

EPIPHANY APPEAL, 1898.

To the Reverend the Clergy and the Laity of the Church of England in Canada:

Brethren Beloved in the Lord,—During the late Conference at Lambeth no subject evoked such profound interest, and none was enforced by such repeated appeals, as the Church's obligations regarding Foreign Missions. Over and over again, it was affirmed in accents loud and strong that the work of making God's ways known upon earth, His saving health among all nations, stands in the first rank of all the duties which the Church has to fulfill. Christian missions may seem especially incumbent upon us in this age of world-wide national intercourse, but in truth they have been the Church's primary and imperative duty in every age: first, because God would have all men know His wondrous love, and that they are Christ's vast inheritance; secondly, because it has ever been the Divine method to bless man by man, and to save the perishing through the instrumentality of those who are being saved.

In accordance with this unvarying plan, the Church's Head has issued the unmistakable command to his followers—"Preach the Gospel to every creature"—"Ye shall be witnesses unto Me . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth." In the presence of these supreme facts, all imagined or possible objections to missions can have no more weight than the small dust of the balance. Brethren, we dare not stay to reason with objectors; the Master's bidding is imperative, and the ages lengthen, while His work is not accomplished. Alas! there have been long and shameful epochs in the history of Christendom, when the Church seemed to have all but forgotten the last commandment of her Lord. The splendid enthusiasm and fervid passion for missions which gave birth to the Winfrids and Ansgars and others of the middle ages in course of time died out. Only after the lapse of centuries were they revived in the heroism of the Jesuits, the Moravians, and the men of Halle. For two centuries after the Reformation British Christianity contributed scarce half a dozen names to the noble army of Christian missionaries. But blessed be God! there came upon our barrenness times of refreshing from His presence, and with them a growing realization of the great purpose for which the Church exists.

We speak of the present century as the era of modern missions, and yet one-half of it had passed away before any general and enthusiastic assault was made upon the kingdom of darkness. In the opening years of the century, the entire Christian world, apart from the Church of Rome, contributed to missions annually but three hundred thousand dollars, and it sent forth upon the great errand of mercy only two hundred and fifty persons, including catechists and teachers. Their work, too, was largely in European colonies, or in the islands of the sea. The teeming populations of India, China, Africa and Japan were at that time almost inaccessible; but when once the wall of exclusion which surrounded these peoples was broken down, the missionary fervour seemed to be born of the opportunity. Devoted men and brave women pressed into the field in steadily increasing numbers, till now, in every section of Christendom, men are, year by year, caring more, praying more, working more, and giving more for the glorious cause, with the result that it is no unusual thing for the English Church Missionary Society alone to send forth fifty or more new labourers in a single year. It may perplex our doubting hearts, perhaps, to think how many a pioneering band has toiled for years with no apparent success. Morrison, for instance, laboured for seven years in China, and Marsden for ten years in New Zealand, and the first missionaries in Sierra Leone for twelve years, before a single convert had been gained. We are apt to forget that when God has great purposes for His Church to fulfill, He commonly begins by trying the faith and patience of His instruments. The harvest is sure, but much of it can only be gathered in by the toil and seeming waste of human life. Yes, the harvest is sure! Witness the marvellous successes which have been achieved during the last two decades upon the African Continent, where

Mackenzie, and Bowen, and Vidal, and Steere, and Hannington laid down their lives. More than three hundred churches have been erected in the district of Uganda, while in these churches are to be found no fewer than twenty-five thousand worshippers. The cathedral at Mengo is large enough to accommodate four thousand persons, and congregations of a thousand meet in it for a week-day service. Here also are to be found seven hundred native teachers, supported entirely by the native Church. At Bonny, on the banks of the Niger, another great cathedral has been built, and in it congregations of one and two thousand persons assemble. In that deadly region where, for Christ's name's sake, fifty-three missionaries, or missionaries' wives, laid down their lives in the first twenty-three years of the Church's operations, there are now eighty-six clergymen. Sixty-two of these—among them two Bishops—are native Africans, and they minister to some twenty-five thousand Christians.

Compared with the vast populations of India, two million three hundred thousand Christians may seem a very small army; but is it little that Christianity has increased four times as fast as the Hindu and Mohammedan populations generally? or that the whole country is now covered with a network of missions? or that the native clergy now greatly exceed in number the European? or that the spirit of Christianity influences profoundly even those who reject its teachings, and is gradually dominating all ranks and classes of men? Surely all these things are but harbingers of the day when these vast nations shall behold the penetrating rays of a noon-day Gospel shining upon them with a light from which there can be no hiding. In the huge Empire of China there were, fifty years ago, but six Christians, unless there were unknown survivors of the early Jesuit missions; to-day the Anglican Church alone has over five thousand Chinese communicants, while the various Protestant communions claim forty-five thousand adherents more. In 1871 there were but ten known Japanese Christians; to-day there are forty thousand, while five Bishops of our communion and six hundred missionaries of all names are labouring in these islands. In the various mission fields of the Church there are now five hundred ordained native clergymen, and each year ten thousand adults receive the sacrament of Baptism.

The missionary force of the world, it is estimated, amounts to 70,000 persons, including those from Christian lands and their native associates. The missionary contributions of Christians, so far as they can be ascertained, now average \$15,000,000 annually, and there are over 1,000,000 native communicants. We bless God for the steady advance which the Church has been making during the last half century, and heartily we thank Him for these regenerated ones! But when we remember that there is still no more than one labourer (including both sexes and all grades) to every 14,000 of those yet waiting to be evangelized, we feel that we are not called upon so much to congratulate ourselves upon what has been already done, as to be concerned about what yet remains undone.

Let it be continually borne in upon our memories and our hearts that a thousand million souls exist upon whom the Day Star has not yet arisen. Shall it ever arise for them? Yes, verily! for the mouth of the Lord of Hosts hath spoken it! Not, however, until the whole Church has awakened to a full realization of her position and mission; not until every member is aflame with fervid desire to diffuse the light which has been enkindled in his own soul. How far below such an ideal do we, as a Church and as individual souls, stand in God's sight to-day! "In truth we have all need," says the Archbishop of Canterbury, to be "roused to the very bottom of our hearts—to be stirred to the inmost depths of our souls concerning that about which we ordinarily think so little." It is God's rule not only to bless man by man, but also to bestow the measures of His blessing in proportion to the earnestness with which we ourselves work in response to the impulses of His grace. When, therefore, the time shall have come that every single soul that has begun to love the Lord takes his full part in doing what the Lord has given him to do,

then indeed will the windows of heaven be opened and the blessing will descend as of a second Pentecost; converted souls will come flying as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows; a nation shall be born at once, and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

What are we of the Canadian Church doing to aid in bringing about this glorious consummation? The operations of our board in the foreign field are mainly carried on in Central Japan, where we are working from two chief towns in the Province of Shinano, viz., Nagano, the capital (population 25,000) and Matsumoto (population 17,000). Our staff consists of seventeen persons, viz.: four clergymen (of whom two are natives), a lady missionary who has gone out at her own charges, a lady medical missionary with whom are associated seven assistants, and four native teachers. Mr. Waller, who has been subject to frequent insults and acts of violence during his five years' residence at Nagano, has now gathered about him a considerable band of converts and workers, among them two Catechists and a most efficient native clergyman, Rev. J. I. Mizuno, who is a stipendiary of the board labouring in the Province of Echigo; and we read from time to time of confirmation classes of five, fourteen, and twenty persons, and of forty baptisms in one year. A successful effort has lately been made in Canada to raise funds for the erection of a church at Nagano. May we not hope that the board will be enabled to make a grant sufficient to cover the expense of its suitable equipment? Miss Smith, who has been our admirable medical missionary at Nagano for two years, during which she has encountered much persecution, serves twenty patients daily, but is as yet without a hospital, waiting till the funds already in hand for that purpose are supplemented by the contributions of those friends in Canada who have sent her there.

Matsumoto, also in the Province of Shinano, is our second centre. Here the pioneer work was begun by the Rev. Masazo Kakuzen, a stipendiary of the board, in the spring of 1894. He was joined by Mr. Kennedy in the autumn of the following year, and a catechist is now associated with them. The Christian converts at present are few, but there are 150 children on the roll of the Sunday school, and as the Sunday services are crowded with enquirers, we may be sure that a church will soon be required here also. Miss Paterson has been stationed at this post, and help is needed for the sustenance of the poor girls in her training school.

This really represents only about half the entire work of the Canadian Church; for there is a society lately formed working in part independently, and in part subsidiary to the board, which supports eight missionaries. They and their helpers are labouring in Japan, in China, in South America, and within sight of the Arctic Sea. This society also contributes to the support of nine others, labouring either in the fields just mentioned or among the Indians of our North-West Provinces. While we honour the zeal of this society, we cannot but believe that were our efforts united in one, more might be accomplished for the work we are each and all striving to do.

And what has the Canadian Church contributed for the support of the missionaries of the board, and for other objects in the foreign mission field? Our treasurer received for the year ended last July \$11,906.52. We lay it upon the consciences of our brethren whether this is an adequate response from a Church claiming 100,000 communicants? Eleven cents per annum for each communicant! Does that represent the interest of the Canadian Church in the supreme work entrusted to her by her Lord? Is it not too evident that while a few may have been giving up to the measure of their ability, the great majority utterly fail to recognize the gratitude which is owing by the Church for her own existence? A small increase of liberality all along the line, although falling far short of what deserves to be called sacrifice, would enable the board both to make adequate provision for the effective working of those already in the field, and to extend her operations to other fields which are "white unto the harvest."

May a well of living water spring up in every

heart, from stream of whom God's grace in the inspiration of unity; and so possess abroad the devote the stance until

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