if the Church would unite in presenting herself before God, with her members, with the one prayer that all who have sinned through ignorance or feeble-mindedness may be roused to begin the work that is waiting for them ? Such an awakening of true mission interest would be a beginning of the quickening of the spiritual life, and might greatly strengthen the desire for that quickening in larger measure. But how to get the Churches to act together, and the Church members to gather before God for instruc-

tion and prayer? One can hardly conceive of a more glorious opportunity than the Week of Prayer would afford.

I cannot but think that our missionaries in the field would welcome the proposal, and be greatly strengthened by its carrying out. To feel that the whole Church was giving a week to spend with them before the throne of their Lord, in order to receive anew His instruction and equipment for the work, would be an inspiration. And it would be to the Native Churches an invaluable lesson as to our deep sense of the life we offer them being a life that comes from above, to be received and dispensed only as it is given in answer to prayer. They and we would feel how truly we are "one new man in Christ Jesus." And God, our God, would bless us.

One plea more. The heart of our Lord Jesus goes out in tender love towards all these dying souls. And in love as tender towards all His redeemed, whom He asked that they should prove their love by satisfying His love, by winning for Him the lost whom He died to save. He longs to make us share fully His own love and the joy of seeing God glorified in the salvation of men. He longs for this. Our heart can form no conception of what He must feel as He sees the coldness and neglect of so many of those who are indeed His blood-bought property. Would it not be right for once

to try and avail ourselves of the annual gathering at the beginning of a new year, and lead God's people to plead exclusively and intensely for this one blessing—an awakening of tens of thousands of believers to see that to labour to bring the gospel without delay to every creature is the sacred duty and the highest privilege and blessedness of every Christian?

The new century calls us to it. Much has been said of the past having been a missionary century. We thank God for all that He has wrought in it through His people. But all admit that unless the Church begins to live and love, to give and pray, on a very different scale from what she has been doing, there is not the least prospect of the evangelisation of the world within this generation. The first year of the new century is passing. We have had time to consider and say whether there are the signs of a liberality and a devotion greater than heretofore. We have had the opportunity of calculating what is needed if the work is to be done. How can we consecrate the century more effectually to God than by beginning its second year with a grand muster of the whole army of God on earth to renew its vow: The whole earth for Christ Jesus; His gospel for every creature?

A few words as to the carrying out of the scheme, should the Alliance feel at liberty to give

the invitation. It will need much prayerful thought and effort if the whole Church is to be wakened up to take part in it intelligently and heartily, and if we are to seek to avail ourselves to the utmost of the blessing it might work. Arrangements will need to be made by which different Churches and societies could, as far as possible, co-operate. Even where there cannot be united meetings, men of missionary enthusiasm or of spiritual power in different Churches might be lent to each other. Each society will not only seek how it can gain most for itself, but how it can impart to others most of the blessings it may have received from God. In view of what was said at the Conference of the responsibility of pastors, and the very large degree in which the home interest in foreign missions depends upon them, they ought to be approached with suggestions for securing their aid. A special study of the missionary question, the preaching of a series of sermons before the Great Week, to prepare Christians for it, the stirring up to prayer beforehand, would be a blessing to pastor and people. All who have been working as evangelists might be asked for the one week to give up their ordinary gospel preaching, and to give their help in this combined effort to win Christians to take their part in winning the world for Christ. They will have their recompense

in a new zeal in their helpers in the home work. And it will be seen that, for all those who have been gathered in to the Saviour during the Simultaneous Mission of the past year, there is nothing more helpful than to get them at the beginning of their Christian course thoroughly identified with the mission cause.

There will be need, too, of a special literature. Many Christians are so ignorant of the facts of the case, of Scripture truth bearing on it, of the true spirit in which the work is to be done, of the need and the joy of self-sacrifice, of the power of prayer, both as power to pray and power to obtain, of the unspeakable joy which the love of Christ can give in this service, and the need of an entire consecration to the loving Saviour, that one could wish that a number of simple, pointed tracts might be prepared and brought into the hands of those who have hitherto been comparatively indifferent. Or if four or six men of spiritual power could each write a paper on some different aspect of the great question, and these be issued as a little pamphlet, addressed to our more intelligent and interested Christians, this might prepare the way for their giving themselves to labour for the ingathering of a large harvest of new warm-hearted mission friends into the service of our King.

The question naturally arises: Who is to care

for all the correspondence and labour connected with preparing for such a great missionary campaign? I know not whether the Alliance, even if it consents to issue such invitation, would regard it desirable or possible to assume the leadership in such a matter. If not, might it not at least take the initiative in inviting a number of known leaders in mission work, and arranging with them for the appointment of a Committee of Management. If one or two men could be set apart by this body to circulate information, to waken interest, and to secure aid, local helpers would surely be everywhere forthcoming.

The Students' Volunteer Movement has hitherto confined its work very much to the ingathering and training of those who are ready to go to the foreign field. I have sometimes wondered whether they would not find it an admirable training if they were to offer themselves to ministers to help in meetings for creating missionary interest. The complaint has been made that, however desirable, it is so difficult to secure a visit from a missionary for every congregation. A volunteer, full of enthusiasm, who has studied some part of the mission field, or better, two or three in company, testifying to what their Lord has done for them, and their surrender to His service, might in many cases supply the lack. I do not know whether they have yet taken up the home work for

foreign missions into their programme. I cannot but think that it would be a blessing to themselves as well as to the Church. The chief question of the Missionary Problem is at this moment: How to get the Church quickened? To aid in solving that question is the best work that can be done for foreign missions. Out of that quickened life—the Holy Spirit's presence in the Church—will come the answer to every other question.

Extraordinary circumstances require extraordinary measures. The discovery of an imminent danger justifies exceptional changes, and men willingly approve and submit to the inconvenience. The state of the Church, the need of the world, the command of Christ, appear to me to call for very special efforts. The urgency of the case is extreme. There is no time to be lost. Our Master wishes every human being without delay to know of His having come to the world to save him. Let not the enthusiasm of our watchword, **In this Generation!** deceive us. It may make us content that meantime the thirty million a year who are passing away in darkness should not know Him. It may deceive us with the idea that it is certainly going to be done. But it is most certainly not going to be done if the Church remains on her present level. The one deep impression the Report of the Conference leaves is that, unless pastors and members

labour and pray with an entirely new devotion, the work cannot possibly be accomplished. It is so large, it is so difficult, it needs such an interposition of Divine power, that, unless the Church return to the pentecostal life of her first love, it cannot and will not be done. I say again, the urgency of the case is extreme. No sacrifice can be too great if we can only get the Church, or the more earnest part of it, to take time and wait unitedly before the Throne of God, to review her position, to confess her shortcoming, to claim God's promise of power, and to consecrate her all to His service. I cannot but think that the change in devoting the week exclusively to foreign missions would be acceptable to God and His people, and bring abundant blessing.

As we gather, one great company throughout the world, and ask the Master to repeat to us the Great Commission, and breathe its power into our hearts; as our hearts open out in faith to the promise of His infinite power and unchanging presence with us; as we yield ourselves in fresh obedience and consecration to the work of His love—His blessing and His Spirit will be given us. I cannot but believe that many a one who has been labouring heartily in this blessed service will be brought near his blessed Lord, and fired with new zeal to lead on others who are lagging behind.

And many a one who has been giving something, and praying or loving little, will be taught to see what the true secret is of partnership with Christ in this work. And many a one will hear a call to consider whether the Lord does not want his personal service in the field. Many a pastor will get a new insight into what he has really to train his people for, and how much, while labouring at home, he may do for the world at large. And I am confident that to many it may be made the beginning of a new revelation of what our Lord Jesus is and claims, and of the inexpressible blessedness of, like Him, only living to bring the world back to God.

I leave the proposal in the hands of those who have the power to decide, either in the Evangelical Alliance Council, or among the friends of missions they may consult. Should there be good reasons for not making the change, I shall not regret having made the proposal. It may direct attention to a great need, and in God's good time bring forth fruit in a way we do not expect. I commit the thought to His gracious care.

And may the day speedily come when His Church shall, in waiting on God, renew her youth, when the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS

Sunday, 5th January, to Sunday,
12th January

(These notes are given, not so much with a view to their being adopted, as to suggest to the readers of this the many various lines of thought which there are to be taken up.)

Sunday, 5th January. Praise. Psalm cxb. 11-13

Praise—for the glory of His kingdom in the earth—for what He has wrought—for the share He gives us in His work—for what He is doing and is going to do. 2 Chron. xx. 14-22.

Monday, 6th January. The Work and the Workers

The Work. Its extent. One thousand million heathens and Mohammedans. 2 Cor. ii. 16. Its difficulty. The power of Satan. Eph. vi. 12. Its urgency. The worth of a soul; thirty million a year dying.

The Workers. The Church, the Body of Christ. Every member, without exception, redeemed to take part in that work. Phil. ii. 15, 16.

Pray. For a vision of the need of the world, of the glory of Christ, of the calling of believers. For all missionaries, our representatives in the field. Col. iv. 2-4.

**Tuesday, 7th January. The Power for the Work—
the Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit. All mission work is God's own work. 1 Cor. xii. 6. The Holy Spirit the Mighty Power of God working in us. Eph. iii. 16, 17, 20. The Spirit given at Pentecost as the power to bring the gospel to every creature. John xv. 26, 27; Acts i. 8. All failure owing to the loss of this power. Gal. iii. 3. All real mission work, in giving, praying, working, only of value as the power of the Spirit is in it. Rom. xv. 16. God's promise of the Spirit meeting us, and our prayer for the Spirit meeting Him, the only hope for our missions. Acts iv. 31.

Pray. For the power of the Spirit as the enthusiasm of Christ's presence and love in the Church, in missionary societies, in your own congregation, in your own life, with the one aim of witnessing to every human soul of Jesus. Luke xxiv. 47-49; Acts i. 8.

Wednesday, 8th January. Humiliation and Confession

Confession. Of the terrible failure of the Church to know and fulfil her mission. Of the lack of entire consecration to Christ's honour and kingdom. Of the lack of love and self-sacrifice in giving and praying. Hag. i. 1-11; Mal. iii. 10; Phil. ii. 21.

Humiliation. The only path to restoration. Isa. lviii. 1, 2, 6, 7; Gen. xlii. 21. Pray for the Spirit to convince of sin.

Thursday, 9th January. The Spirit of Supplication

Prayer. Its place. The chief factor on man's side in doing God's work. The key to all heavenly blessing and power. Luke xi. 13; John xiv. 13, 14; Eph. iii. 20.

Its difficulty. It needs crucifixion of the flesh to strive and labour (agonise) (Rom. xv. 30; Col. iv. 12), to watch in prayer. It needs a spiritual mind to delight in fellowship with Christ, and to believe that our prayers will prevail.

Its urgent necessity. More men and more money are needed; but the need is greater of more prayer, such as ushered in Pentecost. Acts i. 14.

Pray. That in this week of prayer God may give the spirit of prayer. And that there may be a great increase of secret, habitual, fervent, believing intercession for the power of the Spirit in our mission work.

Friday, 10th January. Consecration and Service

Consecration. If confession has been real, if prayer has been honest, there must follow a new surrender. 2 Chron. xv. 8-15. This implies a turning away from all sin, and from all shortcoming, to a life of entire obedience and devotion. 2 Cor. v. 15.

It implies specially a very personal giving of one's self to the Lord Jesus and His love, to be by Him kept, and used, as His own property and possession. 2 Tim. ii. 21; Tit. ii. 14. Everything depends on this: the missionary problem is a personal one.

Service. It implies that we take up the service of Christ in seeking souls for Him. Isa. liii. 10. In caring for missions by interest, and giving, and praying, and fellowship with others. And also in making Him known to those in whose midst we live.

Saturday, 11th January. Faith and its Divine Possibilities

Faith. The power in man that corresponds to the power of God. Matt. xix. 26; Mark ix. 23. It is the

power that leads to prayer, grows strong in prayer, and prevails in prayer. Mark xi. 24. It is the power that overcomes the world, because Christ has overcome it, and faith lives in union with Him. John xvi. 33; 1 John v. 4, 5.

Missions have no foundation or law but in God's purpose, God's promise, God's power. These Divine possibilities are the food of faith, and call every mission friend to this one thing—to be strong in faith, giving glory to God. Rom. iv. 20, 21.

Pray. That this week may lead to a deep revelation of God's readiness and power to fulfil His promises to His people, and a great quickening of true faith in every mission worker and helper at home and abroad.

Sunday, 12th January. The Love of Christ.

Rom. viii. 31

Its triumph in every human heart our aim. Phil. ii. 13.
Its possession our only power. 2 Cor. v. 14.

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