

# POOR DOCUMENT M C 2 0 3 5

THE EVENING TIMES AND STAR, ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, MAY 20, 1922

## CHRISTIANITY IN HEATHEN VIEW

Impressions Received During  
a World Tour to Promote  
Peace—Views Held in the  
Far East.

Fred B. Smith in New York Evening  
Post.

(Fred B. Smith, chairman of Commission on Churches of the Federal Council of Churches, is making a trip around the world in behalf of international friendship and good will under the auspices of the World Alliance for International Friendship Through the Churches and the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, so a report which he presents of the view of Christianity held in the Far East at this time is of significance. The following article was written by Mr. Smith in Bombay, India.)

Is Christianity a warning, blood-thirsty religion?  
To the average, western Christian such a query seems perfectly absurd, ridiculous, and unworthy of serious consideration. But to one just finishing three months in the Far East as a messenger of world peace and an advocate of the Christian religion as the fundamental doctrine in producing this question seems very real; indeed, it comes with such force that it seems to be about the most important one before the human race.

If an ordinary man who had never heard of Christianity should read the descriptions being written and spoken of this faith by the people of the Orient and then follow the same method concerning the claims for it being made by the disciples of the "accident," he would never suspect that it was the same religion.

Before leaving New York I received a perfectly splendid letter from a great Indian Christian, extending an early assurance of welcome to his country, but giving this strange counsel: "I would strongly advise you not to use the word 'Christianity' in speaking in India. It is here regarded as the name of a western religion which has failed. You can preach Christ, but you cannot preach Christianity."

Another noble native minister immediately after my second public address in India took me aside and said: "You must know that all the educated people in this country look upon western Christianity as a warning, blood-spilling religion." Another translated a part of an article in a prominent paper in which the writer associated Mohammedanism and Christianity as being kindred faiths, but gave the Moslems the advantage of superiority in that they freely advocated the sword, while the Christians talked and professed peace, while the latter were waging the worst wars in all history.

I could multiply these illustrations from China and Japan, and add a little less severe in the latter. The Hindus, the Mohammedans, and the Buddhists are filling the Far East with descriptions of western Christianity as a blood-thirsty, war-loving and promoting organization. Only one of these blind to history and events can flippantly say they have no foundation for their arguments.

As against this Eastern conception I have a glad memory of how deep is the desire for peace, brotherhood, and a world of friendliness upon the part of those true western Christians I know so well. I remember the great interest being manifested in the World Alliance for International Friendship Through the Churches. Now, I have just received the bulletin of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America and the report of the meeting of its executive committee at Chicago in December, 1921, filed with zeal for a warless world. I read with thanksgiving the "Message to the Churches," calling for the investment of every energy to make "good will" abound. I am made conscious of the reality of the fact that this federal council, representing 20,000,000 Christians, is making "international justice and good will" its most conspicuous responsibility. I have been reading some British religious periodicals and they are filled with the hope of no return of war. The East says: "Christianity, a cannon ball, a submarine, and a gas bomb are synonymous."

The West says: "Christ is the Prince of Peace and the Christian Church is the instrument to make that doctrine effective throughout the world." However implicit may be this belief, the cold fact is that thus far it has not produced that result even in nations where it has held a preponderance of the people. Singing hymns, saying prayers, and passing peace resolutions do not remove this impression.

In view of this tragedy in the history of the church and the human race the one commanding necessity for the leaders of Christianity in the nations where this faith prevails is to so reassert the cardinal doctrine which the angels sang at the birth of Jesus, viz.: "Peace on earth, good will to all men." That the organized church shall in reality be put upon a peace basis, in this hour nothing else matters much.

New church editors, more preachers, more money, more members, and even more foreign missionaries are quite indifferent topics. A better definition of Christ is needed. If all the professing Christians in the West in 1914 had been upon the "Friends" basis, the war would not have occurred, and the Far East would not be scoffing at the Christian church.

This sentence is almost an exact quotation from a conversation with a Buddhist priest in Japan: "The church must be freed from a spirit of nationalism which makes it the trusted servant of the war lords when they shout 'patriotism' as a disguise for more war to advance their political schemes." The platforms of Christian churches from 1914 to 1918 in Russia, Germany, France, Great Britain, and the United States were to a very large degree simply war agents.

I look back upon young men personally uttered concerning that war, and much of it is still a vivid nightmare. Small wonder that the non-Christian leaders have branded ours as a warning religion.

This peace ideal must be made real, true, genuine, in the Christian churches. It is the supreme duty. If it fails more wars are coming. The stage setting is perfect for more outbreaks. Accepting all of them, nevertheless, the Gospel of Christ is a brotherhood doctrine, and the Christian church is the only organization with world contacts which make possible a common binder for preserving peace.

Let the prophets tell how strong is to

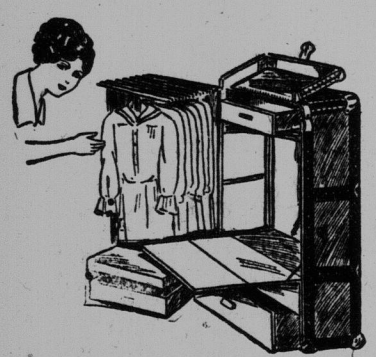
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the forwarding of the memorandum to  
the general assembly.

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five Presbyterian clergymen of this city  
presented a request to the Bishop of  
Montreal and to the Montreal presby-  
tery today asking for ordination in their  
respective churches, Anglicans in the  
Presbyterian and Presbyterians in the  
Anglican church without further delay.

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4 lb. tin Sheriffs' or St. Williams  
Marmalade..... 40c  
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Strawberry Jam..... \$1.00  
Strawberry Jam..... 80c  
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2 lbs. Bulk Cocoa..... 25c  
3 lbs. Split Peas..... 25c  
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