

The village now seemed desolate. Children missed their teachers, and sick ones the visitors who had spoken to them of Jesus, but in less than three weeks twelve new candidates filled the vacant seminary. Let us shake hands with one of them. Several years before Behrens longed to be a missionary, but he was the main dependence of his aged parents, and as they would not give him up the pastor held him back. Not long after, on his death-bed, the father felt that he had done wrong, and begged the pastor that such a thing might never take place again in his family. The early love was still burning in the heart of the son, whose wife shared his devotion to the work, and when their only child died he again offered himself to go as a missionary. The pastor told him that though heir to the estate, he must enter the school on the same terms as the rest, and he not only agreed to that, but gave his estate also. This Mr. Harms accepted only on condition that if he ever had to leave the work it should be restored to him. So the mission owned a farm, which by careful management supported the candidates during their studies.

But success in missions always brings greater outlay, and this work formed no exception to the rule, for the growth of the work required a periodical to keep the people at home acquainted with the work abroad. As it gives us a glimpse of the editor, let us look into its opening address :

“And now I hear many a sigh, and words like these: ‘So many missionary magazines already, and here is another! What folly!’ Dear friend, if you sigh over this *once* I do *ten* times, for *you* only *read* it, and when you lay it down your trouble is over. But I must *write* it, every month a new one, though loaded with work enough already. Believe me, I would drop it if I dared, and if you ask, Why not dare? I answer, ‘The love of Christ constraineth me.’ Ever since the work began I have been urged to this, and when I shook it off, as one shakes the rain from his cloak, it only rained the harder till I was wet through, so I publish that the rain may cease, and indeed, I would have no love for Christ or for His people if I did not. So in the name of our God let it begin, and may our Blessed Lord say Amen, and grant me strength for the work.”

This was in 1854, and since then it has appeared regularly. Besides narratives of missions, it contains accounts of the work at home or sermons; so the missionaries were kept posted in home affairs, and the people at home with the trials, successes, and new enterprises of the missionaries. The editor writes as though chatting in his own family, and in such a Christlike spirit that the reader is not only informed concerning the kingdom, but is thrilled by its influence. This may explain why its monthly circulation reached 14,000 copies, larger than that of any other German periodical, sacred or secular, save one, and that does not exceed it. Though only a penny a number, in 1860 it yielded more than 2,000 crowns profit to the mission. This press furnished occupation to many of the people, and besides books for the mission, prints Bibles, catechisms, and hymn-books for home use, and never rest.