

church cannot be a living church without a living interest in the spread of the gospel, in mission work. An interest in missions is not something which may or may not characterize a church; it is the very test of the life of the church. The first duty of the Christian Church is to make conquests over the world of the kingdom of God. Interest in missions, work for missions, giving to missions, is not an immaterial feature of church life, a sporadic duty, which may be overlooked in the life of a church, and for long periods of time be held in abeyance while the church nevertheless lives and thrives. On the contrary, the spirit of missions is the very life of the church. Without an interest in missions no Christian Church has the true life of Christ. To say that such or such a church "is a strong church, but takes no interest in missions," is like saying that so and so is a strong man but has only one lung and a weak heart! Such a statement involves a contradiction in terms. If a church is the Church of Christ it has life eternal. It knows Him whom we know is life eternal. If we know Him, if we know how He blesses and enriches life, we cannot rest content and inactive while so many of our fellow-men are without this precious and enriching knowledge. In proportion as a Church of Christ knows the Saviour of men and has His Spirit, it uses every means He has given it to make Him known to others. If our churches do not fully use their means for this most Christian end, they are not giving evidence that they have in them the life of Christ. No other form of activity can be substituted for this, the essential work of the Church. So to hold up Christ before the world that the presentation of Christ's life and teachings through the life and deeds of Christians shall perpetually draw men to Christ, is the first great duty of the Church.

It is true that the work of Christian education, the work of building up Christians on their most holy faith, must go forward through the ministry of the gospel to Christians. Pastors do well to emphasize this upbuilding power of the preaching of the Word. But woe to the minister of the gospel who is content without a constant harvest of souls, and without teaching his people to give freely to missions. So subtle is the insidious tendency to trust to other agencies than the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the enlightening power of the Spirit breaking out of the Bible in answer to prayer, so dangerously easy is the temptation to rely upon other sources of strength for the life of a church, that David Livingstone was led to say of Christianity that it is like a vine, "it requires perpetual propagation to attest its life and its genuineness." You can know that it is alive only by its power to propagate itself. If a man is a Christian he will bring others to Christ. Unless a church is bringing others to Christ the presumption is that its members are not Christians. For we cannot be Christians unless we abide in Christ; and we have his word for it, that if we abide in him and his words abide in us, we shall bear much fruit. The danger of too many Christians, the weakness of too many churches, lies in their forgetting that the chief business of Christians is to be in their home life and through their missionaries in foreign fields, such witnesses for Christ as shall continually turn souls to Him. If a Church member's life or a minister's preaching is not full of Christ it will not be blessed, however full of culture or of money-making for its own uses it may be. And preaching and Christian living that is full of Christ abound in the presentation of Jesus as the Saviour of men—the Saviour from sin, the Saviour from death. It is this divine saving power that

makes Christ what he is. It is this that is the essence of Jesus Christ, as the old scholastic defined essence, "that by virtue of which a thing or a person is, and is what he is." It is his Saviourhood that is the central doctrine as to Christ; and it is this revelation of God's saving love in Christ that makes Jesus the Saviour, the express image of His Father's glory. We are learning that for a minister to say, "My church is my field of labor," is a narrow half truth. The ringing words, "the world is the field, the church is the force, the minister is the leader," are the expressions of a true aggressive Christian spirit. "To seek and to save that which was lost" was our Saviour's mission from heaven to earth, and is our Saviour's commission now, given to every believer, given from heaven to be carried out on earth.

Whatever other work our Christian Churches may leave undone, we cannot truly be Christian and suffer our mission work to languish. There are not two classes of Christians in the Church—the class of missionaries who have been sent by their Master to win souls, and the other class all other Christians who are not missionaries, and so have not been sent, not commissioned to win souls for Christ. All Christians are sent of God to win men to him through Christ. "Ye are my witnesses," says Christ to His disciples. Every Christian is under obligation to be a missionary, one sent from God to win men to God.

A church that generously supports missions will support everything else which it ought to support. Who has ever known a church which was weakened spiritually, morally, or financially by giving too much to missions? On the other hand, who has not known church after church which has been deafened, dwarfed, ruined, because it had no interest in missions, because of the small, self-centred spirit which limited the giving of the church to the "maintenance of its own ordinances?" There is no fear for the other financial interests of the church which gives generously to missions.

## NOTABLE EVENTS IN CHINA.

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As soon as the Emperor of China saw that the war with Japan could not be averted, a request was made through the Foreign office to the diplomats of various countries, that all foreigners throughout China remain at their several posts and pursue their various callings, promising protection.

In some cities, notably Peking, the people, not distinguishing between the Japanese and other nationalities, became exceedingly insolent, and even violent. The emperor at once issued a proclamation threatening the severest punishment upon those who ill treated anyone belonging to a friendly nation. This is the first instance in modern times of a Chinese emperor personally issuing a proclamation in favor of foreigners.

In the interior many officials began personally to make the acquaintance of missionaries, and in some instances giving receptions in their honor, thus wonderfully increasing the prestige of the missionaries among the common people. The viceroy of one province, after personally examining their work, publicly proclaimed, what other officials for the first time discovered, that the missionaries' work was only for the "good of the people," and that they only sought to "save men."

The Dowager Empress of China, regent of the empire