

## Canadian Pulpit.

No. 35.

## The White Fields and the Few Laborers.

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(Concluded.)

Japan, the land of the rising sun, barred against the gospel for centuries, but now quite open to its reception.

Korea, the hermit nation, 400 miles long by 200 miles broad, with a population of over 10,000,000, and all within reach of the gospel.

We have Mexico, too, our near neighbour, with its 8,000,000 square miles, and its population of nearly 10,000,000 waiting to be brought to Christ.

And far away, down in the Southern Pacific, there are clusters of islands, fair and beautiful, where every prospect pleases and only man is vile. These are the South Sea Islands, rich in beauty, rich in vegetable and mineral wealth, but richer by far in White Harvest Fields, waiting for the reluctant laborers to come.

Are not the Fields White unto Harvest? And are they not to say as never before waving with golden grain waiting to be gathered into our Master's garner?

"The fields are ripening, and far and wide,  
The world now is waiting the harvest tide,  
But reapers are few, and the work is great,  
And much will be lost should the harvest wait."

**II. Encouragement in the work.**—The first century of the Christian era was a great missionary period. The gospel was then preached over the whole of the civilized world. Paul in his missionary journeys carried the gospel to many countries. At the time of his death at Rome, in the year 67, A.D., the gospel had been carried over Western Asia, Southern Europe, and Northern Africa, and for nearly two centuries the gospel continued to make conquest after conquest among the civilized nations which surrounded the Mediterranean Sea. Then the church grew wealthy and worldly, and little was done for missions for long centuries.

The Reformation in 1517 roused the slumbering church to some sense of its duty, but it had then, or thought it had, quite enough to do with the Papacy at home, to prevent it from carrying the gospel to the heathen. Christian missions began proper in 172 when William Carey propounded his views before a small body of Baptist ministers in England, and thus in reality we have only had one century of missions to the heathen world. In 1792 the heathen population of the world stood at 847,000,000. To-day it stands at 1,047,000,000. That is an increase of 200,000,000 heathen during the century.

How many converts have we gained to Christianity during the century? In round numbers some 3,000,000. These converts are scattered over every part of the habitable globe. 2,500 of them are regularly ordained ministers of the gospel, 27,000 of them are acting as evangelists to their heathen fellow-countrymen, while many others are actively engaged in regular Christian work.

What is the exact strength of the missionary forces of the church actually at work in the mission field? To evangelize 1,047,000,000 of heathen we have 3,000 ordained missionaries, 750 laymen, and a noble army of 2,500 lady missionaries. In all a body of 6,250 missionaries of the cross. Were this body equally divided over the heathen world it would give 107,000 heathen to each missionary at work. Besides teaching and preaching this noble army of Christian workers is scattering abroad the Word of God in 300 different languages. And in this lies the certain hope of the world's complete and ultimate salvation.

How much does the Church of Christ give per year in order to carry the gospel to the heathen world? Just about \$12,000,000. Think of what the drink bill of Christendom is for one year. Add to this what is annually spent on mere pleasures, many of which to say the least are of a questionable nature. Then think of the amount spent on tobacco and other luxuries, almost every one of them injurious to the human system. Put these vast sums together, and compare the total amount with the \$12,000,000 grudgingly given for carrying out Christ's great command. Nor is this all. For every missionary sent to Africa there is sent 70,000 gallons of liquor, said to be the vilest made. Over 8,000,000 gallons are transported into Africa alone every year, and this causes more destruction in a single day than all the missionaries can repair in years of hard work. The drink traffic in Africa is a greater curse to the people than even slavery itself. And the same can be truthfully said of the New Hebrides.

In spite of all these obstacles Christianity is making a steady and rapid progress. Let no one imagine for a moment that the mission cause is a failure. Wherever you look among the nations to day you will find that Christianity is a great and important fact. It is showing itself in millions of lives, it has changed the whole current of the world's affairs, it is shaping and moulding the present, and nothing in the future can stay its triumphant progress. As well say that the sun in the heavens is a failure. The religion of Jesus Christ is adapted to all classes and conditions of men. To the highest intelligences of India and China, and no less to the lowest forms of degraded humanity, whether living amid the eternal snows of Lapland, or sweltering on the burning plains of tropical Africa. What is needed to-day is more consecration and more zeal to bring it to bear on the great masses of heathendom. Think of the vantage ground we occupy as compared with the Church in a former generation. To-day there are 7,000 trained missionaries in the field. The Bible is translated into 300 languages. Nearly all of these languages are reduced to a grammar. And we have 3,000,000

of converts from heathendom to inspire us with hope for the future. It was late in the afternoon when Napoleon rode on to the battlefield of Marengo. With his experienced eye he saw that the battle was almost lost. Looking anxiously at the setting sun, he said, "There is just time left to recover the day." He gave his orders with characteristic promptitude, and the defeat was turned into a complete and triumphant victory. Could some victory like this not be won for Christ during the closing decade of this century? Everything is on the church's side. She has the men, she has the means, and she has the promise of her ascended Lord. What is needed is faith in God, prayer to God, and consecrated and well directed effort for God in winning souls.

**III. Our privilege and duty.**—(1) Let us be deeply interested in the cause of missions. There is no other cause half as worthy of our individual interest. The very fact of 1,000,000,000 of our fellow creatures living and dying without a knowledge of the gospel should be enough to arouse the most careless Christian living. Our Saviour died for the cause of missions, and can we doubt His interest in it. The heathen are His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth are His blood-bought possession. Let us, His professed followers, be profoundly interested in this good cause, and let us take every opportunity of showing it.

(2) Let every Christian give proportionately and regularly for the spread of the gospel. This is the direct measure of our interest. Not long ago a poor woman said to a collector of the London Missionary Society, "I cannot give as the wealthy do, but I can give sixpence a week." Let every Christian be animated by that spirit, and the problem "missionary support" would be solved.

(3) Our duty is to pray for the success of missions. Jesus requested His disciples to pray for more laborers. Let us do the same, and let us pray for them after they are in the field. More prayer for them, and less criticism of them and of their methods. At Waterloo the British troops fell on their knees to avoid the French fire, and then from their knees they marched on to victory. In the conquest of the world for Christ victory will only come as we rise from our knees. Christ's cause is the winning cause. To Him shall the gathering of the nations be. The ultimate success of His Kingdom is just as sure as God's plan and purpose can make it. The song of the herald angels shall be heard again: Not chanted by angels this time but by men and women redeemed and washed in the blood of the Lamb. The continents of the earth will raise the song, and the Isles of the Sea shall swell the chorus, as a redeemed world rolls heavenward its psalm of praise. "Glory to God in the highest, and an earth peace, good will toward men."

Meanwhile upon our ears there falls another and a different sound, wrung from the depths of millions of despairing hearts. Across the billowy ocean it comes, gathering momentum as it nears our shores, and a long loud wail breaks upon the ear of Christian Canada. Breaks upon our ears to be heard and heeded, or to be sent back again to the dark lands whence it comes, unheard and unheeded, and the bleeding hearts and the wounded consciences of 1,000,000,000 of our fellow creatures to go to an eternity where hope can find no entrance but cruel despair and unending home.

Then think of the reflex influence of missions upon the Church at home. The divine plan and purpose seems to be that the church which does most abroad is the strongest and healthiest at home. At one time Greece was disunited and broken up in broiling factions, even on the verge of internecine war. The Persian at the gate was the hammer which welded the factions of Greece into one compact whole. In front of the foe the bickerings of the barracks are forgotten, and shoulder to shoulder, the soldiers are one in sympathy and purpose, as they fight their country's enemy. And with such a work to do, with the command of Christ ringing down these centuries, with so many things to cheer and encourage, and from the vantage ground at present occupied; should not the Church of our risen Lord unite her broken ranks, call to aid all her resources and with an earnestness and zeal which the circumstances demand, endeavour to carry out her Lord's great command?

It is a great thing, says Dr. J. H. Barrows, to fling an idea into the air, to throw an ideal, like a glance of light, into the future. It is an idea of a great peaceful empire, we are told, which has held China together through thirty centuries. It is an idea which Jesus flung upon the breezes of Palestine to become the joy of the ages, and the idea of universal brotherhood beneath the mild supremacy of a heavenly king is now in the mind of men, and will yet, in God's good time, be enthroned over all the high places of bigotry and alienation, of ignorance and oppression. It is the one thing given to you and me that is worth toiling for; it is that which will lend its lasting glory to this memorable year. It is that for which the spirit of Jesus, the founder of the kingdom of love, we are henceforth to strive until we ourselves are called to the capital of that spiritual universe, to the peace and joy of that summer-shrine of God, the heart of our father in heaven.

We learn a great lesson in the service of Christ when we learn that gentleness is a power.

No matter what its profession may be, the love that halts and turns back when it sees danger coming is a sham.

Loving God makes man divine.

If you hate God in this world you will not love him in the next.

Are you willing to take your weights and measures to the judgment with you?

A love that helps others is always widening and deepening itself.