

THE FIELD
IS
THE WORLD

Missionary Department

"Pray, Study, Give."

THE SEED
IS
THE WORD

September Missionary Meeting

SUBJECT FOR THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 25:
"Our Missionary Responsibility."

MATTER ASSIGNED FOR STUDY: Chapter 8,
"Our Share in China."

"Remember that this splendid book, with others, uniform in size and style, but dealing with different subjects, should be ordered from Rev. Dr. Stephenson, Methodist Mission House, Toronto, who will gladly advise you on all matters connected with the Forward Movement for Missions."

The chapter under study for our meeting gives a number of definite reasons showing why the responsibility of our church is great for the speedy evangelization of West China. Each of these reasons might well be assigned to a separate person for statement in the meeting. They should treat the subject matter something after the following order:

1. Deal with the permanency of Szechuan as an important strategic centre.

Geographically it occupies a striking and commanding situation, and must continue to do so always.

Commercially it is in a highly important relation to thousands of other cities, towns, and villages, reached by the great highways that stretch far out on every side.

The positive need of the vast province appeals to us. "Thousands of temples, tens of thousands of priests, but no uplift, no outlook, no vision of God, no passion for souls, no sacrifice for humanity."

The accessibility of the people gives a permanent value to the place and our work in it. No objection is any longer made to the prosecution of Christian missions, and our representatives are free to go everywhere proclaiming the Gospel.

The division of the vast territory among the Christian churches for evangelization makes the responsibility for each for its own sphere a distinctly individual one. There can be no shifting of duty, no shirking of work, no transference of obligation to another, for each church knows its own task and is to be held accountable therefor.

2. Outline our new field, for which as a church we are directly responsible.

A wall map or an outline sketch on a blackboard will be desirable here. Point out the great Chengtu plain, with more people living in it than there are in all Canada. Show how this populace includes all classes and conditions, giving rise to the need of a varied and competent missionary force.

But there are other tribes of people living all around about that need the Gospel, and fully 14,000,000 souls have a right to look to us for the Word of Life.

Conclude this portion of the study by having some person read, or, better still, recite the impressive paragraph found on the upper half of p. 141—"A Magnificent Challenge."

3. The next contributor to the programme may deal with the question of ways and means, showing how our responsibility is to be adequately met.

The work needs more helpers of various kinds. Medical missionaries, evangelists, pastors, teachers, craftsmen, nurses: in short, men and women with every conceivable quality, gift, and grace, to meet the varying demands that arise continually, are needed to overtake the work.

A great Union Christian University is being erected, and as our young Canadians may find suitable and satisfactory training in any of our home colleges, so it is intended to provide similar educational facilities for all who desire them in the far-away capital of Western China.

Many outstations are to be manned. Some of them are cities as large as Halifax, Hamilton, Ottawa, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, and Montreal. Others, though less populous, are important centres in the thriving agricultural districts. In all of them we should have a station, but only in a few has the church as yet been able to plant work.

The positive and pressing needs for a greatly enlarged force and for much increased financial support are easily seen.

4. The fourth person taking part may well point out the wonderful promise for the future that China gives.

The awakening of the nation, its desire for modern methods of all kinds, its earnest enquiry for intellectual culture, its sincere longing for a satisfying religion—these and other characteristics of this great people all point to a brighter and better day when the land shall shine in the brightness of the Light of Life.

Close by having the last paragraph, "China's Challenge," read or recited to the meeting.

OUR MISSIONARY RESPONSIBILITY.

In addition to the study of the topic (which relates wholly to China if you confine yourself strictly to the text-book), it will be profitable to examine the question of responsibility in some such way as the following:

We are under responsibility for missionary activity to—

1. God. From Him we have received the measureless blessings of life, of His revealed truth, of Christian privileges, and because of our utter dependence on His bounty and grace, we are under the obligation of gratitude. This cannot be expressed fully in words of thanksgiving addressed directly to His ear, but should call forth our praise before our fellow-men. (Have some member read aloud the 145th Psalm.)

2. Our fellow men. Having what many of them have not, it is our duty to give it to them, for they need it too. This is the basis of Paul's statement as he makes it in such passages as Romans 1: 14, 15, and 1 Cor. 9: 16. (These and similar passages should be studied that it may be made clear how, as with Paul so with us, a sense of privilege received from God brings a corresponding obligation towards mankind. Until others have what they need and we have, we are under debt to them. That debt can never be paid unless we give them the blessing and privilege which we enjoy. Our thought, prayer, plan, purpose, all should be given for others, and the poem which follows may well be recited in this connection.)

OTHERS.

BY C. D. MEIGS.

Lord help me live from day to day
In such a self-forgetful way,
That even when I kneel to pray,
My prayer may be for others.

May self be crucified and slain,
And buried deep, and all in vain
Attempts be made to rise again,
Except to live for others.

Take all my selfishness from me,
Ope' Thou mine eyes that I may see
That even what I do for Thee
Must needs be done for others.

And when on earth my work is done,
And my new work, in heaven's begun,
May I forget the crown I've won,
While thinking still of others.

Others, Lord, yes, others.

May this my motto be,
"Help me to live for others
That I may live for Thee."

3. The Church. As our relation to God calls for gratitude, and our association with our fellows puts us under obligation, so our connection with the church calls for Loyalty. There is but one good reason for the church's existence, one continuous cause of her activity on the earth, and that is expressed in the passages of which Luke 24: 46-48 is a type. (Let it be made clear that the supreme duty of the Christian Church is the extension of the Kingdom of God throughout all the earth, and that if she fails to fulfil this duty she ceases to be Christian.)

4. To Ourselves. The highest measure of personal development is impossible without spiritual activity, and if we would realize the greatest profit it must be because we receive, not to hold for self-enrichment, but to give out again in diffusive benediction. There is a conception of Christianity that is essentially selfish. It withholds and tends surely to poverty. There is a contrasting idea of it that implies a scattering of good, and which means increase. If we would be what God desires for us, if we would do what he has in mind regarding us, we are under the responsibility of Growth, and to grow we must give, and by such giving we shall have more abundantly. (Let Hebrews 13: 7-15 be read here, and the beautiful figure of the passage be examined and applied.)

5. To Christ. Here the test is that of Obedience. For but one thing every Christian is accountable in his personal relation to his Lord, and that is to do just as He says as nearly as possible in the spirit and motive which He desires. This is well expressed in many passages. (Matthew 28: 16-20 gives the express command of the Master. For implicit trust in the promise therein contained, and for unquestioning obedience to the instructions given, every disciple to the end of the ages will be personally responsible. Let it be only understood clearly, that obedience is not optional with us, but that it is our duty to give the Word of Life to the whole world in the shortest possible limit of time.)

Do It To-Day

That deed of kindness you would do—
do it to-day.

That word to help your brother to be true—speak it to-day.

The time is rapidly passing by when service is open; and you and I

If we mean to answer our neighbor's cry,
Must do it to-day.

That straying one that you mean to seek—
seek him to-day.

That helping hand for one who is weak—
give it to-day.

Be helpful to-day—how foolish to wait
till dear ones pass through the pearly gate.

And then remorsefully cry, "Too late!"
Help them to-day.

—Our Dumb Animals.

"To succeed at last we must put God first."