

splendidly supported the movement. "And now," he said, "if I went back to India I would find ten thousand educated, trained Christian native women ready to aid and help in every way the Christian church, as they were actually doing now, and we call this the day of small things."

Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions.

Mr. Zwerner's address was on "The Impact of Christianity on the Non-Christian Religions." He said:

Christianity and the non-Christian religions are two distinct conceptions. Their real relation, therefore, when they come into contact is that of impact, and not of compromise. Christianity is distinct in its origin. Its revelation is supernatural, and its Founder was the Lord from heaven. In a real sense, the Church of Christ can say with the Psalmist: "He hath not dealt so with any other nation, and as for His statutes, they have not known them." Christianity is distinct in its character from all other religions. If it were not, there could be no universal mission. It is distinct in its effect. If it were not, there should be no foreign missions. "There may be comparative religions," as Dr. Parker has said, "but Christianity is not one of them." The non-Christian religions are inadequate to meet the intellectual, social, moral and spiritual needs of the human race. Only the Bread of Life can meet the famine of human hearts. Only the torch of the Gospel can lighten spiritual darkness, and the human heart finds no rest until it rests in Christ. The missionary character of Christianity, therefore, demands impact with every non-Christian system.

Some of the great non-Christian religions have for centuries appeared stagnant and motionless. Others have never had the missionary spirit of aggression, but wherever Christianity meets the three great religions of today they are in motion. Hinduism is hoary with age, but has not lost all its strength. The Brahmo-samaj and the Arya-samaj are proofs of the fact that this great system is taking on new forms because of the impact of Christianity. Buddhism has always been a missionary faith. It reached Ceylon two hundred and thirty years before Christ was born. It was in China before the Apostle Paul became a missionary. It reached Japan before Mohammed was born; won over its converts in Siam by the time of his death, and was fighting for the mastery in Central Asia before the Reformation. In Ceylon today the Buddhist clergy have adopted Christian methods. With Sunday schools, tracts and periodicals they are pressing their propagandism, and Buddhism claims more adherents than Protestant Christianity. A Buddhist mission is about to visit England, and Buddhism has found defenders and converts among the Anglo-Saxons.

Defiant Islam.

Islam is the greatest of all the non-Christian religions in its missionary spirit and defiant attitude toward Christianity. One hundred years after Mohammed's death his name was proclaimed from minarets in Canton, China, across the whole of Asia and Africa and into Spain. The Laymen's Missionary Movement of the Moslem world has existed for thirteen centuries, and has swept everything before it, until in Africa one-third of the population is Mohammedan, and in India alone sixty-two and a half million followers of the false prophet are found.

The three great religions that today are contending for mastery and have the greatest world influence have had personal founders—Buddha, Mohammed and Christ. When Jehangir Khan overran Asia with his barbarian hordes these three religions contended for the mastery of Asia, and the Russian Empire is proof of how they divided their spoil. The Moslem peril is the present-day problem of African missions. North of the equator

there are fifty-four million Mohammedans; south of the equator over four million; and there is no doubt that Christianity and Islam will divide the remainder of pagan Africa between them within the next two decades.

All three of these great missionary religions are in motion. Their impact means collision, division, conquest. Islam and Buddhism together embrace over one-half of the non-Christian world. The men of the yellow robe are carrying their message throughout Asia, and the men of the green turban are uniting their ranks for Pan-Islamism, but the Cross is in the field.

Shall the wheel of the Buddhist faith, with its horrible pessimism and hopeless Nirvana, crush the destinies of the millions of Asia? Shall the fatalism and pride of the loveless creed of Islam shut out the message of hope contained in the Gospel from two hundred millions of our brothers and sisters? These questions can only be answered by the impact of a vital, world-conquering faith in Him who said: "All power is given unto Me in heaven and earth." "Go ye, therefore."

Some Results.

The result of the impact of Christianity on these non-Christian religions is too large a subject for separate consideration, but what Christianity has already done through its impact on Islam is prophetic of its strength and conquest everywhere. The present political division of the Moslem world shows the hand of God's providence in opening doors for His Gospel. Three-fourths of the Mohammedan world is under Christian rule, and the balance of political power is not in the hands of the Caliph, but of England, France, Russia, and the Netherlands. Eighty-one million Mohammedans are under the flag of Great Britain, which bears the symbol of the Crucified. Islam has lost its sword, and the power of political persecution is gone. The new era in Turkey and Persia is the direct result of the impact of Christian education and Christian civilization. Socially the Moslem world has been challenged by the higher standards of Christian morality and by the introduction of reforms, as the result of Christian education. The Mohammedan women in Russia have sent a petition to the Duma to be delivered from the oppressions of their husbands. A Moslem in Egypt is advocating the abolition of the veil and the emancipation of womanhood. Every Christian home in the Mohammedan world stands as a protest against social conditions, and uplifts a new ideal social possibilities for which the better class of Mohammedans, both men and women, are yearning.

The impact of Christianity through schools and colleges in Moslem lands is well known. The missionaries were the pioneers of modern education throughout the Levant, and have stimulated the Moslems themselves to found colleges and schools and uplift the masses out of their condition of illiteracy. The very contrast of a religion of enlightenment over against a religion of illiteracy rivets the attention of Moslems. It was the subject of their discussion at a recent conference in Mecca, and is a live question in India, where ninety-six and a half per cent. of the Mohammedans are unable to read and write. Who can measure the impact of such institutions as Robert College, and the colleges at Beirut and at Assiut, Egypt?

Morally and spiritually the impact of Christianity on Islam has not been a rebound. Vital Christianity penetrates and disintegrates. The effect of the lives of men like Raymond Lull, Henry Martyn, Bishop French, and Keith Falconer was greater on Islam than the crusades of the middle ages. In a real sense their lives have fulfilled that great saying of the first missionary to the Mohammedans: "He who lives by the life cannot die."

Today every strategic centre in the Moslem world is held for Christ. There have been thousands of converts in India, scores of witnesses and martyrs for the Christian faith in Western Asia; while in Java and Sumatra a self-supporting, self-governing, self-propagating church has been gathered from among the Mohammedans. The impact of Christianity throughout the Moslem world, because of its life and teachings, has increased the power of the Cross. The Cross of Christ is the missing link in Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism. Calvary is the reconciliation of these three problems which have perplexed the human mind since the world began: The greatest thing in God—which is love—the strongest thing in the universe—which is law—and the darkest thing in history—sin. The Gibraltar of the non-Christian world cannot hold out against the pierced Hand. "When a young man fully armed guardeth his own palace, his goods are safe; but when a stronger than he shall come, he taketh from him all the armor in which he trusted, and divideth his spoil."

"Uplifted are the gates of brass,
The bars of iron yield
To let the King of Glory pass;
The Cross hath won the field!"

The Church and the Nation.

Canon Norman L. Tucker, of Toronto, who was to have spoken in the afternoon, was the first speaker at the evening meeting on Thursday, on the subject of "Canada's Debt to the Missionary." This was one of the choice addresses of the Congress. In a picturesque and vivid and masterly way Canon Tucker touched upon the present conditions and outlook of this new nation of Canada, and then went on to show how and in what ways that new nation was indebted to the faithful and statesmanlike and self-sacrificing service of the Christian missionary.

"Now the question arises, to what or to whom is Canada indebted for all this? In part from the traditions and habits derived from the fathers, but more than to any other cause to the character and work of the early missionaries in the land. They laid the foundations on which this national character and these national virtues have been built up. They led Canada to feel that the highest endowment was the spiritual nature, and that the chief aim and object in life was to seek the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness. They trained men in the love and study of the Bible, as having the words of eternal life. They trained men in the habit of frequenting the house of God. They taught men to observe and sanctify the Lord's Day. They everywhere established Sunday-schools, and so brought up the young in the nature and admonition of the Lord.

Canon Tucker paid a splendid tribute to the zeal and heroism of the late Dr. Robertson, Home Mission Superintendent in the West of the Presbyterian church. His whole address was a fine illustration of how the great forward missionary movement of our time was broadening the sympathies and enlarging the outlook of the men in all the churches, enabling the members of one communion to see and rejoice in all that the others were accomplishing. His closing sentences, in which he held up the pioneer missionary as a pattern and example to the church of to-day, will not soon be forgotten by those who heard him.

Is there a better example for us to follow? Are there in the national history nobler men than the missionaries who have made our past and our future history possible? Are there any more worthy of our grateful remembrance than they? Can we do better than imbue ourselves with their heroic, self-denying spirit for the pioneer work that has fallen to our lot, for the battle that has to be renewed in every age?

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