

A PROBLEM OF MISSIONS

The deep interest taken in missions and mission work by the students of our colleges is a most hopeful sign of the times.

The many who stand ready, at the call of the church, to go forth to the regions beyond to do work for the Master is certainly encouraging to all interested in the spread of the Kingdom of God. That the cause of Christ is not getting its share of the world's wealth is certain, and needs no fuller demonstration than what is everywhere to be found more or less on the surface of life.

Hard times are everywhere spoken of as the cause of depleted missionary treasuries, and I doubt not that to some extent that is true. Yet, if a hundred thousand dollars is needed for some great project, the end of which is the moral degradation of the multitude—such as a championship prize fight—it is not lacking, and while millions of earth's sons are without the gospel of life, God is robbed, and they are left without the light of the Gospel, not for lack of open doors to enter in at, nor for lack of men, but for lack of means to send those who are ready and willing to go.

Are we doing the best with the means we have? Is there sufficient interest taken in the work at our own door, and among those more immediately committed to our care? Does the halo of glory so rest on the foreign work as to surely and steadily leave the impression, in fact, if not in theory, that the soul of one in China, Japan, India, or Africa, is of more value than the soul of a perishing neighbor at our own door, or by our side?

Viewed from the practical side of mission life, I find this ever staring me in the face. Are there not thousands of dollars of the Lord's money wasted annually in our "Home Mission" work by the various denominations? And that, too, in the face of the Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us." Wasted by two or three evangelical churches working the

same ground, having their missionaries travel long distances, and with little chance to give careful pastoral attention to any one appointment or station, for lack of time, as it requires, and at the same time each church paying the bulk of what the worker gets from the missionary fund, when by a division of territory, such as prevails in foreign fields, there would be both work and support within reasonable distance for each individual missionary, or at least sufficient support to reduce by thousands of dollars annually the present missionary outlay for the same territory. This would also give a surplus of men for fields beyond, and present to an un-av-
 ed world the fact that we value the salvation of souls first, and made all our schemes for denominational growth and development second to the development of the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

I am aware that it is very much easier to see defects than to remedy them. Yet it does seem to me that if the heads of our various denominations could reach some practical solution of the above named difficulty, so as to secure a fair division of the territory now occupied, and from time to time arrange new territory, the great bulk of the people everywhere would loyally fall into line and act on the principle that conversion to Jesus Christ and obedience to His will is the great requirement of life, and that under the pastorate of any true and capable minister of God they would heartily co-operate to this end.

Toward this I think the church of God is moving. May He hasten the time when nothing from the point of human selfishness, or ardent love for that which is short of the redemption of our race, shall stand in the way of the fullest carrying out of His purposes for the salvation of men.

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