

THE MISSIONARY CONCERT.

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1. *The cause of missions needs it.*—Missionary fervor must be fed with missionary facts. Ideal enthusiasm springs from personal knowledge of actual conditions. Men and moneys, prayers and petitions will not be offered for a cause when people are ignorant of its claims and its needs. Impulse must be preceded by instruction. Let Christ's soldiers at home receive regular bulletins from the front telling of their comrades' dangers, perplexities, and needs, and they will be inspired to send forward reinforcements and supplies.

2. *The pastor needs it.*—His own interest in missions needs spur and stimulus. A regular missionary meeting in his church will compel him to keep in touch with progress of his Master's kingdom outside his own parish. Often the most devoted pastor needs this incentive to systematic study of the great field. He needs it as an unequalled opportunity for securing the co-operation of his people in church work. In the Monthly Concert meeting he can draw out many a hidden talent. To one he can entrust the drawing of a map; to another, a general description of the country under consideration. A merchant can tell something about its commercial importance. A physician can speak of its climate, its diseases, its medical needs. A farmer can describe its agricultural products. A teacher can point out its system of education. The form of government can be assigned to a lawyer. Someone interested in natural history can speak of its flora and fauna. Its legends, its history, its religions can be allotted to others chosen by the pastor, according to their different tastes, while the work already accomplished by the missionaries can be presented by those who have made themselves especially familiar with the facts. The papers of any who have not sufficient confidence to read them in public may be read by others assigned for the purpose. In this way the pastor can guide his people in their reading, directing their steps into a most fascinating department of Christian literature. There will be many who cannot at first undertake such work. To these, verses to be read, or paragraphs from the missionary magazines, may be assigned; others can draw pictures of interesting objects connected with the subject, or may collect photographs and curiosities for exhibition at the meeting. The preparation of slides and the operation of lanterns and stereopticons will be in the charge of others. "A work for everybody, and everybody at work" can be more neatly realized at a Monthly Concert than anywhere else.

3. *The people need it.* The occasional missionary sermon by the pastor, valuable and indispensable as it is, is received by his people as a matter of course. It cannot deal with details. It offers no opportunity for personal participation in the study of missions. But the Missionary Concert stimulates the people to study for themselves this fascinating subject. It throws upon them an individual responsibility to become intelligent students of missionary facts, principles, and problems. It gives them a new joy as they thus participate in the work of the church. It supplies a definite point toward which they can direct their reading. It gives them a new sense of fellowship with their far-distant missionary comrades.

4. *The missionaries need it.*—They need it as much as the soldier away from home, alone on the solitary sentinel post, needs the reassurance that he is not forgotten by his comrades in camp—not forgotten in the prayers

and thoughts of his dear ones at home. The missionary will work hopefully, courageously, persistently so long as he knows that his heavenly Father is not forgetting him; but he will work still more hopefully, still more persistently if, in addition to this mighty assurance, he knows he is not forgotten by his brothers-in-Christ at home. To return to his native land and find so many churches in almost total ignorance of the field where he has been working, and of the grave issues that are confronting his station, to find hopeless confusion in the minds of many as to the most general geographical location of his adopted home,—all this is discouraging enough. But, in addition, to enter church after church and to find the allusions to the great and holy missionary enterprise confined to a single phrase of the "long prayer," brings a sense of loneliness and homesickness that makes him sometimes long to return to his solitary post before his furlough had expired.

II. THERE WAS NEVER A BETTER TIME FOR ADOPTING THE MISSIONARY CONCERT THAN THE PRESENT.

1. *The missionary enterprise was never in so interesting a stage as at present.* Its aspects were never so varied, its problems never so complex. It is to-day a part of the world's history, secular as well as religious. Its relation to recent events in China, in Japan, in Turkey offers most interesting themes for study. Its relations to commerce, science, politics, civilization repay the most careful inquiry. Acquaintance with its history, its motives, its achievements, its methods, is a part of a liberal education.

2. *The literature of missions was never so rich and varied.* The various missionary magazines were never more ably edited. Books of discovery, travel, biography, relating directly to the missionary enterprise in foreign, home, and city work, abound, while the works that touch indirectly the general subject are very numerous. The magazines and daily papers give an increasingly large space to subjects bearing upon the topics of the Monthly Concert, and most valuable and timely information may be secured from these sources from month to month. Postal facilities have made it possible to hear the freshest news from the foreign field, while the various Mission Boards are always ready to send speakers or the latest information relative to the topic under consideration. *The Missionary Herald*.

THE MISSION WORK OF OUR CHURCHES THE HEART OF OUR CHRISTIAN LIFE.

Some extracts from an address by Pres. Merrill E. Gates, LL. D.

Often we speak of a particular church, or of a group of churches, as "not taking any interest in home missions," or "not taking any interest in foreign missions," as though it were quite possible for a church to be a living Church of Christ, yet to have as an immaterial idiosyncrasy, as a trifling peculiarity, this entire absence of all interest in mission work! As if a Church of Christ might choose quite at its own caprice between having an aesthetic interest in fine music for its own service, and paying hundreds of thousands of dollars a year to secure such music, and having an interest in home and foreign missions! We speak as though it were a matter of comparative indifference which of these two forms of interest should characterize a church. But the truth is, that a