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## THE LAMBETH COUNCIL ON FOREIGN MISSIONS.



HE usual Encyclical has been issued by the Primate of all England, President of the Council, in accordance with the wishes of the Archbishops and Bishops lately assembled in the Lambeth Council, addressed "To the Faithful in Christ Jesus," and from it we give our readers the utterances of their Lordships upon the work with which we are more immediately concerned. Under the title "Foreign Missions" the letter reads:

"Lastly, we come to the subject of foreign missions, the work that at the present time stands in the first rank of all the tasks we have to fulfil. We have especial reasons to be thankful to God for the awakened and increasing zeal of our whole communion for this primary work of the Church, the work for which the Church was commissioned by our Lord. For some centuries it may be said we have slumbered. The duty has not been quite forgotten, but it has been remembered only by individuals and societies; the body as a whole has taken no part. The Book of Common Prayer contains very few prayers for missionary work. It hardly seems to have been present to the minds of our great authorities and leaders in compiling that book, that the matter should be in the thoughts of everyone who calls himself a Christian, and that no ordinary service should be considered complete which did not plead amongst other things for the spread of the Gospel. We are beginning, though only beginning, to see what the Lord would have us do. He is opening the whole world to our easy access, and as He opens the way He is opening our eyes to see it, and to see His beckoning hand.

In preaching His Gospel to the world we have to deal with one great religious body, which holds the truth in part but not in its fullness, the Jews; with another which holds fragments of the truth embodied in a mass of falsehood, the Mahomedans; and with various races which hold inherited beliefs ranging down to the merest fetishism. In dealing with all these it is certainly right to recognize whatsoever good they may contain. But it is necessary to be cautious lest that good, such

as it is, be so exaggerated as to lead us to allow that any purified form of any one of them can ever be in any sense a substitute for the gospel. The Gospel is not merely the revelation of the highest morality; it reveals also the wonderful love of God in Christ, and contains the promise of that grace by Him by which alone the highest moral life is possible to man. And without the promise of that grace it would not be the Gospel at all.

The Jews seem to deserve from us more attention than they have hitherto received. The difficulties of the work of converting the Jews are very great, but the greatest of all difficulties springs from the indifference of Christians to the duty of bringing them to Christ. They are the Lord's own kin, and He commanded that the Gospel should first be preached to them. But Christians generally are much more interested in the conversion of the Gentiles. The conversion of the Jews is also much hindered by the severe persecutions to which Jewish converts are often exposed from their own people, and it is sometimes necessary to see to their protection if they are persuaded to join us. It seems probable that the English-speaking people can do more than any others in winning them, and, although Jewish converts have one advantage in their knowledge of their own people, yet they are put at a great disadvantage by the extremely strong prejudice which the Jews entertain against those who have left them for Christ. It seems best that both Jews and Gentiles should be employed in the work.

For preaching to the Mahomedans very careful preparation is needed. The men who are to do the work must study their character, their history, and their creed. The Mahomedans must be approached with the greatest care to do them justice. What is good in their belief must be acknowledged to the full, and used as a foundation on which to build the structure of Christian truth. They have been most obstinate in opposing Christian faith, but there seem now to be openings for reaching their consciences. It is easier for them to join us than it was. In some lands the intolerance, which was their great bulwark, is showing indications of giving way. In India the Christian and the Mahomedan meet on equal terms, and a Mahomedan can become a Christian without