

The Canadian Missionary Link

VOL. XVI.

TORONTO, APRIL, 1894.

No. 8

CHRIST A MISSIONARY.

Paper read by Mrs. L. D. Morse at Vizlanagram Conference, January, 1894.

(Published by request.)

This paper consists mainly of thoughts suggested by reading Stalker's "*Imago Christi*." This work I have found exceedingly helpful and inspiring. One cannot read it without receiving a new insight into the character of Jesus and feeling a fresh desire to walk in His footsteps. Nearly every sentiment expressed in this paper may be found much better and more fully expressed by any one who will take the time to read this book.

The greatness of Jesus has magnified to our imagination the small country in which he lived, so that we hardly realize how small was that spot of earth over which walked His blessed feet and upon which were displayed such wondrous works. The Kingdom of Herod the Great was equal to an area of 12,000 square miles. Therefore, Palestine in the time of Christ, was only about two-thirds the size of Nova Scotia or one-half the size of New Brunswick. What a small territory and yet Christ's influence spread over all the world! The missionary of to-day may do work in only a few hundred villages, but if he be wholly consecrated to God's work and faithful, his influence will not be confined to those few villages, but extend over the whole country even through all the world and down through all the centuries. Although the name of Carey is wedded to that of Bengal and the name of Judson to Burmah, yet their influence has thrilled the whole world and moved the hearts of millions. There is an illustration of this which is very old and its very oldness gives witness to its truth. A stone dropped into the centre of a lake sends its ripples to the farthest shore, and the work that a true missionary does will send waves of sacred influence around the whole world. An editorial in a recent issue of the *Messenger and Visitor* gives much encouragement to the missionary and much inspiration to be faithful, viz., "Our own missionaries in India are touching and influencing our churches at home more widely and in some respects more powerfully than they could have done if they had remained here among us, and in proportion as their lives are heroic and Christ-like will they have power to inspire such qualities in those whom their influence reaches."

If the greatness of Jesus has magnified to our minds the small country in which he lived, how much more has the greatness of His work magnified to us the short period in which it was done. His public ministry lasted but three years. How much work have we done since New Year's Day, 1891? There is nothing influencing the world to-day for righteousness so much as those three years in Palestine. It is possible though the days of our life be short for us to live through succeeding ages. If we are faithful our Christian influence throughout this mission field will be felt long after we have passed to the home beyond. We cannot

make our short life full of years, but we can make it full of work for the Master.

"We live in deeds, not years,
In thoughts not breaths,
In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
We should count life by heart-throbs.
He most lives
Who thinks most,
Feels the noblest
Acts the best."

Although the public work of Christ lasted but three years, yet the preparation for this work took thirty years. He could not have put so much work in so short a time if He had not been fully prepared by earnest study of the Scriptures and unceasing communion with God. At the age of twelve years He conversed upon the Scriptures with the most learned men of His time and "all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers." Ever after in times of temptation and of controversy, in public preaching, in private communion with His Father, the Bible lay before Him an open book. The Bible was His chart and His life was the great fulfilment of the Scriptures which He loved. If Christ felt the importance of studying the Word of God how much more should the missionary. A missionary is surrounded by the heathen, his heart grows faint and he is perplexed as to what he shall do. He is continually giving out. How can he do this unless he be filled? How can he be filled but by that which God gives? Everyone must necessarily be an assiduous student of the Scriptures. In times when despair lays hold of one how changed the aspect will be after we have read several chapters of those sacred and blessed books of our Lord. If we are filled with the Scriptures any perplexing question can be settled by something which we have learned there. Christ had only the Old Testament. We have the Old and New and if we neglect these nothing else can supply their place.

"Thyself the truth must know,
If thou the truth wouldst teach,
It takes the God-instructed soul
To give the lips full speech."

The life of Christ was one continual prayer. His last words on the cross were a prayer. Before taking any important step in life He would spend much time alone with God. After curing so many in Capernaum tired with the day's work He "departed into a solitary place to pray." Mountains seemed His favorite haunts upon which to commune with His Father.

"Cold mountains and the midnight air
Witnessed the fervor of His prayer."

If Christ needed to pray, can we do without prayer? A missionary is away from the Christian companionship which he had in his own land. His spirit often longs for the heart-stirring prayer meetings of old which were food for his soul. He must pray even more here than at home. His temptations and trials