

DYNAMIC CHRISTIANITY  
AND THE  
WORLD TODAY

By  
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DEDICATED IN LOVING MEMORY  
OF  
ROBERT P. WILDER  
AND A HALF CENTURY OF HIS FRIENDSHIP  
TO  
THE STUDENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN

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# DYNAMIC CHRISTIANITY AND THE WORLD TODAY

## INTRODUCTION

**W**HEN THE Inter-Varsity Fellowship asked me to prepare a book setting forth the claims of the foreign field, there were two reasons why I could not decline their request. One was my long friendship for Robert P. Wilder and his expressed desire before he was called home that I should at some time help forward the work among British evangelical students for which he had done so much. The other reason was that such an opportunity should come to me at the eleventh hour—when I have retired from my work as professor of missions at Princeton and look back over seventeen years in Cairo and twenty-three in Arabia without the possibility of a return to the battle-front. All that remains for such aged warriors is to pass on the torch. In the words of the Psalmist: “O God thou hast taught me from my youth, and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now, also, when I am old and grey-headed, O God, forsake me not, until I have showed thy strength unto this generation and thy power to everyone that is to come.” (Ps. lxxi. 17, 18.)

There are two aspects, in my opinion, of the missionary situation to-day that need some elucidation and emphasis. The one relates to the power of the gospel and the other to its universality. In military language, its dynamic and its range. What explosive power has our message, and how far can it travel?

*εἰς ὃ καὶ κοπιῶ ἀγωνιζόμενος κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν  
αὐτοῦ τὴν ἐνεργουμένην ἐν ἐμοὶ ἐν δυνάμει*

Colossians i. 29.

Fanatics have been defined as those who redouble their energies when they have forgotten their aim. Doubtless all who are interested in the missionary enterprise are in these days putting forth new energy and advocating more rapid movement to attain their object. Have not some, however, forgotten the goal in their earnest effort to press forward? Is there not some danger lest we run so fast that we forget the content of our message? Will the broader outlook which many advocate, perhaps diminish deep insight?

A brilliant writer in the *Atlantic Monthly* some years ago characterised the modern missionary as one whose "first concern is always something deeper, something more vital than questions of theological and metaphysical speculation relating to the Person and the Work of Christ, to the Virgin Birth (in which, together with other miracles he may or may not believe); to the fine distinctions between the humanity, the divinity, the deity of Christ; to the nature of the Trinity; to the Atonement. Upon just one thing he insists: that which touches not the *bene esse* of the Christian faith, but its *esse*; the personal assimilation in the disciples' life of the teaching and of the *spirit* of Jesus."

On the contrary, we believe that the very nature of Christianity, its dynamic, its passion, its power of missionary appeal, its *esse* as well as its *bene esse* consists in its *credo*—its whole-hearted belief in, and allegiance to, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary, Who died on the Cross for our sins and arose again, Who gave us this message as our only commission and sealed it with the promise of His presence.

The chapters which form this little book treat of these two aspects of the missionary problem. Some

were given as addresses and revised, and are now sent on their errand to set forth our conviction of the adequacy and sufficiency of "the faith once for all delivered to the saints." That gospel which Paul preached has been the message of all who were in his apostolic succession, and is to-day, as in his day, "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Why should we be ashamed of its contents or its implications? In an age of doubt it is the only anchor of our hope; in the present chaos of international relations it alone can bring reconciliation. And there is no other gospel than the apostolic message that has dynamic for the Church as it faces a disillusioned, distracted and desperate world of humanity. Paul's whole life was based on his conviction that the gospel was dynamic, that his energy was not his own but Christ's, and that the measure of his success was his *agonia*.

S. M. ZWEMER.

*Princeton, N.J.*

## PART ONE: DYNAMIC CHRISTIANITY

CHAPTER I

THE EARLIEST GOSPEL

"Travelling on through Amphipolis and Apollonia they reached Thessalonica. Here there was a Jewish synagogue, and Paul as usual went in; for three sabbaths he argued with them on the scriptures, explaining and quoting passages to prove that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead, and that 'the Jesus I proclaim to you is the Messiah.' Some were persuaded and threw in their lot with Paul and Silas, including a host of devout Greeks and a large number of the leading women."—Acts xvii. 1-4 (Moffatt's translation).

## CHAPTER I

### THE EARLIEST GOSPEL

IF ALL THE New Testament books were lost except one, and that were the earliest epistle written by the Apostle Paul, we would still have convincing proof of the historicity of Christianity and clear evidence for nearly every article of the Apostle's Creed as expressing the faith of primitive Christians. The earliest and therefore oldest book of the New Testament is the first letter of Paul to the Thessalonians. This is the general consensus of opinion among all critics. "In the case of the first epistle," says Dr. Milligan in the *Standard Bible Dictionary*, "its authenticity, which no one even thought of challenging before the nineteenth century, is now so generally recognised by critics of all schools, except those who reject the Pauline writings altogether, that it is not necessary to discuss it further here."

The exact date assigned to the epistle depends on the chronology of Paul's life, but all critics are agreed that it was written not later than the year 53 A.D. (some say as early as 49 A.D.), that is, less than twenty years or twenty-two years after the Crucifixion. All critical opinion, therefore, brings us as close as possible to the primitive days of Christianity when those who were eye-witnesses of what Jesus was, and did, and suffered, were still living. The epistle itself, as Weiss remarks, shows (Chapter v. 25) that Paul began his epistolary intercourse with the churches which he founded "by this letter and had therefore to give directions as to what use should be made of it." The same authority



points out that Chapter ii. 16 has no reference to the destruction of Jerusalem, as Baur inferred and then made false deductions as to the date of the epistle.

The contents of the epistle, moreover, everywhere point to this early date, especially because of its omissions. "Nowhere," says Dr. Milligan, "does the real Paul stand out more clearly before us, alike in the intensity of his affection for his converts, in the confident assertion of the purity of his own motives, and in the fierceness of his indignation against those who are hindering the progress of Christ's work." Of all the Pauline epistles this one represents perhaps most fully the apostle's normal and familiar style of writing. Renan describes it as "stenographed conversation." We may be sure that whatever we find in this epistle, will be sincere and genuine in its character. It is a love-letter written to meet pressing needs, and with perhaps no thought of any wider audience than those to whom it was addressed. It was written and sent from Corinth to Thessalonica, then, as now, one of the largest and most important cities of the Levant. The things that took place in this city were not done in a corner. The apostle wrote to Jews and Gentiles who were contemporaries of Christ. Some of them may have been present at Jerusalem at Pentecost. The witness of this epistle is therefore as strong as possible, because it portrays undesignedly the character of early Christianity and the faith of early Christians.

When we consider the character of the writer as revealed between the lines, and the character of those to whom he wrote, a typical group of believers, who can doubt that what is here taught contains the very fundamentals of our faith? If we deny these teachings, we cannot honestly call ourselves Christians. The issue of our investigation is therefore to ascertain

whether this earliest New Testament document contains that teaching which many now are prepared to deny because they believe it was all of later growth and development. If, for example, the deification of Christ was due to St. John's Gospel and to St. Paul's later teaching, and the Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels is human only, how do we account for the fact that such an epistle as the one before us, after emphasising the unity of God, gives such strong proof for the deity of Christ and is addressed without any apology for such teaching to a group of Jewish and Gentile believers?

Regarding the writer, we learn from the epistle itself that he had the authority of an apostle (ii. 6); that he was associated with Silvanus and Timothy (i. 1; iii. 2); that he was entrusted with a message called the Gospel (i. 5; ii. 4), which he boldly proclaimed (ii. 2). The writer had travelled widely. He had visited Athens (iii. 1), Thessalonica, Macedonia (iv. 10), and Achaia (i. 1, 7, 8). He had been cruelly treated at Philippi (ii. 2); and, similarly treated, had been driven out from Judea by the Jews (ii. 15). The man who wrote this epistle was a man of prayer (i. 2). His only hope was in the Lord Jesus Christ (i. 3). He tried to please God and not man (ii. 4). He hated flattery and hypocrisy (ii. 5). He was so careful of his conduct that others imitated him as they did "the Lord" (i. 6). He loved passionately those to whom he wrote, longing to see them as a father doth his children, as a nurse cherisheth her babe. He was willing to pour out his own soul for them (ii. 7, 8, 11, 17; iii. 8, 10). He sought no favour from the hands of those to whom he wrote, because he supported himself, working not only by day, but by night (ii. 9). He had his own fight for character, his ideals were those of a soldier (v. 8), and he knew his enemy (ii. 18).

The letter was written on the spur of the moment, just after Timothy had arrived from Thessalonica with glad news (iii. 6). Whatever he tells them in this epistle is based on his own experience, his faith in God, in Jesus Christ, and his hope of salvation. This is perfectly evident from the unconscious change of the pronouns "ye" and "we," especially in iv. 13, 14, 17. No man could write in this fashion with the intent to deceive or to idealise; and we repeat once more before we analyse the teaching of the epistle that Paul, once a Jew but now a Christian, who has suffered for being such, writes all this *less than twenty years after the death of Jesus, the Nazarene, on the Cross.*

The teaching of the epistle touches nearly every Christian doctrine. For the sake of convenience we have grouped the facts as follows:

1. He who wrote and those to whom he wrote believed in the immortality of the soul (v. 23). They believed in one God, the Creator, Who is called "Father" (i. 1; iii. 11), Who is the living, true and only God (i. 9; iii. 9). This Father sent His Son from heaven (i. 10) and revealed His will through Him Who is called Jesus Christ (v. 18). He is called the "God of Peace" (v. 23), Who searches hearts (ii. 4), desires holiness in men (iv. 3), and sanctifies believers (v. 23).

This God made known His will by prophets (ii. 15) and makes it known now (that is, at the time when the apostle was writing) through His gospel, which is a divine message (ii. 8) and not merely the word of man (ii. 13). There is no pantheism or polytheistic teaching in this epistle. Its doctrine of God is complete and fits in with the teaching of the Old Testament. We have clear reference also to the call of God to salvation and to holiness (ii. 12; iv. 7; v. 24). The afflictions of believers are also predetermined by God (iii. 3).

2. What does this earliest document teach in regard to Jesus Christ? He is an historic personality, so well known that He needs no further introduction to its readers. He is the standard of conduct and character (i. 6) and had a company of apostles of whom Paul was one. After His perfect life He was killed by the Jews (ii. 15), who are suffering God's wrath in consequence (ii. 16). But this same Jesus afterwards arose from the dead (i. 10; iv. 14; v. 10). The writer comes back repeatedly to this great truth even in so short an epistle. Jesus is now in heaven (i. 10), but speaks through apostles (iv. 15). They take solemn oaths in His name (v. 27) to claim authority for His message. It almost seems a claim of inspiration (compare iv. 15). Jesus Who ascended into heaven is coming again (ii. 19; iv. 15; v. 23). His coming will be unexpected (v. 3), with His saints (iii. 13), in glory (iv. 16), in the clouds of the air (iv. 17), but the time of His coming again remains uncertain. It will be as that of a thief in the night or of travail upon a woman with child (v. 2, 3). If this phraseology is original with the Apostle Paul, it bears a striking resemblance to that of Matthew (xxiv. 43), and of Luke (xii. 39). If it is quoted, have we not an argument here for the early date of the Gospel? At least of an original document that contained these phrases?

What is the character of Jesus Christ in this epistle? Can He be classified with prophets and apostles? Is He lower than the angels, or is it clear from this epistle that He is very God? His name is coupled with that of Deity, not once but frequently (i. 1; iii. 11; iv. 14). He is called "Lord" (i. 6). "God's Son" (i. 10), "the Lord Jesus" (iv. 1), "Christ Jesus" (v. 18), "Jesus" (i. 10), and "the Lord Jesus Christ" (i. 1; i. 3; v. 28). It is not necessary to go into the significance of these names.

All of them would be full of meaning, especially to Jewish Christians, yet none the less to Gentile converts.

The One Who bears these high titles has the attributes of Deity. He directs by His providence (iii. 11), avenges iniquity (iv. 6), has authority on the day of judgment, for it is called "*His* day," He comes from heaven with *His* angels and the "trump of God." He is also the Lord of salvation because He delivers from the wrath to come (i. 10), is the source of salvation (v. 9), establishes hearts and produces holiness (iii. 13).

Although He lived a life on earth, which terminated in death, His present vital power is so universal that He is the fountain and source of love (iii. 12), not only among believers but toward all humanity. Believers stand fast in Him (xiii. 8). This is their life. His grace is the highest good (v. 28), and somehow this Lord Jesus Christ is in constant vital union with those who believe in Him, not only now (iv. 1), but even after death (iv. 14; iv. 16; v. 10).

Is it possible to suppose that such a conception of Jesus was the invention of such a man, and could this historic personage have been transformed within two decades from the human into the Divine? The witness of this epistle is the witness of the original faith of early Christians in the deity of the Christ.

3. The epistle also teaches much regarding the Holy Spirit. He is a person (i. 5, 6), the source of joy in believers (i. 6), and given of God to them (iv. 8). His symbol is that of fire, for He can be quenched (v. 19). In this case also we have indication that the language used by John the Baptist and by Christ himself was familiar to the apostle.

In view of this teaching in regard to God's Son and the Holy Spirit, it does not surprise us to find three references to the doctrine of the Trinity (i. 3-5; v. 18, 19, and v. 23).

4. We turn now to the teaching of this epistle regarding the church. Here we have a beautiful picture of apostolic Christianity. It is called "the church of God which is in Christ Jesus" (ii. 14). It consists of a company of brethren (ii. 14; v. 26). It is founded on the teaching of the gospel (i. 5; ii. 2). Its doors are open to Gentile and Jew (ii. 16). Its watchword is: "Love for all humanity" (iv. 9, 10).

The church seems to be well-organised (i. 1; ii. 14; iii. 2, 6; v. 12, 13). It therefore exercises discipline (v. 14). Among its members there are a number once idolaters, but who now worship the one true God (i. 9). Their theory of comparative religion is that when they were idolaters they were "in the night and the darkness," but now they are "the children of light and of the day," believers built up by the Word (ii. 13).

There is no reference to the sacraments, but this does not necessarily prove that they were not in use.

What marvellous transformations of character must have taken place among this company of believers! We know from other writers what was the moral condition of the Roman empire, and especially of its great seaports. Thessalonica was no exception. Only the life of Jesus can account for such ideals of character and standards of moral judgment as we find in this short epistle. Grace, peace, and love are considered the highest virtues (i. 1; i. 3; iii. 6; iv. 9). Here were people who proved faithful to high ideals under affliction and persecution (i. 6; ii. 2; ii. 14; iii. 4; iii. 7). How these Christians loved one another (ii. 10, 12)! It was a missionary church (i. 7, 8), full of the joy of serving (i. 6), toiling and labouring for some high ideal (i. 3), with constant prayer to God for his assistance and blessing (i. 2; v. 17; v. 25). Here was a little company

of men and woman opposed to hypocrisy (ii. 4, 5), uncleanness, error, and guile (ii. 3), alive to the duty of self-support (iv. 11, 12), engaged in the fight for character against Satan (iii. 5), and so successful that the Apostle glories in them, rejoices in their spiritual welfare, and longs to see them (ii. 17, 19; iii. 8, 12). And all this twenty years after the crucifixion!

Their ideals of married life, its purpose and purity, were high (iv. 4, 5). They had learned the lesson of forgiveness (v. 15), and of universal love and benevolence. Their lives were full of prayer and gratitude at all times and for all things (v. 17, 18), they were earnestly attempting to abstain from every form of evil (v. 22), and they believed that God was able to preserve their spirit, soul, and body blameless (v. 23). It is no wonder that their greeting therefore was with an holy kiss (v. 26).

Finally, we may ask, what was their hope which kept them steadfast in such a place and at such a time, a flock of sheep in the midst of wolves? They looked for Christ's return. He was their hope, their joy, their comfort (iv. 13, 16, 18). After the temptations of Satan (ii. 18; iii. 5) had been endured and overcome they looked forward to death as a sleep (iv. 13). Not only a sleep, but a sleep which was in Jesus, on His loving bosom. After death comes the resurrection at Christ's glorious appearing with the rapture of the saints to meet Him in the air. And they comforted one another with these words: "We shall be forever with the Lord" (iv. 17).

Such is the picture of early Christianity. What further need have we of testimony or apologetic? If all the documents of the New Testament were lost except this earliest epistle, we would still have the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

"Faith of our fathers, holy faith!  
We will be true to thee till death."

## CHAPTER II

### ABSOLUTE AND NOT RELATIVE

“Anyone who is ‘advanced’ and will not remain by the doctrine of Christ, does not possess God: he who remains by the doctrine of Christ possesses both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not admit him to the house—do not even greet him, for he who greets him shares in his wicked work.”—John ii. 9-11 (Moffatt’s translation).

## CHAPTER II

### ABSOLUTE AND NOT RELATIVE

IN HIS BOOK *Thinking Black*, Dan Crawford introduced us to the psychology of the black man so as to give us a new angle of vision. The primitive mind seems, naturally, to think in black and white rather than in gray. Perhaps our modern civilisation has made us lose the power of sharp distinctions in the world of thought. We were told that one of the results of the war would be to teach men everywhere to think less superficially and more conclusively on moral questions. Has this been true?

Dr. Hendrik Kraemer in his book on the Christian Message in a non-Christian world speaks very decidedly on the peril of relativism and the dire necessity for an absolute Christianity in our modern world:

“The outstanding characteristic of our time is the complete disappearance of all absolutes, and the victorious but dreadful dominion of the spirit and attitude of relativism. This is not contradicted by the stupendous fact that mankind is literally wallowing in pseudo-absolutes; rather the reverse is the case. Religion, morality, systems of life, standards, spiritual values, normative principles, social orders are all divested of any absolute character or significance. The political crisis with its constant threat and reality of war and destruction, the economic crisis with its ensuing terrible unemployment and instability of life, naturally breed a spirit of uncertainty and insecurity in the minds of men. This, however, is only an addition

to a more fundamental uncertainty that eats at the vital centres of human life. The problem of religious certainty is *the* ultimate problem of modern man."

There is always a tendency to compromise in morals, and the same tendency is evident in regard to the work of evangelisation. God divided the light from the darkness, not only in the world of nature, but in the world of thought. "This, then, is the message," says John, "which we have heard of Him and declare unto you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not tell the truth." The attitude of the apostles toward the non-Christian religions is not expressed in gray or twilight shades. There are no blurred edges to their convictions. "Sharp as a sickle are the edges of shade and shine" in their teachings.

There is no "thinking in gray" in any part of the New Testament. Christ and the Apostles dwelt in the realm of the absolute. What Paul thinks of idolatry is clear, not only from the first chapter of Romans, but from such words as those in his epistle to the Corinthians: "The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have communion with devils" (1 Cor. x. 20).

John was the apostle of love, and yet it was he who wrote in regard to the Gospel message: "If anyone cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works." Such intolerance is impossible to those who think in terms of gray—without intolerance of any sort.

James does not hesitate to class with the devils those who trust solely in Unitarianism, which is intellectual monotheism (ii. 19). And Jude speaks of the false

teachers of his day as "autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; . . . wandering stars for whom the blackness of darkness hath been reserved forever" (xii. 13).

What we need to-day in missions is less comparative religion and more positive religion. It is possible to dwell upon the tolerable things in Hinduism, the ideal things of Buddhism and the noble things in Islam even as one sifts out grains of gold from tons of earth, to the practical exclusion of the social evils, the spiritual darkness and the spiritual death which dominate these systems. This was not the method of the apostles. A recent writer in the *Indian Witness* puts the fact in very forcible language: "The wise general does not carefully search out the strong spots in the fortress of his antagonist and then spend his time illuminating them with his searchlights. He finds the weak spots and dwells on them with his heavy artillery. Let some of our sages who are scholastic rather than practical prepare a list of the things vitally antagonistic to Christian truth, then the men who are practical rather than scholastic will be able to avoid scattering an ineffective effort and to concentrate on those things the destruction of which by their fall will cause the fall of false faiths."

To us who work among Moslems, their denial of Jesus Christ's mission, His incarnation, His atonement, His deity are the very issues of the conflict. Almost spontaneously, therefore, what might have been mere theological dogma in the mind of the missionary, turns into a deep spiritual conviction, a logical necessity and a great passion. Face to face with those who deny our Saviour and practically deify Mohammed, one is compelled to think in black and white. The challenge of the *Muezzin*, who calls to Moslem prayer, is a cry of pain; it hurts. In the silence of the night one cannot

help thinking how it pleased the Father that in Jesus Christ all fullness should dwell, not in Mohammed. Face to face with Islam one cannot help asking what will be the final outcome of "Christian" Unitarianism. In the history of Islam its so-called monotheism has always degenerated into some form of pantheism or deism.

When Moslems assert the gospel is corrupted and untrustworthy, the missionary can find no help in textbooks of destructive criticism. One wonders whether the great conflict between Islam and Christianity will not have to be fought out between the covers of the Bible. They themselves are abandoning their traditions and the Koran in public and private discussion, and are appealing to the Christian Scriptures. Their appeal is often based on the interpretation of those who think in gray. A recent paragraph on the subject of Christ's Deity which appeared in an Indian Moslem magazine copied all its arguments from books by modern Unitarians.

An Arabic book published at Beirut a few years ago is entitled *Heathen Doctrines in the Christian Religion*. It is by a Moslem graduate from a mission college who fancies that he has proved Christianity false by appealing to European critics of the destructive school. In Cairo the Moslem press quotes Unitarian interpretations of New Testament doctrine as proof against the New Testament Christ. The Christian who has no convictions in regard to the great fundamentals of Christianity is easily led to treat Islam as a sister religion and all Moslems as seekers after God in their own way.

Now, if there is no real distinction between regeneration and evolution, if there was no miracle at Bethlehem and only a martyrdom on Calvary, we may patiently await the future development of Islam on the right

lines. But in that case the missionary is no longer a proclaimer of the truth; he is only a seeker after truth. He is no longer an architect and builder, but a geologist looking for fossil specimens in old strata to complete his collection of things once alive, but now dead. He has interest in religion, but not passion for Christ.

"The great obstacle," writes an experienced missionary from India, "in the way of the success of the gospel in non-Christian lands is not the attitude of the people or the inherent difficulties of the work, but the tendency on the part of missionaries to be judges instead of advocates, with a desire to hold the balance of truth rather than wield its sword."

On this subject the words of Dr. P. T. Forsyth, of Hackney College, have weight: "Have you not met that class of people who are called globe-trotters? They have time, and means, health, curiosity, and interest easily excited. They travel much, some incessantly. Their world is a plexus of hotels connected by rails. There are always ready for a new excitement. They easily take up new concerns, new people. They have seen the outside of many lands, and cities, and men. As it is with these grievous people, so I say it is with the creeds that sacrifice everything to breadth, and are interested in all faiths alike. They do not send missions, they do not help missions. They are globe-trotter creeds, cosmopolitan but not universal. They are, in the world of mind and belief, what these rich tramps, these returned empties, are in the world of movement. They are not narrow enough for enthusiasm. For enthusiasm you must concentrate, you must have positive religion. You cannot let your mind ramble and stagger about at its vagrant will. You must concentrate and compress to get energy. These fluid creeds are not narrow enough for duty, for a sense of responsi-

bility. For that you must have more definite lines and a more fixed centre. That is it, a fixed centre. Now, that was the real secret of the great missionary movement of a century ago, which did so much to compensate for the narrow creed. It was not the narrow creed, but the fixed and fiery centre that was their real strength. They had the sun, though their calendar needed adjusting, and other reckonings were somewhat out. Or, to change the image, the power of the stream lay really not in the rigid banks but in the great volume of faith that flowed from the inexhaustible fountain of the Cross. We may have outgrown their creed, but God help us if we also move from their centre! You cannot call that growth. A town does not grow if it just covers new ground; it may do that by keeping the same population and just moving in another direction. Its centre may move with it and the place grow no larger; it only grows if it enlarges round its old centre. A tribe does not grow which just migrates; it covers new ground but it is only by leaving the old; it does not spread out round the old home. So it is with the growth of our creeds. They may enlarge, and mean less. They may know more with less faith. They may move with the times but get loose from eternity. They may gain some clearness of head but lose much ardour of heart. Christ may have more adherents but fewer believers, more sympathisers but not more confessors."

The painful attitude of neutral states in the World War should prove to the Christian that for him there can be no neutrality in a war for a Kingdom which has no frontiers, but claims the whole world.

The effect of thinking in gray is inevitable on the messenger as well as on his message. Twilight life is not conducive to spiritual health. We need the full blaze

of the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. His authority must be supreme in the intellectual sphere. His belief in the Old Testament scriptures and His statement that "they cannot be broken" leaves only one alternative; if we reject them, we reject Him also. It is not hard to accept the miracles of the Old and New Testament if we accept the miracle in the first chapter of Genesis and the greater miracle in the first chapter of John's Gospel. As R. L. Knox says in his brilliant book *Some Loose Stones*:

"Orthodox theology explains all the miracles recorded of our Saviour under one single hypothesis that He was omnipotent God. But the enemy of miracle is forced to give a variety of different explanations; that the healing of the sick was faith-healing, the stilling of the storm, coincidence, the feeding of the five thousand a misrepresented sacrament, the withering of the fig tree a misrepresented parable, the raising of Lazarus a case of premature burial, and so on."

A mutilated gospel can only mean a mutilated spiritual life. When we walk in the light we do not mix colours. Christ's touch cures colour-blindness. There is a noble intolerance in the very words used so often by the Apostle John: light—darkness, truth—lie, life—death, God—devil. The effect of thinking in gray always leads to compromise, and where there is compromise there is indecision. Men have opinions instead of convictions; they join Erasmus in his study rather than Luther nailing his theses to the door of the cathedral. But Luther would have made a better foreign missionary than Erasmus, especially in these days when so many in the Christian and non-Christian world are thinking in gray.



CHAPTER III

THE CHANGELESS CHRIST

“And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Thine hands: they shall perish but Thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail.”—Hebrews i. 10, 11, 12.

### CHAPTER III

## THE CHANGELESS CHRIST

**W**HAT STARTLING implications in this New Testament quotation from Psalm cii! The whole starry universe will once perish—but God remains and Christ is God! (John i. 1-6.) For we cannot speak of a changeless Christ unless He is more than man.

Jesus Christ changed everything by His coming into the world; but He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever—because He is the Son of God and partakes of His nature.

What He was, He is; what He said, He says; what He did, He does. Because He is our contemporary—our present Lord.

His demands, His promises, His character, His power, are the same. He stills the tempest of the human heart; He cleanses the leprosy of sin; He opens blind eyes, and He can raise the dead as He did once.

We discuss everything and change nothing; He discussed nothing, but changes everything—Himself unchanged!

As we read the newspaper “Change and decay in all around we see—Oh Thou that changest not, abide with me!” Does this refer to Christ? The Epistle to the Hebrews was written only thirty years after the Crucifixion yet the writer speaks of Christ’s superiority to the angels and all creation and then gives seven quotations from the Old Testament to prove it:

1. No angel is called Son—But Jesus is. (Ps. ii. 7.)
2. No angel can call God Father—But Jesus does. (2 Sam. vii. 14.)
3. All the angels worship the Son—And that Son is Jesus. (Deut. xxxii. 43, LXX.)
4. Angels are only ministers—Jesus is Saviour and Lord. (Ps. civ. 4.)
5. Christ's throne and sceptre are Divine—Therefore He is Crown-Prince of the universe. (Ps. xlv. 6, 7.)
6. Angels are creatures—But the Son is the Creator. (Ps. cii. 25-27.)
7. No angel was ever enthroned at God's right hand—Jesus was (Ps. cx.) and Jesus is now.

These are stupendous claims to make for the Carpenter of Nazareth, less than thirty-five years after His death and resurrection.

But not greater than John makes in his gospel, or Paul in Colossians, or Jesus Himself even in the synoptic gospels.

"All things are delivered unto me. . . ."

"All power is given unto me. . . ."

"When the Son of Man shall come. . . ."

To the New Testament writers Christ was not Lord at all, unless He was Lord of all. In no book of the New Testament are statements regarding the eternal and absolute deity of Christ more strongly asserted or put in a more thought-provoking way, than in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

We limit ourselves to one only of the seven quotations which the writer says apply to Jesus: namely the sixth. It is taken from Psalm cii. 25-27. Let us read it again in connection with verses 1 and 2.

If Jesus Christ is only the greatest character in human

history—a divinity minus omnipotence—He is insufficient for the day in which we live. And if in this life only we have hope in such a Christ we are of all men most miserable.

We are told that Christ is divine, but that "nobody should ever go to Jesus, to His manger and His cross to find the omnipotence which swings Orion and the Pleiades". (Fosdick, *The Modern Use of the Bible*, p. 269).

But that is the very thing the writers of the New Testament do and that is what we propose to do here and now.

The creeds of Christendom have always seen in the Manger at Bethlehem and on the cross of Calvary, The Eternal Word made flesh—Light of Light, very God of very God, and of one substance with the Father. As we have it in our hymn, Christ is "Creator of the rolling spheres, ineffably sublime."

What was the Old Testament conception of the universe of the rolling spheres: "The heavens are the work of Thy hands. . . ." It was not so puerile and puny as some modern writers (who make sport of the ignorance of the ancients) imagine.

Not the story of Joshua's prayer for the sun to stand still—but the magnificent statements of Job and the Psalms and Isaiah give us the measure of the Old Testament cosmogony and astronomy. The knowledge and skill of the older civilisation must not be despised.

Egypt, Babylon and China had already made their contribution to astronomy. They had recorded observations. There were earnest star-gazers. They even had made star-catalogues and were calculating eclipses.

"Canst thou bind the cluster of the Pleiades, or

loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou lead out the signs of the Zodiac in their season or guide the Bear with her train?" (Job xxxviii. 31).

"Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their hosts by number: He calleth them all by names. . . . He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain."

"He stretcheth out the north over the empty space and hangeth the earth upon nothing." "When I consider Thy heavens!" "O Lord my God, Thou art very great; . . . Thou art clothed with honour and majesty." "Lo these are part of His ways . . . but the thunder of His power who can understand?" "Praise Him in the firmament of His power."

We must consider also that to these writers God was transcendent beyond all the visible creation. The Jews were not pantheists but theists. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." He "stretcheth out the heavens . . . and maketh the Bear, Orion, Pleiades and the chambers of the South." And this Creator, says the writer to these Hebrew Christians, was Jesus! Our changeless Christ! "The same yesterday, to-day and forever."

The New Testament conception of the universe was also expressed in language of that day, but it was therefore higher and greater than in Old Testament times. The Greeks had far surpassed the old Babylonians, Assyrians and Egyptians—they did not yet have Copernicus or Kepler but they had Pythagoras and Ptolemy and Strabo.

These astronomers had taught the Greek and Roman world the endless expanse of creation, and something of its mysteries seen and unseen. They knew far more

than Job or Isaiah. So did Paul. The New Testament world was a new world.

Paul in the Epistles remembering his travel by night on land and sea cries out:

"Star differeth from star in glory, so also is the resurrection." "In Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth." "Oh, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God."

James, too, speaks of the Father of the heavenly lights who knows no change of rising and setting and with whom is no parallax. (Greek text.) That is, God is at the centre of the Universe!

The Apocalypse of St. John has more than twenty references to the stars and the great catastrophes of the heavenly powers that will usher in the day of doom!

Peter says that in the last day, "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." And it was of this vast universe that John and Paul and the writer to the Hebrews, stated in plain language that Jesus Christ was the Creator and upholder. "Creator of the rolling spheres."

What do you make of that?

"I gaze aloof, at the vaulted roof,  
Where time and space are the warp and woof  
Which the King of Kings, like a curtain flings,  
O'er the dreadfulness of eternal things,  
But if I could see, as indeed they be,  
The glories that encircle me,  
I should lightly hold this tissued fold,  
This marvellous curtain of blue and gold;  
For soon the whole, like a parched scroll,  
Shall before my amazed eyes unroll  
And without a screen, at one burst be seen  
The Presence in which I have always been."

"As a vesture shalt Thou fold them up"—all the

stars and firmament. "But Thou, O Christ, remainest!"

The Apostles believed it—do you?

What does modern science do to our text? The universe has become still larger to us: we have greater knowledge. Let us be thankful for it. Have we larger wisdom? Do we still have a childlike faith? Microscope, telescope and spectroscope have pushed the horizon farther away, but has God become less necessary? Has Christ become less real? How great is Jesus Christ in our New Universe? Do we still take the New Testament seriously? Would a smaller Christ meet this larger problem?

Dare we leave God out from so vast a universe? Looking through the great telescope at the Lick Observatory at the nebulae of the Milky Way can you still say: "By Him was everything made?" Do you ever look at the stars? "What is man that Thou art mindful . . .?"

"But Thou remainest; . . . and Thy years shall not fail." The eternal, everlasting Christ!

Light of Light! When they saw the star they rejoiced. . . . We see all the stars, we too rejoice "Very God, of very God. Begotten, not made."

Light of Light! In whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Of one substance with the Father. . . .

"In the beginning was the *Word*. . . ." We have seen His glory in all His stars and have come to worship Him.

If He does not, if Christ can not, who can unlock the seven seals of life's seven great mysteries: sin, pain, death, life, immortality, faith, love? . . . What Jesus meant to the earliest disciples of the first century he can mean to you. What He was to them, He is to you.

Paul did not invent a new religion. He received the message and passed it on. There is only one gospel.

"Now brothers" (writes the apostle according to Dr. Moffat's translation), "I would have you know the gospel I once preached to you, the gospel you received, the gospel in which you have your footing—the gospel by which you are saved . . . namely, that Christ died for our sins as the Scriptures had said—that he was buried and that he rose on the third day as the Scriptures had said."

The Christ of the earliest New Testament Scriptures is a supernatural Christ. His death is a supernatural event. His resurrection, too, was supernatural. He came to save us from our sins. He died to save us from our sins. He rose again to save us from our sins. The cross is all and the cross is final!

That is the foundation of our faith, the strength of our hope, the source of our love. If we do not adhere to these great fundamental facts, our religion is all haphazard. We need omnipotence for we are impotent.

When we accept the facts we must accept all their implications, for great is the mystery of our changeless Christ.

We go to the Manger and find Omnipotence there. "The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth."

We go to Calvary and find Omnipotence there. "There was none other good enough to pay the price of sin." "The Church of God was purchased by His blood." "They crucified the Lord of Glory."

We stand before the empty grave and behold! Omnipotence has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light in the gospel.

Heaven's arches rang, the angels sang, and the star pointed the way when Jesus was born at Bethlehem. But on Calvary,

"Well might the sun in darkness hide  
And shut his glory in,  
When Christ, the Mighty Maker died  
For man His creature's sin."

It was fitting that heaven should be moved to gladness at His coming, and to grief when He died; for when this same Jesus comes again to judge the world in power and great glory, the very "heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up." But according to His promise we look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. Meanwhile we hitch our wagons to stars. (Isaiah xl, Ps. cxlvii).

The foundation of God standeth sure. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. He is our Master and our Lord, infinite, eternal, unchangeable in His wisdom, power, goodness and truth.

A changeless Christ is proof of the finality of His revelation and mission. Because He came, we wait for none other. "In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the godhead bodily." We close this chapter with the noble words of Professor Lynn Harold Hough, Th.D., of Drew University, New Jersey, which appeared in the *Expository Times* for December, 1933:

"It is clear enough that Paul could never regard the religions of the world as somehow upon a level, each with some contribution to make to the final religion which is in some sense a synthesis of them all. The thing of which he was perfectly sure was that there had been a Divine invasion of human life in the person of Jesus

Christ, and that the Christian religion was not an aspect of man's quest for God, but was God's quest for men, God in action in Jesus Christ for the remaking of human life, for the salvation of the individual and the achievement of the Kingdom of God in the life of men. It was the conviction that he was the bearer of a unique and finally significant message from God to men which was the secret of Paul's life. And in Rome his thought of Christ took the loftiest flights. He saw Him as the very secret of the life of the universe of which we are a part, the very principle by which all things cohere, the very actuality of the Divine in human life. And the Church of twenty centuries is essentially with Paul at this point.

"The type of hospitality which emasculates the Christian religion for the sake of friendly contact with the ethnic faiths would have made impossible the whole history of the triumphs of the Christian religion in the world. Granted that there are golden threads in all the fabrics which represent the ethnic faiths; granted that the light which has lighted every man coming into the world has lent illumination at some point to one after another of the great religions of the world; it remains true that there is a distinction between the Christian religion and the ethnic faiths which is best expressed by saying that they represent man in action searching for God, while the Christian religion represents God in action for the salvation of man.

"If the Christian Church should ever forget that in Christ, God comes into human life as He comes in no other person, in no other place, and in no other way, the day of creative power for the Christian religion would come to an end. At this point there must always be—we must not be afraid of the words—a noble intolerance. So it is clear Paul believed. For this is the

heart of what he was saying to the Colossians. It reminds us of the day when the great Athanasius in the midst of a similar battle cried out: 'Our all is at stake.'"

## CHAPTER IV

## THE UNCHANGING MESSAGE

"Now, brothers, I would have you know the gospel I once preached to you, the gospel you received, the gospel in which you have your footing, the gospel by which you are saved—provided you adhere to my statement of it—unless, indeed, your faith was all haphazard . . . namely, that Christ died for our sins, as the Scriptures had said."—1 Cor. xv. 1-3 (Moffatt's translation).

## CHAPTER IV

### THE UNCHANGING MESSAGE

THE INDIFFERENCE OF great masses of men to-day to dogma," Edwyn Bevan wrote in the *International Review of Missions*, "while they still reverence Christian ethical ideals, is something which confronts the friends of missions with a problematic situation." He then went on to show, in his article entitled *The Apostolic Gospel*, that any attempt to get away from apostolic dogma and to go back to Jesus Christ simply as the revealer of moral values, is an impossibility.

We must either accept the apostolic interpretation of Christianity or give up any attempt to set Jesus Christ on an eminence above all other good men. The old cry, "Back to Christ," often means "away from Paul and his teaching." The Sermon on the Mount, however, is not the earliest Christian document. If we consider the chronology of the New Testament books, it is a striking fact that the doctrinal epistles—Galatians, Corinthians, Romans—were written and circulated among the churches before the good news was recorded by Mark or Luke. The first letter of Paul to the Corinthians was written in A.D. 56; the common date assigned to Matthew's Gospel is shortly before A.D. 70.

The Christian teaching, therefore, of the apostles, and the doctrine accepted by the early Church, is to be found not only, nor first, in the Synoptics, but in the Epistles. They tell us of the finished work of Christ. They give Him the pre-eminence above all; they find



the centre of their teaching in His death and resurrection; their glory is in the cross.

The apparent foolishness of this message did not disconcert them or lead to compromise. The Jews demanded miracles and the Greeks were mad in their search for philosophy. Paul determined to disregard the wisdom of both worlds, Jew and Gentile, and to proclaim a Christ crucified, although a stumbling-block to the Jews and foolishness to the Gentiles. In the great resurrection chapter he gives us the theme of his preaching as well as the hope of his salvation and ours: "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." In a single sentence he confirms the historicity of the death of Jesus, asserts its fundamental character, and gives its supreme significance. All three of these are to-day called in question, discounted, or explained away.

In the non-Christian world *the teaching of the cross* is still the stumbling-block and foolishness. The Moslem reads in his Koran (Surah on Women, vs. 155): "God hath stamped on them their unbelief . . . for their saying, Verily we have killed the Messiah Jesus, the son of Mary, the apostle of God, *but they did not kill him and they did not* crucify him, but a similitude was made for them." In this respect the Moslem teaching is perhaps borrowed from that of the early Gnostics. In various forms the idea that Christ did not really die, but swooned and came to life again without tasting death, has been taken up even in modern days. The lengthy novel by George Moore entitled *The Brook Kerith* is based on the same illusion.

But even where men admit the fact of Christ's death on the cross, they still stumble because of its *implications*. Are not Christian Science and New Thought

and other modern cults saying to-day, "Any God except one who died on the cross?" Yet it was the Lamb slain, who, in John's Revelation, is the object of all heaven's worship. *The Sunday School Times* recently published a cartoon representing civilisation as a gentleman of culture seated in his home with the morning newspaper open before him. His wife, represented as Christianity, was about to hang on the wall of their home a picture of the Crucified, with the inscription "Redemption Through Christ's Atoning Blood." Civilisation, however, remarks: "Now that we have decided to be one, you will oblige me by removing *that* from the wall of our home." But a Christianity without Christ crucified as its central doctrine and supreme hope is a contradiction of terms. We know *that* Jesus Christ died and *why* He died, from the Scriptures.

The witness of pagan writers, entirely apart from the New Testament record, was gathered in a little book by Samuel Stokes, a missionary in India. He gives quotations from Tacitus, the historian; Pliny, the Roman governor; Suetonius, and others, who record as a matter of well-known history that Jesus of Nazareth was put to death by Pontius Pilate and crucified as a criminal. The famous passage in Josephus' *Antiquities* (Chapter xviii, Part 3), was once called in question as not being authentic. Its general genuineness has now been admitted by Harnack and others. It also gives independent witness, therefore, to the death of Jesus. In the article on Jesus Christ in the Jewish Encyclopædia, it is said: "He was executed on the eve of the Passover Festival." The death of Jesus was foretold in Old Testament prophecy, and when Paul says, "He died according to the Scriptures," he doubtless referred to all the passages in the Old Testament of the

suffering Messiah, wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities. Not only in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, in the twenty-second Psalm, and in the thirteenth chapter of Zechariah do we have this picture, but perhaps Paul was not unmindful of the great unconscious prophecy of the heathen world by Plato, 429 B.C., in his *Politia*, Vol. II, 36. He describes the perfect, righteous man who is to be the world's deliverer, in these terms: "Who without doing any wrong may assume the appearance of the grossest injustice; yea, who shall be scourged, fettered, tortured, deprived of his eyes, and after having endured all possible sufferings, fastened to a post, must restore again the beginning and prototype of righteousness."

In addition to the testimony of the Scripture we have the witness of the Lord's Supper, an outward and visible sign of something that occurred in the breaking of His body and the pouring out of His blood. The evidence of such an unbroken tradition coming down the centuries in every branch of the Christian church cannot be gainsaid.

Moreover, the mere sign of the cross is a remarkable testimony to the historicity of the Crucifixion. Once it was a symbol of shame and degradation; only the criminal and the outcast were associated with it; the curse of God and of man rested on it. This sign of the cross has now become the symbol of honour and glory, of pride and prestige. We see it on national flags, in crosses of honour, in decorations of valour, and the ministry of friendship and relief is carried on under the banner of the Red Cross. All this is inexplicable unless the cross has been dignified, transfigured, glorified by Him who hung upon it for our sin. The historicity of the death of Jesus is established by all these proofs. He died according to the Scriptures, except for those who

still dare to put the testimony of one obscure Koran verse against all the historic evidence of Jewish, Christian and pagan writings!

In stating the content of the apostolic gospel, Paul says, that *the death of Christ holds the fundamental place in Christian teaching*. "I delivered unto you first of all"—the Greek word signifies *before everything else*, or as belonging to the weightiest articles of the faith. In the Septuagint the same phrase is used in Gen. xxxiii. 2, where Jacob places the two maid-servants and their children in the very front of his cavalcade to meet Esau. And again the same Greek words are used regarding David (2 Sam. v. 8), where he says: "Who-soever smiteth the Jebusites first." Paul evidently means to say that the death of Christ for our sins is of the first importance. It is the cornerstone and keystone of Paul's Christianity.

The importance of the death of Jesus Christ as the fundamental fact in the New Testament is shown by the place it occupies. One-third of the New Testament matter deals with the story of the cross and the atonement. Matthew devotes two long chapters to the trial and death of Jesus; in Mark the two longest chapters relate to these events; one-seventh of the entire text of Luke is taken up with the same story, and in John's Gospel the shadow of the cross falls on the scene almost at the outset, while one half of the narrative deals with the last week of Jesus' life.

In the Apostles' preaching, as recorded in the Acts and the Epistles, their one theme seems to have been Christ crucified. Peter (Acts x. 38-43) voices the message than which they had no other, the good news of peace through Jesus Christ which spread throughout the length and breadth of Judea and was carried all over the Roman Empire:

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, so that He went about doing good, and curing all who were oppressed by the Devil—for God was with Him. And we are witnesses to all that He did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. But they even put Him to death, by crucifixion. That same Jesus God raised to life on the third day, and permitted Him to appear, not to all the people, but to witnesses—men previously chosen by God—namely, to us, who ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead. And He has commanded us to preach to the people and solemnly declare that this is He who has been appointed by God to be the Judge of the living and the dead. To Him all the Prophets bear witness that through His name all who believe in Him receive the forgiveness of their sins."—(Weymouth's translation.)

Paul at Corinth determined to know nothing in his preaching save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. The very word "cross" was used so frequently that it became the synonym for "Christianity." The preaching of the cross, the offence of the cross, the glory of the cross, the power of the cross—all these phrases indicate the place this doctrine had in Apostolic preaching. The two Christian sacraments are without significance, without symbolism, without mystic meaning, unless they refer to the death of Christ. We are buried with Him in baptism; we partake of His broken body and shed blood; it is the washing of regeneration that refers to the washing away of our sins. We are to testify to the fact and the significance of the Lord's death till He come.

In other words, the most solemn office and the deepest mystery of the Christian Church gather around the cross, and the Crucified. The same witness is borne by the hymnody of the Church Catholic throughout the ages. The death of Christ has been the theme of Christian song during the persecutions of the early Church when they sang praises to their dying Lord in the catacombs, until the day of the modern revival and

the Salvation Army. Take away the death of Christ and the best hymns of the Christian Church are without significance. It was with deep insight that Sir John Bowring, British Consul-General at Canton, China, wrote:

"In the cross of Christ I glory,  
Towering o'er the wrecks of time;  
All the light of sacred story  
Gathers round its head sublime."

The Church of the Redeemed when they sing the new song, still celebrate the old, old story.

"And I looked, and heard the voices of many angels on every side of the throne, and of the living creatures and the Elders, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, and in loud voices they were singing, 'Worthy is the Lamb which has been slain to receive all power and riches and wisdom and might and honour and glory and blessing.' And I heard every created thing in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea (and all that is therein) saying,

"To Him who is seated on the throne,  
And to the Lamb,  
Be ascribed all blessing and honour  
And glory and might  
For ever and ever!"

(Rev. v. 11-13. Weymouth.)

Take away the death of Christ from your creed and you destroy Christianity. He draws all men unto Himself because He was lifted up on the cross. Deny the significance of the crucifixion and the whole New Testament becomes a scrap of paper, for it is no New Testament, no new covenant *except in His blood*. Without that blood there is no hope for the sinner and no joy for the believer.

Paul therefore points out, in the third place, *the*

*supreme significance of the death of Christ.* He died for our sins according to the Scriptures. There is no other way to explain the death of Christ than from the Scriptures. It is inexplicable that God did *not* deliver Him from such death, that He did *not* make His escape, as Moslems aver, unless there was a necessity and a high moral purpose, a divine purpose, in His death. When Paul said that Christ died for our sins *according to the Scriptures* he referred to the Old Testament, its types and symbols, its promises and prophecies, its portraiture of the suffering Messiah, without the shedding of whose blood there could be no remission of sins. Whatever Paul's interpretation is of the doctrine of the atonement, he himself claims that it is based on the Scriptures—that which he had received he delivered. Pauline Christianity is rooted in the Old Testament. His good news was the fulfilment of the promise made unto the fathers.

It is impossible to eliminate certain phrases from the Synoptic Gospels which are just as clear in their teaching regarding the significance of the death of Christ as is John's Gospel and the statements of the apostle in his epistles. For example what can be the significance of "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matt. xx. 28), unless it refers to the sacrificial death of Christ as the ransom for sin? The apostolic interpretation of the death of Jesus as necessary, vicarious, and propitiatory was recorded chronologically long before the record of the Gospel. This interpretation, therefore, of the death of Jesus is not a later addition, but is the earliest interpretation we have.

In A.D. 53, that is, twenty years after the crucifixion, Paul writes:

"For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: for peradventure for the good man some one would even dare to die. But God commendeth His own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, shall we be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by His life."—(Rom. v. 6-10 R.V.)

To the Corinthian church he writes:

"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died."—(2 Cor. v. 14.)

And again,

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself . . . Him who knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."—(2 Cor. v. 19, 21, R.V.)

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews clearly teaches that Christ's one sacrifice on the cross does away with sin, that He is our only high priest, that His blood has cleansing power, and that the new covenant owes its validity solely to the death of Christ. The Mosaic sacrifices were of small value: what they typified, Christ fulfilled. Peter, in his first epistle, has the same Gospel. He speaks of Jesus who Himself carried in His own body the burden of our sins to the cross so that we, having died so far as our sins are concerned, may live righteous lives. By His wounds, ours have been healed. He also has no other gospel than the gospel of the death of Christ for our sins according to the Scriptures.

John writes, concerning Christ, that, "He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the whole world;" "He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren;"

"God . . . sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." The first name given to Jesus in the Gospel of John is "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world," and, in the last chapter of the New Testament, eternal life is found only for those whose names are written in the Lamb's book, and who drink of the river of the water of life which proceedeth from the throne of the Lamb. The word "Lamb" in the Gospels has no significance and no power over human hearts unless it refers to the sacrificial Lamb of the Old Testament and shedding of blood for the removal of guilt and transgression. This is the good news, the only good news, for sinners.

So important, so supreme, is the place of the atonement in the apostles' thought and preaching that it seems incredible for anyone to accept the New Testament and then reject the very kernel of its teaching. "It will be admitted by most Christians," says Dr. Denney in his book entitled *The Atonement and the Modern Mind*, "that if the atonement, quite apart from precise definition of it, is anything to the mind, it is everything. It is the most profound of all truths and most creative. It determines more than anything else our conception of God, of man, of history and even of nature; it determines them, for we must bring them all in some way into accord with it. It is the inspiration of all thought, the key, in the last resort, to all suffering. . . . The atonement is a reality of such a sort that it can make no compromise. The man who fights it knows that he is fighting for his life and puts all his strength into the battle. To surrender is literally to give himself up, to cease to be the man he is and become another man. For the modern mind, therefore, as for the ancient, the attraction and the repulsion of Christianity are concentrated on the same point; the cross of

Christ is man's only glory or it is his final stumbling-block."

The story is told of Mr. Moody that when he was visiting in Europe a young minister came to him and said: "Moody, what makes the difference between your success in preaching and mine? Either you are right and I am wrong, or I am right and you are wrong."

Said Moody, "I don't know what the difference is, for you have heard me and I have never heard you preach. What is the difference?"

And the other answered: "You make a good deal out of the death of Christ, and I don't make anything out of it. I don't think it has anything to do with it. I preach life."

"What do you do with this," Mr. Moody asked, "He hath borne our sins in his own body on the tree?"

"I never preached that," was the reply.

"What do you do with this: 'He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities, and with his stripes we are healed'?"

Said he, "I never preached that."

"Well," said Mr. Moody again, "what do you do with this, 'Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission'?"

Said he, "I never preached that."

Mr. Moody then asked him, "What do you preach?"

"Well," said he, "I preach a moral essay."

Said Mr. Moody, "My friend, if you take the blood out of the Bible, it is all a myth to me."

"I think the whole thing is a sham," the minister replied.

"Then," said Moody, "I advise you to get out of the ministry very quickly; I would not preach a sham. If

the Bible is untrue, let us stop preaching, and come at once like men and fight against it if it is a sham and untrue; but if these things are true, and Jesus Christ left heaven and came into this world to shed His blood and save sinners, then let us lay hold of it and preach it, in season and out of season."

The apostolic Gospel to Paul and his successors, and to every evangelist and every missionary, is a personal message and a personal gospel in the deepest sense. Paul spoke of it as *my* gospel. "I received it," "I delivered it," he wrote. Those who have not received it in their own hearts as the final message and the saving message of God's grace can never deliver it to others.

In the life of Dr Chatterjee, *A Prince of the Church in India*, by Dr. Ewing, the story of this Bengali Brahmin's conversion suggests much anxious thinking for those modern missionaries who attempt to relegate the cross and the atonement to a subordinate place. Dr. Chatterjee explains what was the compelling force which induced him to leave home and country and honour by accepting Christian baptism. He admits the attraction of Christ's blameless life and His perfect teaching, but goes on to say: "the doctrine which decided me to embrace the Christian religion, and make a public confession of my faith, was the doctrine of the vicarious death and suffering of Christ. I felt myself a sinner, and found in Christ One Who had died for my sins, paid the penalty due my sins." "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."

He says further that, after all his years of experience as a leader of the Indian church, the atonement has become "in my thinking and in my life the great and sole differentiating line between Christianity and all other religions, so that when I became a Christian I

felt, and feel it most strongly now, that a God all mercy is a God unjust. . . . This continues to be my creed to this day."

The true apostolic succession is not a matter of method of ordination or of ecclesiastical connection, but of the character of our message. Have we received first of all, and delivered first of all, the news of Christ's death for sin? Do we interpret that death, not in terms of human philosophy, but in terms of the Old Testament Scriptures? Does the death of Christ hold the foremost place in our preaching, in our thinking, and in our missionary programme?

CHAPTER V

THE IMPACT OF CHRISTIANITY

"I am astonished that you are hastily shifting like this, deserting Him who called you by Christ's grace and going over to another gospel. It simply means that certain individuals are unsettling you; they want to distort the gospel of Christ. Now even though it were myself or some angel from heaven, whoever preaches a gospel that contradicts the gospel I preached to you, God's curse be on him! I have said it before, and I now repeat it: whoever preaches a gospel to you that contradicts the gospel you have already received, God's curse be on him!"—Gal.i.6-9 (Moffatt's translation).

## CHAPTER V

### THE IMPACT OF CHRISTIANITY

NOTHING IN THE character of the Apostle Paul is more astonishing than the breadth of his vision, the wideness of his programme, and the greatness of his loving heart. By a new creation, Saul the Jew, with his Pharisaic prejudice and nationalistic limitations, became Paul, the Apostle to the Roman Empire. His spiritual biography was the growth of a narrow soul into the measure of the stature of the fullness of his Master, Jesus Christ, in Whom there was neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female, Roman nor barbarian. The middle-walls of partition were all broken down—and if not, Paul would break through them. "Who maketh thee to differ?" he cried. . . . "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" "None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." Such categories of thought were not only startling to Paul's contemporaries; they were revolutionary and represented the impact of a new force on society and the individual.

From the height of the imperial city—where no stone walls could make a prison for his soul—Paul the dauntless scans the whole horizon of life, things past and things to come, the church militant and the church triumphant, his fellow workers, some faithful and some faithless, and the distant vision of the Eternal City and the fadeless crown.

From the same imperial city in our own day, Benito Mussolini, the statesman and dictator of an awakened



nation, formerly an itinerant workman, and a socialist editor, sums up the present world situation to-day. We quote from the story of his life:

"There are three great empires which to-day form the tripod of humanity. There is the British Empire, which still possesses lands, but to all appearances has lost its leading idea; the Russian, which has an idea and is seeking lands for itself in East and West; and the Christian, which no longer has any land, but an idea in which 400,000,000 persons scattered over the whole earth are agreed. Of these three, the little ship of the divine Hebrew, Jesus, still floats better than any other on the stormy waves of history. . . ."

Alone and in prison Paul thought not of surrender, but of world conquest. The two empires were already engaged in a death struggle and Paul knew which was to win. "In real life," said an eminent preacher, "Nero sits on the throne and Paul languishes in prison and many years must pass before people begin calling their dogs Nero and their sons Paul. But that time comes. As God lives, that time always comes." The impact is irresistible when it comes.

In the church militant there is no substitute for the missionary passion. When the church ceases to evangelise, she ceases to grow and to glow. What a world vision, what fierce loyalty to truth, what unflinching love for humanity, and what sacrificial service appear in the life and epistles of this world citizen of the first century!

There are still colossal evils to overcome, gross injustices to combat and lost provinces to win for the King. In the spiritual warfare of the church pacifism is treason. Paul had his opinion of Demas and of Alexander the coppersmith. The Lord would render to them according to their works. The Christian religion never could have been started on the kind of loyalty many people give it to-day.

The impact of Christianity on a non-Christian world began nineteen centuries ago, and will not cease until the kingdoms of that world have become the Kingdom of the Lord and of his Christ. This impact has gathered momentum and strength throughout the centuries. Never before was it so world-wide and so strongly evident.

The definition of mechanical impact is full of significance and pregnant with illustration in considering the spiritual impact of a religion of Life, which is supernatural, on the other religions of the world. "Impact," we are told, "is the collision or shock occasioned by the meeting of two bodies, one or both being in motion." Now, it is perfectly evident that such impact is impossible unless there are two bodies. At least one of them must be in motion, and the effect of the impact will depend on the weight of the bodies, their momentum and their resisting power. The effect of the impact of two bodies may be only a rebound, as in the case of a rubber ball against a stone wall. It may result in penetration, as when a cannonball strikes a fort, or it may result in the complete disintegration of one of the two bodies, as when a live shell strikes a fortification. These laws of the natural world find their application in the spiritual, and the impact of bodies terrestrial is a parable of the spiritual and moral effects resulting from the impact of a living Christianity on the other religions of earth.

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 rebound by 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 once 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. The human heart finds no rest until it rests in Christ. The missionary character of Christianity, therefore, demands impact with every non-Christian system. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel." The glory of God is manifested in the strength and momentum of this impact. "For this purpose was the Son of God manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil."

When it was proposed in Berlin to found a chair of comparative religion, Harnack, the theologian and church historian, gave three reasons why such a chair has no place in a great university. The first reason he gave in these words: "There is only one religion which was revealed from God. All the other so-called religions are the inventions of men. One has come down from heaven; the others are of the earth, earthy. One is a divine revelation from the Creator of the universe; and all the others may be classified as mere moral philosophies." Now, whether or no we join with Harnack and Theodore Parker in stating our belief, we cannot believe in Christian missions unless we believe that the Christian religion and non-Christian religions are two distinct conceptions, which cannot avoid impinging the

one upon the other. Christianity is distinct from the non-Christian philosophies and the non-Christian religions in its origin. It is distinct in its character. It is entirely distinct in its effect. So much is there in Buddhism that resembles Christianity, that the early Jesuits thought it the devil's imitation of Christianity. But in spite of all the world-movements toward civilisation, in spite of the changes, in spite of the fact that "the morning light is breaking and the darkness disappears" through Africa and Asia, these non-Christian religions in their nature and character and effect are wholly what they have always been—distinct from the Christian religion. What is Buddhism, for example, in this twentieth century? Hear the testimony of Lord Curzon, whom nobody would accuse of being prejudiced in favour of the Christian religion over against the non-Christian religions. In his book on the *Problems of the Far East*, he says of the Buddhist priests: "Their piety is an illusion; their pretensions a fraud; they are the outcasts of society; the expression on their faces is one of idiotic absorption. This is not surprising, for the mass-book is a dead letter to them; it is written in a strange language which they can no more decipher than fly. The words they chant are merely equivalents in sound, and as used in Chinese are totally devoid of sense." And a missionary goes on to say of this Buddhistic religion which holds in its grasp nearly three hundred million people: "The Buddhist priests have a blank idiotic look on their face; they are no more influenced by moral sense than are the waves of the sea; they know no sense of sin, and feel no need of a Saviour themselves. How, then, could they be a guide to others who are in need of a Saviour?" A few years ago this item appeared in a Foo-chow paper, which is Buddhism up to date, over

against the claims of men like Fielding, who tells us that Buddhism has "such high morality that even Christians may go to school to Buddha." "On the eighth day of the fourth month the Buddhist priests in the vicinity of the west gate in Dung Keng met in their yearly conclave, one purpose being to ordain Buddhist priests, by the rite of burning marks upon their heads. Among the priests was one from Gua Sang village. This man was accused of stealing a priestly garment worth two dollars. The theft was committed last year. He was seized by the assembled priests, and before the crowd his eyes were gouged out. They then placed piles of wood about him and burned him to death." That is Buddhism in China yesterday. Some thought that Mohammedanism had changed its nature because the Turks declared a constitution, because the Persians were grasping for a parliament, because there are colleges and institutions of learning scattered over the Mohammedan world. But read the report of Armenian massacres and of medieval tortures carried out by the very Turks who swore on the constitution and by the Koran that they would uphold liberty, equality, fraternity. I challenge anyone who has travelled around the world to deny that in their origin, in their influence, in their character, there is a great and lasting and unchangeable gulf between the non-Christian religions and the Christian religion. They are distinct in spite of much that is un-Christian in Christendom.

In the next place, the two bodies are both in motion. There was a time when Christianity, too, was largely stagnant. There was a time when the Church of Jesus Christ did not regard her Master's last commission. There was a time when Mohammedanism could have taught us what it was to have a great missionary movement. There was a time when Christianity might

have gone to school with Buddhism to learn the real missionary spirit. But to-day Christianity is in motion. At last the Church of Jesus Christ has begun, not to play at missions, but to take hold of missions as a great divine task.

"Ye that are men now serve Him,  
Against unnumbered foes,  
Let courage rise with danger,  
And strength to strength oppose."

That is the spirit of the Church of Jesus Christ to-day. And just as surely as Christianity is in motion, the other religions are in motion. It is the impact of two moving bodies, or of one moving body against all the other non-Christian religions. Take Hinduism, for example. If anything is true of Hinduism it is that Hinduism was built up in watertight compartments of caste, confined itself to one great peninsula, absorbed but never went out—a great and mighty system, hoary with age and self-satisfied. Hinduism to-day is no longer stagnant; Hinduism to-day is rampant.

Vivkananda and other Swamis are going out seeking whom they may lure into the immense net of Hinduism. Hinduism is no longer esoteric, but popular and tries to be modern; it has borrowed the plumes of Christianity, and faces us as a mighty, new, reformed Hinduism. Why, you can no more recognise in the talk of these reformed Hindus the old Hindu religion than you can recognise in the broken line along the shores of Sicily, Messina as it was before the earthquake. It is all changed.

Buddhism has always been a missionary religion. It came to Ceylon from India 250 years before Jesus Christ was born. It was a missionary religion in China before the Apostle Paul became a missionary. It had already reached Japan before Mohammed was born,

and before Mohammed died Buddhism had grasped the whole of Siam. In the middle ages Turkestan and Central Asia were the battleground between Buddhism, Islam and Christianity, and the mighty struggle between these three religions of the world is still going on.

Of all the non-Christian religions, perhaps, Islam has shown most of all the power of an immense and lasting momentum. We have a missionary propaganda; we have committees, and boards, and treasuries; we have literature and enthusiasm. But where can you point in Christendom to a missionary spirit like that which has breathed throughout the Mohammedan world for thirteen centuries? Their Laymen's Missionary Movement does not have its tenth anniversary, but its thirteenth hundredth!

Rich man, poor man, begger-man, thief,  
Doctor, lawyer, merchant, chief,

—the whole laity of the Moslem world has been missionary in Africa and Asia for all these centuries, until to-day there are over two hundred and fifty million Mohammedans. Moslems are not inactive to-day. They are publishing Thomas Carlyle's *The Hero as Prophet*, and selling it for two annas on the streets of Lahore. They are copying the Koran and printing it for the pagan tribes in the heart of Africa. They are winning over, against Christian missions in some parts of Africa, thousands and tens of thousands of converts. The non-Christian religions, the greatest of them, are in motion to-day.

Not only are the non-Christian religions in motion, but the men of the yellow robe and the men of the green turban are coming into actual contact and clash and conflict with Christian missionaries, and both of them are claiming the victory. It is a clash of arms such

as the world has never heard, such as history has never seen. Missionary statesmen in Africa tell you that within two decades there will be no paganism left in Africa, but Christianity and Islam will divide between them the whole of the Dark Continent. Shall the religion of the loveless Allah, the religion of the lifeless creed, the religion of the degraded home, hold in its grasp a whole continent? The call of God's providence and the command of Christ, and the very existence of our Christianity demand immediate, world-wide missionary impact on the part of Christianity with the non-Christian religions of the world.

The effect of that impact leaves no uncertainty of the result. The Christian religion, being not of the same nature as the other religions, need fear no conflict with the other religions of the earth. He who said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth," said so when Buddhism was 500 years old, when Hinduism was many centuries old and when Mohammedanism, though not yet arisen, already existed in the very germ, because the Apostle Paul, one might say, describes people who could not be better described if we wished to characterise in a sentence the Moslem world to-day when he said, "For many walk of whom I have often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is perdition, whose god is their belly, who glory in their shame, who mind earthly things"—the five points of Islam: anti-Christian, hopeless, sensual, with low ideals, and without spirituality—a religion of the earth, earthy. The conflict, the impact of Christianity upon the non-Christian world may well be measured in terms of its impact and conflict with Mohammedanism.

What has been the result of an impact which has only taken place for a very few years through missions, and

only for a few decades through western governments, laws and commerce? In the Mohammedan world you may see first of all the effect of that tremendous impact politically. Seven-eighths of the population of the Mohammedan world are under the flags of European governments. Ninety-one million Mohammedans under the Union Jack, which bears the three-fold symbol of the Crucified. As a Mohammedan long years ago told me at Bagdad when I said, "Why do you spit when you see that flag?"—"It is not England that I hate; but why should England put the symbol of the cross on her flag and over our country?" Yes, why should England put the symbol of the cross on her flag, except that she owes her strength, and owes her glory, and owes her life, and owes her civilisation to that same cross of Jesus Christ, towering o'er the wrecks of time.

The impact of Christianity has not only been political, but social. The former was not always an impact for good, although it has thrown open the doors to Christian missions. But the impact of Christianity has been social. The great social reforms now going on in the Mohammedan world are indicative that Christianity and Christian missions have not been without influence in Moslem lands. When the Moslem women of old Russia presented a petition to the Duma to be delivered from the oppression of their husbands, such a petition was the direct result of the impact of Christian thought. When a new constitution was proclaimed in Turkey, and there was a new era of liberty, was not the result due in large measure to Robert College, Beirut College, and Assiut College, and the impact of Christian education throughout the Mohammedan world? Socially, the Mohammedan world is no longer stolid and stagnant, but receptive, and looking

all around the horizon to see how it can appropriate our social system without giving up its book and its prophet. But the Moslems can no more easily appropriate our social system, which is full of the life of Christ, without giving up their book and their prophet than pick out the nummulite fossils from the limestone cliffs in the Mukattam hills. They are embedded. They stand or fall together. That is why Jesus Christ is spoken of by John, the beloved disciple, as coming not to bring peace, but the sword. That is why John says, "For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." In so far as the non-Christian religions have in them the evidence of God's spirit, in so far as the non-Christian religions have shared in the ethics of Christianity, like Confucianism in its honour to father and mother, in so far they will stand the test; but in so far as the non-Christian religions are without Christ and without hope and without God, the habitations of cruelty; in so far as those who hold them, as Ian Keith Falconer said, "suffer the *horrors* of heathenism and Islam"; in so far Jesus Christ has come to destroy the works of the devil. This is also true of Western paganism.

The Christian impact has also had a moral and spiritual effect. We are sometimes told that the work among Mohammedans is without success; that there have been no Mohammedans converted by the power of Christian missions. But we may remember that the first conversion from Islam to Christ took place even before Mohammed died. One of Mohammed's own companions left Arabia and went to Abyssinia. There the impact of a living Christianity, although partly dead, the impact of Abyssinian Christianity, opened the eyes of that Arab, Obeid Allah bin Jahsh, and he wrote back to Mohammed, as the Arabs themselves

relate, "I now see clearly, and you are still blinking." Would that Mohammed himself had received that message from the impact of one of his disciples with a living soul in Christian Abyssinia! The first convert has been added to throughout the centuries until to-day you can count in Persia, and Arabia, and Turkestan, yes, and Bokhara and Afghanistan, men, if not by the score, yet by the ones and twos and tens, who have laid down their lives rather than deny the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. In India there are thousands of converts and two hundred preachers of the gospel who were formerly Mohammedans. In Java there are no less than sixty thousand living converts from Islam gathered into churches, and many of these churches are self-supporting. If after only half a century of such missionary effort as we have given to the Mohammedan problem, God has given us such evident victories, what will not be the victory of the impact when Christianity, a living Christianity, comes face to face with the whole Mohammedan problem in Africa and in Asia? The strength of that impact is not measured by our gifts to missions, by the endowments of our institutions or by the numbers who attend our colleges. The strength of that impact is not measured by the printed page scattered over the Mohammedan world. The strength of that impact rests solely and wholly in the strength of Calvary. The Mohammedan religion and other religions may have many great truths, but the missing link in the Moslem's creed, and all creeds of the non-Christian world, is the cross of Jesus Christ. The Buddhist religion may elevate, almost deify, law and order, but the Buddhist faith knows nothing of the gospel of the Crucified. Hinduism knows of innumerable incarnations, but is ignorant of the one great Incarnation at Bethlehem.

The Cross of Calvary, because it reconciles the three greatest things in the world—the greatest thing in God, which is love; the greatest thing in the world, the moral law; and the greatest mystery of humanity, sin—will win against all other religions. Because Calvary unites these three, and solves the problem, not only philosophically, but practically for every one of us, so that face to face with that cross we say, "My Lord and my God," and walk in His footsteps; and because, when we are face to face with that cross, life is no longer a mystery but a glorious transfiguration; therefore, the cross of Jesus Christ will prevail until the kingdoms of this world shall have become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ.

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

CHAPTER VI

THE STUMBLING-BLOCK OF CHRISTIANITY

“From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he had to leave for Jerusalem and endure great suffering at the hands of the elders and high priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised on the third day. Peter took him and began to reprove him for it; ‘God forbid, Lord,’ he said, ‘this must not be!’ But he turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind me, you Satan! You are a hindrance to me! Your outlook is not God’s but man’s.’”—Matt. xvi. 21-23 (Moffatt’s translation).

## CHAPTER VI

### THE STUMBLING-BLOCK OF CHRISTIANITY

IT WAS THE deliberate judgment of Dr. James Denny when he wrote on the place and interpretation of the *Death of Christ* in the New Testament some years ago, that the atonement did not have the value assigned to it, either in modern preaching or in theology, which it has in the New Testament, and that the emphasis given to it in average current Christianity was not that of the apostles in their preaching. Those who have carefully read his book must admit that the importance of the death of Christ to Christian theology and life cannot be exaggerated. Throughout the entire New Testament the Cross dominates everything. It interprets everything, and it puts all things in their true relations to each other. The death of Christ is the central truth in the New Testament, and therefore, as Denny remarks, “both for the propagation and for the scientific construction of the Christian religion, the death of Christ is of supreme importance.” How is this fact related to the Moslem problem! Is the death of Christ and His atoning work our supreme message? Ought it to be our first message?

The fundamental difference between Islam and Christianity is the absence in the former of the doctrine of the cross. The cross of Christ is the missing link in the Moslem’s creed, and not only in the Koran and in the early traditions, but in the practical experience of every missionary, especially in lands that are wholly Moslem, nothing seems to stand out more prominently



than Islam's hatred of the cross. The Koran gives Jesus Christ a high place among the prophets, and confers on Him names and titles which, if rightly interpreted, would place Him above them all, and yet it does so only by denying His death and His atonement. Modern Islam differs in no respect from orthodox Islam in this particular, and although the followers of the new Islam may speak in the highest terms of Jesus Christ as regards His character, His miracles and His influence on history, they occupy the orthodox position in this respect; nor do they find a place in their doctrine of salvation for Christ's atonement. A recent writer, and a missionary of long experience in Persia, goes so far as to say that there is "not a single important fact in the life, person and work of our Saviour which is not ignored, perverted, or denied by Islam." Their chief denial, however, is of His death. There are three passages in the Koran which seem to indicate that Christ did die:

"But they (the Jews) were crafty, and God was crafty, for God is the best of crafty ones! When God said, 'O Jesus! I will make thee die and take thee up again to me, and will clear thee of those who misbelieve, and will make those who follow thee above those who misbelieve, at the day of judgment, then to me is your return. I will decide between you concerning that wherein ye disagree. And as for those who misbelieve, I will punish them with grievous punishment in this world and the next, and they shall have none to help them.' But as for those who believe and do what is right, He will pay them their reward, for God loves not the unjust."—(Surah iii. 47-50.)

"And peace upon me the day I was born, and the day I die, and the day I shall be raised up alive."—(Surah xix. 34.)

"And I was a witness against them so long as I was amongst them, but when Thou didst cause me to die, Thou wert the Watcher over them, for Thou art witness over all."—(Surah v. 117.)

These texts certainly seem to teach that Jesus died.

Yet in spite of them, Moslems everywhere quote the other verse when they deal with Christians, whom they accuse of misbelief:

"And for their misbelief, and for their saying about Mary a mighty calumny, and for their saying, 'Verily, we have killed the Messiah, Jesus the Son of Mary, the Apostle of God.' . . . *But they did not kill Him and they did not crucify Him, but a similitude was made for them.* And verily, those who differ about Him are in doubt concerning Him; they have no knowledge concerning Him, but only follow an opinion. They did not kill Him, for sure! Nay, God raised him up into Himself."—(Surah iv. 155, 156.)

In the traditions which have come down to us from the prophet himself (or which have been invented by his followers and attributed to Mohammed)<sup>1</sup> this denial of the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross is elaborated. As apparently the death of Jesus Christ was both affirmed and denied in the Koran, to unify its teaching the only possible way of escape was to affirm that although He died for a few hours or days, *He was not crucified*. We read in Moslem tradition:<sup>2</sup>

"And they spat upon Him and put thorns upon Him; and they erected the wood to crucify Him upon it. And when they came to crucify Him upon the tree, the earth was darkened, and God sent angels, and they descended between them and between Jesus; and God cast the likeness of Jesus upon him who had betrayed Him, and whose name was Judias. And they crucified him in His stead, and they thought that they crucified Jesus. Then God made Jesus to die for three hours, and then raised Him up to heaven; and this is the meaning of the Koran verse: 'Verily, I will cause Thee to die, and raise Thee unto Me, and purify Thee above those who misbelieve.'"

In addition to this, Moslem commentators teach that when Christ comes again the second time, He will die,

<sup>1</sup> Goldziher, *Mohammedanische Studien*, Vol. II.

<sup>2</sup> For these traditions and their sources, cf. Zwerner's *The Moslem Christ*, pp. 78-112.

emphasising, as it were, the frailty of his human nature, which even after his return from glory, and his death for a few hours before his ascension, is still subject to death. This flatly contradicts all the teaching of the New Testament that "He died unto sin once," and "Death hath no more dominion over Him."

Not only do Moslems deny the historical fact of the crucifixion, but from the days of Mohammed himself until now, they have shown a strange and strong antipathy, and even a repugnance, to the very sign of the cross. It is related by al-Waqidi that Mohammed had such repugnance to the very form of the cross that he broke everything brought into his house with that figure upon it. This may have been mere superstition, or, as Muir remarks, "It may, on the other hand, have been symbolical of his extreme aversion to the doctrine of the crucifixion."

According to Abu Hurairah, the prophet said: "I swear by heaven it is near when Jesus, the Son of Mary, will descend from heaven upon you people, a just King, and He will break the cross and kill the swine." In certain books of Moslem law it is expressly laid down under the head of theft, that if a cross or crucifix is stolen from a church, the usual punishment for theft is not incurred; although if it be stolen from a private dwelling, it is a theft. It is well known to readers of the daily press that Turkey and Egypt have never been willing to have Red Cross Societies under the International Hague Convention regulations, but have organised Red Crescent Societies instead. A more recent incident illustrating Moslem hatred for the cross comes to us from the Sudan in connection with the postal service. The *United Empire* wrote:

"In the early days, the stamps of the Sudan bore a watermark which for many months passed unnoticed

by their users. But one day a Mohammedan, in an idle moment, held one of them up to the light, and discovered to his dismay that this watermark bore an obvious resemblance to a Maltese cross. Now, to a devout Moslem, any suspicion of veneration to the cross of the Christian is not only distasteful; it is absolutely forbidden. And here for months the Moslem scribes of the Sudan had been placing their lips, or at least their tongues, to its hidden design unknowingly. It may seem a small thing to some people, but the world knows what a doleful page of history has been written merely because some cartridges were greased; and in the Sudan the authorities acted with discretion. They changed the water-mark. Thus to philatelists a Sudan stamp water-marked with a design bearing a resemblance to a Maltese cross is a rather valuable discovery."

It is true that educated Moslems are becoming ashamed of this repugnance to the symbol of the cross, and try to explain away certain of the early traditions or present-day practices. In a supposed interview with a newspaper correspondent Sheikh Rashid Ridha, of Cairo, utterly denies the story related by Charles Doughty regarding Arab boys who are taught to defile the cross, drawn in the desert sand.<sup>1</sup> But the story is true. No man has so closely examined and so carefully reported popular Islam as it exists in Arabia to-day as this prince among explorers. Here are his words:

"In the evening I had wandered to an oasis side; there a flock of the village children soon assembling with swords and bats, followed my heels, hooting, 'O Nasrany! O Nasrany! and raving about the kaffir and cutting crosses in the sand before me, they spitefully defiled them, shouting a villainous carol. . . . This

<sup>1</sup> See S. H. Leeder, *Veiled Mysteries of Egypt*, pp. 323, 324.

behaviour in the children was some sign of the elders' meaning from whom doubtless they had heard their villainous rhyming."

The Armenian massacres afforded other terrible instances of this fanatic hatred of the cross, the details of which can never be published. It is true, on the other hand, as Mr. Leeder states, that in the Sahara and Tunisia the cross is used as a tattoo mark and in the decoration of weapons, etc. This use of the cross, however, in certain parts of the Moslem world is due either to the fact that it has continued in use by tribes which were once Christian, or that the symbol is of sinister import. The Tuaregs of the Sahara, as well as the Kabyles of North Africa, were undoubtedly once Christian.<sup>1</sup> And as regards the latter explanation, abundant proof exists in such works as those of El Buni on magic, talismans and amulets. Near the Bab Al Fatooh in Cairo, Moslem women to-day buy silver amulets specially made for them, consisting of a rude image of the Christ on the cross, and on the back are verses from the Koran! It is well-known that these are worn not to honour the Christ or the cross, but with the intention of driving out demons by the use of a sign which is itself considered demonic!

Not only is the symbol of the cross a stumbling-block to the Moslem mind, but the doctrine of the cross is an offence. A number of books and pamphlets that have appeared show this antipathy. Halil Halid in his book, *The Crescent versus the Cross*, shows how far even the educated Moslem carries this opposition. He is an honorary M.A. of Cambridge and a licentiate of the Institute of Law in Constantinople, and writes:

"Islam also holds different views on the death of Christ. Whether historically correct or not, it does not

<sup>1</sup> Hans Visscher, *Across the Sahara*, p. 168.

admit the possibility of the crucifixion of Christ. It advances the theory that someone else must have been crucified by mistake in his place, as it cannot reconcile His lofty position with the alleged form of His death, a form which, to the Moslem mind, only befits criminals. To the Moslem mind it is not only sacrilegious, but also illogical at once to deify Him and make Him suffer such a death. The Christian explanation that 'Christ suffered that painful death for our sins' fails to satisfy the critics of the non-Christian world. It is doubtless convenient for many Christians to regard the passages of their Scriptures concerning the crucifixion as an insurance policy, and to conduct themselves in a manner which is hardly pious, feeling sure that they are safe against hell-fire, because Christ suffered for their sins. Mussulman critics say 'what fanciful notions these Christians entertain on this subject! They not only state that the One, Whom they are to worship, died such a death, but also make a mournful picture out of their notion of crucifixion, representing it by the fine arts—a picture which is neither realistic nor æsthetic.' "

Many of the most bitter attacks on Christianity by the Moslem press in recent years have been similarly directed against the cross and its teaching. In a book published at Beirut by Mohammed Tahir al Tannir, entitled *Pagan Elements in the Christian Religion*, the author draws a parallel between Krishna and Christ, and even illustrates by crude wooden cuts Krishna's death and the death of Christ on the cross, the one with a crown of glory, the other with a crown of thorns! The book tries to prove that all Christian teaching regarding the crucifixion and the atonement is not based on historical fact, but was borrowed piecemeal from heathenism. Mohammed Tawfiq Sidqi in a book

entitled *Din Allah*, attacks the Christian faith both as regards its documents and its dogma, using the arguments of modern destructive criticism, without being aware apparently that it is a two-edged sword which would play havoc with the Koran and the traditions if once its edge were tried. In the introduction he states that Christ is in no sense an atonement for sin, and that ideas of sacrifice and atonement are only remnants of heathenism. He attempts to prove that none of the prophecies of the Old Testament, especially not those found in Isa. liii., Ps. xxii., and Zech. xii. 13, refer in any way to Christ or to His death on the cross.

It is interesting to notice, however, how more and more the advocates of Islam and the opponents of Christianity among Moslems are becoming thoroughly aware that the doctrine of the cross is the Gibraltar of the Christian faith, the centre and pivot of Christian theology, and the very foundation of the Christian hope. In the monthly review, published by Seyyid Mohammed Rashid Ridha, *Al Manar*, twelve pages were devoted to a rather candid inquiry regarding the crucifixion of Christ, and in the very introduction of his subject the learned author says that "the belief in the crucifixion is the foundation of the Christian religion; if it were not for its doctrine of the cross and redemption, which are the root of the Christian religion, they would not spend time in calling upon men to accept and embrace it."

Following an exposition of the teaching of Christians, the article summarises the objections to it as follows:

1. It is opposed to reason.
2. It is opposed to theism. How can God, who is omnipresent and everlasting, degrade himself by dwelling in a virgin's womb?
3. It is opposed to God's knowledge; for the plan of salvation—if such it is—was an after-thought.

4. It is opposed to both the mercy and justice of God; to His mercy because He allowed Christ to suffer, being innocent, without delivering Him; and to His justice in allowing those who crucified Him to do it unpunished.

5. It leads to impiety, because if this is the way of salvation, then no matter how wicked a man is he finds deliverance through the cross, and will never be punished for his sins.

6. It is unnecessary. We have never heard it stated by any reasonable person, or those who are learned in law, that the attribute of justice is abrogated by the pardon of a criminal; on the contrary, it is considered a virtue to pardon an offender. Why should not God do so?

From the above it is easy to judge that the modern standpoint of Islam is not only opposed to the historical fact of the crucifixion, but to the historical interpretation of that fact in Christian theology.

The question here arises how can we account for Mohammed's repugnance to the crucifixion? Was it that he desired to defend the reputation of Jesus, the greatest prophet before him, from the stain which he considered was cast upon it by the Jews who boasted that they had slain Him? (Surah iv. 156). It may have been that to Mohammed's mind there was something abhorrent in the idea of a prophet being left to the mercy of his foes, especially in the case of one of the greater prophets. The Koran makes much of how God wrought deliverance for Noah, Abraham, Lot, and others, even by a miracle. It may have been that Mohammed, therefore, borrowing an idea of certain Christian sects, believed and taught that Christ was not crucified. The Basilidians, we are told, held that the person crucified was Simon of Cyrene; the Cyrenthians and Carpocratians, that it was one of Jesus'

followers, while the Persian heretic Mani taught that it was the prince of darkness himself.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps there was nothing to prevent Mohammed from adopting this view, as he was but imperfectly acquainted with the real doctrines of Christianity. We say, perhaps, because another view is put forward by Koelle in his philosophical study, on the historical position of Mohammedanism.<sup>2</sup> He writes:

"Mohammed, from his low, earthly standing-point, could neither apprehend the unique excellence of the character of Christ, nor the real nature of His all-sufficient and all-comprehending salvation.

"Not want of opportunity, but want of sympathy and compatibility, kept him aloof from the religion of Christ. His first wife introduced him to her Christian cousin; one of his later wives had embraced Christianity in Abyssinia, and the most favoured of his concubines was a Christian damsel from the Copts of Egypt. He was acquainted with ascetic monks, and had dealings with learned Bishops of the Orthodox Church."

Again, Mohammed was not ignorant of the supreme importance of the doctrine of the atonement. According to a well-known tradition, he said:

"I saw my Lord in the most beautiful form, and He said unto me, 'O Mohammed, knowest thou on what subject the highest angels contend?' I answered, 'Yes, O my Lord, on the subject of atonement, that is to say, on the services and degrees which are the cause of the atonement of sins.' Thereupon the word was addressed to me, 'What is atonement?' I answered, 'Atonement is the remaining in the house of prayer after the service has been performed; the going to the meetings on foot; and the taking an ablution when trials and troubles befall: whoever does these things will live and die well, and be as pure from sin as if he had just been born of his mother.'"

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Rice, *Crusaders of the Twentieth Century*, p. 252.

<sup>2</sup> *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, Book III, pp. 310, 334.

Other traditions relate how Mohammed explained some of the pagan sacrifices, such as *The 'Aqiga* and the sacrifices at Mecca, as in a certain sense atoning for sin, so the doctrine of substitution could not, in itself, have been repugnant to him (*Mishkat* xviii. 3).

Whatever the explanation may be, the fact remains that Islam from its origin until our own day has been an enemy of the cross of Christ, and has ever made the crucifixion a cause of stumbling. This position, once taken by orthodox Islam, has been held throughout the centuries. The historical fact of Christ's crucifixion, with all it signifies to Christianity, has always been flatly contradicted. Only among the Shiah sect in Persia do we have a remarkable illustration of the doctrine of the atonement and of substitution forcing a way for itself into Islam. The Aryan mind was never content with the barren monotheistic idea of the Semite Arabs. In Persia, the doctrine of an incarnation, of intercessors, and of salvation by atonement, found eager acceptance at an early date. Those who have witnessed the miracle play of Hassan and Hussein, commemorative of the events at Kerbela, will realise how large a place this death occupies in their life and thought as a propitiation for sin. At the close of the miracle play, the following words are put into the mouth of Mohammed:

"The key of paradise is in Hussein's hand. He is the mediator for all. Go thou and deliver from the flames everyone who has in his lifetime shed but a single tear for thee: everyone who has in any way helped thee; everyone who has performed a pilgrimage to thy shrine or mourned for thee. Bear each and all to paradise."<sup>1</sup>

In presenting this doctrine of the atonement, therefore, to Moslems of the Shiah sect, the story of

<sup>1</sup> Sir Lewis Pelly, *The Miracle Play of Hassan and Husain*, Vol. II, pp. 343-348.

Kerbela can be used to interpret that of Calvary, and finds a response. At the Cairo missionary conference the Rev. S. G. Wilson, of Tabriz, gave this testimony: "When we are setting forth the story of the cross to Persians, they often reply, 'In like manner the blood of Imam Hussein avails for us as an offering to God.' This condition of belief prepares them to hear and understand the Christian doctrine of the atonement. It can be presented to them as to a Christian audience."

But how is it in regard to orthodox Islam? Should we emphasise this doctrine of the crucifixion where it is bitterly opposed and vigorously disputed? Would it not be the part of worldly wisdom and of missionary strategy to keep the cross and the atonement (as well as the doctrine of the Trinity) well in the background, and present to Moslems the *life* of Christ rather than His death as the theme of our gospel? Shall we not follow the discretion (or was it the fear?) of the Sudan authorities in the matter of the postage stamps, and remove even the watermark of the cross from our preaching lest we offend our Moslem brethren? Let the Apostle Paul give us the answer, that apostle who taught "that no man should put a stumbling-block in his brother's way or an occasion of falling;" and who made it a principle of his life that, "if meat causeth my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh for evermore, that I cause not my brother to stumble." His reply would be in the words he wrote to the disputers of this world: "Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness."

Paul knew that the cross was a stumbling-block and the doctrine of the cross foolishness to Jew and Gentile, and yet he deliberately, emphatically, persistently, everywhere, made his mission and his message the cross. As we think of the millions in Moslem lands to

whom our hearts go out in sympathy—their ignorance, their sinfulness, their utter need of the Saviour—those other words of the apostle find new meaning: "For many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ." Let us never on that account consider them *our* enemies, but prove to them that we are their friends by showing not by our creed only, but by our lives, the power of the cross and its glory. We must meet this earnest and latest challenge of our Moslem opponents not by compromises and concessions, nor by cowardice of silence, but by boldly proclaiming that the very heart of our religion, its centre and its cynosure, its pivot and power, is the atonement wrought by Christ on the cross. We must show them that the cross is the highest expression of the very Spirit of Christ; that, as Andrew Murray says, "the cross is His chief characteristic; that which distinguishes Him from all in heaven and on earth; that which gives Him His glory as Mediator on the throne through eternity." If faithfully, fearlessly, sympathetically, we preach Christ crucified, He can make the stumbling-block of the cross a stepping-stone for the Moslems into His kingdom.

There is no other way into that kingdom than the way of the cross. Only by the preaching of the cross can we expect among Moslems conviction of sin, true repentance, and faith in the merits of Another. The cross, and the cross alone, can break down their pride and self-righteousness, and lay bare all hypocrisy and self-deception. More than this, the cross will win their love if rightly preached. The cross is the very antithesis of the spirit of Islam, because it is the spirit of Christianity. This issue must be made clear at the very outset, for it is wrapped up in every other truth of the

Christian religion. Our conclusion, therefore, can find no better expression than in the words of Denny:

“We may begin as wisely as we please with those who have a prejudice against it, or whose conscience is asleep, or who have much to learn both about Christ and about themselves before they will consent to look at such a gospel, to say nothing of abandoning themselves to it; but if we do not begin with something which is essentially related to the atonement, presupposing it or presupposed by it or involved in it, something which leads inevitably, though it may be by an indirect and unsuspected route, to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, *we have not begun to preach the gospel at all.*”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Denny, *The Death of Christ*, p. 302.

## PART TWO: THE WORLD TODAY

CHAPTER VII

THE SHRINKAGE OF THE GLOBE



“And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.”—Daniel xii. 3, 4.

“For as the lightning cometh forth from the east, and is seen even unto the west; so shall be the coming of the Son of man.”—Matt. xxiv. 27, R.V.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE SHRINKAGE OF THE GLOBE

THE PRESIDENT of the Royal Geographical Society chose this startling phrase as the subject of the annual address some fifteen years ago. He referred to the growing proximity of all lands, the inter-racial movements, and the end of major geographical discoveries since nearly all quarters of the globe had been explored. The remarkable increase in all facilities of communication knit together humanity into one compact neighbourhood. Time and distance were annihilated by modern inventions and this caused a “shrinkage of the globe.”

Nevertheless the phrase needs explanation, for, in one sense, the world was never so large as it is to-day; in another sense never so small. Geographical discovery has given us much larger maps and larger areas of habitation. The population of the world has enormously increased in the past century and now reaches a total of some two billion and ninety-five million souls! The great populous areas of the Far East are more populous by far than they were a century ago. This is true, for example, of India, China and Japan. Where formerly there was only guess-work in regard to populations we now have government statistics. The whole world has been charted and surveyed. In *Recollections of a Geographer* (1935), Mr. E. A. Reeves gives two interesting maps of the world.

One shows the territories covered in 1878 by accurate maps, “fairly reliable maps,” and rough maps, as also

the remaining unexplored areas. The other shows the situation in 1933. In the latter year the territories of the two first types "accurate maps," comprised almost the whole of Europe, much of the eastern United States and south-eastern Canada, large tracts in India, Japan and South Africa, the more densely populated parts of Egypt, Palestine and Syria, and scattered patches elsewhere, more especially in Chile, the Argentine, the coastal margins of Brazil, central and western United States, the East Indies, French Indo-China, Madagascar and Australasia. Within these territories extensive areas have been mapped by government surveys to scales of about an inch to the mile or larger.

The great undertaking begun by Professor Albrecht Penck in 1891 to prepare a sectional map of the whole world on the scale of one to one million, that is, sixteen miles to the inch, is now nearly completed for Europe, America and parts of Asia and Africa. It is when we study these maps on a large scale that we begin to realise how large is the world in which we live and how vast the task of evangelisation.

But even as the discovery on the part of geographers and the taking of the census by civilised governments has given us a much larger world, so the progress of human invention has brought the whole human family closer and closer together, and we can only describe this startling reality by the phrase, "the shrinkage of the globe." Time and space have been almost annihilated. Only a few months ago Howard Hughes, a wealthy young aviator, girdled the earth in a little over 91 hours, and in making this startling journey, in which the day shrank from 24 hours to 19, he had five sunrises in four days!

When we think of the speed of travel on land by the racing motor car, we are dumbfounded. "Are we

nearly there?" asked Alice breathlessly of the Red Queen in their headlong flight. "Nearly there!" the Queen repeated. "Why, we passed it ten minutes ago! Faster!" There is something of the fantastic quality of Alice in Wonderland in the process of demolishing space and time and speed records now going on at Bonneville, Utah. There, on the glistening salt flats—as nearly level a stretch as can be found—new records for motor cars have been made thrice within two weeks. The latest stands at 35.75 miles an hour—not far from six miles a minute—the fastest time ever made on land.

The missionary enterprise of the modern church began when there were no steamship lines and no railways, and when Islam with its centre at Constantinople so dominated the Near East that it formed a barrier, and the early missionaries were compelled to go around the Cape to reach the Far East. To-day steamship lines form a network across the seven seas. They not only belt the globe in all directions but the ships are increasingly commodious and luxurious in their appointments. What a contrast between the *Queen Mary* and the fleet of little ships that carried the explorers and pilgrims to America!

In regard to railways, it was only during the last decade of the nineteenth century and in the present century that the iron rails began to cross the great areas of North and South Africa, Central Asia, India and China. They have contributed much in making every part of humanity accessible to the traveller and the missionary.

The motor car is a comparatively modern invention and has revolutionised life in every part of the globe. J. W. Gregory, in his book *The Story of the Road*, from the beginning of time to A.D. 1931, sketches the pro-

gress of the highway in civilisation. The book is in two parts: the first describes ancient and medieval roads beginning with hunters' tracks in the pathless forest to the time of Julius Cæsar and Alexander the Great, who were the roadbuilders across Europe and Asia Minor. The second part of the book deals with the evolution of the modern highway.

"The Romans established a system of well-built roads, whose remains, patched here and there, were the chief highways of Europe until the eighteenth century. From the fall of the Empire until the time of Tresaguet, Telford and Macadam the principles of highway construction were practically unknown." Professor Gregory, like Jusserand, compares the roads of western China to those of the Middle Ages. One road in Chinese Tibet he describes as "a deliberately planned obstacle race." He follows Thorold Rogers in considering that the bad state of the medieval highways has been much exaggerated, but does not quote or refer to any authority. In the reign of Henry III, Bracton quoted "elders as saying that a reasonable day's journey consisted of twenty miles." A recent author has said that a normal day's journey in the fifteenth century was from thirty to forty miles.

"The increase of wheeled traffic in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries subjected the highways to harder use. The statute labour was ill-enforced and the condition of the highways went far to justify the opinion that the *Pilgrim's Progress* was written to show the bad state of the roads in England."

The introduction of the motor car in every part of the world has ushered in the building of highways and opened avenues for trade and commerce in regions that were once almost inaccessible. For example, in the province of Hadramaut in South Arabia, which was

wholly out of touch with the western world, there are now 500 miles of motor roads and 200 cars are in use. We read that eighteen months ago there were only half a dozen motor cars on the coast and seventy in the interior, which had been carried up in pieces by camel caravan. Now in the same district passenger lorries ply daily between Tarim and Shihr. There is regular motor transport across the desert of Arabia and in every part of Persia. In China, until the outbreak of the recent hostilities, they were building motor roads in every province even as far as the borders of Tibet. North Africa has motor roads equal to the best in Europe and one can buy a tourist ticket by motor to Timbuctu. It is no exaggeration to state that the car has increased the area and efficiency of the work of the average missionary in nearly every part of the world one hundredfold.

During the year 1935, 5,126,680 automobiles were produced in the factories of the world, and of these the United States produced nearly 4,000,000. England, Germany, Italy, France and Russia were the other great manufacturers of motor vehicles. When we add to these astounding statistics the fact that in every land, highways are being built for their use, we have a picture of a world in which time and space have now become wholly relative and distances almost annihilated. According to the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Statistics in Washington, the total highway mileage of the world is now 9,270,000. We naturally expect good highways in Europe and America, but already in Africa there are 429,000 miles of highways, and in Asia over one million. Here we have a material and commonplace fulfilment of the prophetic word: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be

exalted and every mountain and hill brought low. The crooked shall be made straight and the rough places plain, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed."

The whole world has indeed become one neighbourhood through facility in communication by land and by sea, not to speak of the aeroplane which is fast becoming an ordinary means of transit across the seven seas and the five continents.

The scientific idea of burying a 5,000-year time-capsule in the grounds of the New York World's Fair, which contains a synopsis of our present-day civilisation may not appeal to every one, but that huge casket of copper-alloy weighing 800 pounds contained, among other objects and documents, a complete Bible, the Lord's Prayer in many languages, and a copy of Dr. Hume's *Living Religions of the World*. Whether 5,000 years from now there will be any inhabitants on the earth to recover and read this record is not at all certain. Among the messages, however, that were enclosed for future generations was a letter by the distinguished scientist, Albert Einstein. He summed up his impression of the present age in 174 words, which are at once deeply significant and also prophetic:

"Our time is rich in inventive minds, the inventions of which could facilitate our lives considerably. We are crossing the seas by power and utilise power also in order to relieve humanity from all tiring muscular work. We have learned to fly and we are able to send messages and news without any difficulty over the entire world through electric waves.

"However, the production and distribution of commodities is entirely unorganised, so that everybody must live in fear of being eliminated from the economic

cycle, in this way suffering for the want of everything. Furthermore, people living in different countries kill each other at irregular time intervals, so that also for this reason any one who thinks about the future must live in fear and terror. This is due to the fact that the intelligence and character of the masses are incomparably lower than the intelligence and character of the few who produce something valuable for the community.

"I trust that posterity will read these statements with a feeling of proud and justified superiority."

Another force which is binding humanity together for better or for worse is the electric telegraph and cable, the telephone and wireless stations. More marvellous than the magic carpet of the *Arabian Nights* is the radio receiving set found in millions of homes throughout the world. In the United States alone there are 561 broadcasting stations, with an annual payroll of \$22,000,000. Radio programmes are advertised in every newspaper of every city in the civilised world. A recent illness brought it vividly to my mind. I was lying in the hospital here at Princeton during the European crisis, and by the twist of a knob at intervals of an hour could be heard voices like these: "We now take you to Berlin. . . . Now we are in Rome. . . . And here is a voice from 10 Downing Street. . . . We now take you to Prague. . . . These reports will come hourly from the National Broadcasting Company." What men hear in the ear is now proclaimed, not only on the housetop, but on the radio.

The Shanghai Christian Broadcasting Association is an example of the use of the radio in foreign lands. They have a daily broadcasting programme of seven hours. The following is a typical programme:

7.45 A.M.	Music.
8.00 A.M.	Morning Worship in Chinese.
12.45 P.M.	Music.
1.00 P.M.	Noon-day Meditation in English.
5.00 P.M.	Better Home Period in Chinese.
5.30 P.M.	News of the Day in Chinese.
6.00 P.M.	Bible Lesson in Chinese.
6.30 P.M.	Bed-time Stories in Chinese.
7.00 P.M.	Music.
7.30 P.M.	Gospel Message in Chinese.
8.00 P.M.	Health Talks in Chinese.
9.00 P.M.	Gospel Message in English.
9.30 P.M.	International Hour (German, French, Russian, etc., in turn).

Mr. H. St. John Philby, in his recent exploration of the land of Sheba, tells how they were in constant touch by radio and listened in to London, Rome and Vienna. Freya Stark, in her book, *The Southern Gates of Arabia*, tells how she became seriously ill in the heart of Hadramaut and how her Arab hosts brought in, one Sunday, a small radio receiving set on which she heard a service from London.

Two other modern inventions have revolutionised the world, namely, the daily Press through the postal service and the cinema. The present-day ubiquitous activity and enterprise of journalism have created a new situation and a new mentality among the masses. Provincialism is on the wane even in the remote corners of the world. A Malay weekly published in Borneo, for example, has on a single page an article on Islam in America, on the new mosque in Berlin, on nationalism in Bengal, and an advertisement of a Javanese steamship company that accommodates Borneo pilgrims for Mecca if they will embark at Padang, Sumatra. The Press is at once a proof of the unity and solidarity of the world and of its hopeless divisions and misunderstandings. It is a daily in-

fallible index to the surging currents of thought in a sea of unrest. It is also a thermometer on which the wise may read the rising or falling temperature of nationalism and a barometer that records approaching storms of suspicion and war.

Journalism existed in China before the discovery of printing in Europe but, generally speaking, present-day journalism is one of the recent forces in Asia and Africa. In many lands it is of comparatively recent date. In the Near East the first newspapers were published in 1869. To-day there is no stronger element binding together the world of Islam than the Press. It is moulding the language and literature of whole nations. It is changing the ancient bombastic and affected style into a modern speech. Of present-day journalism in the non-Christian world the words of Kipling are also true:

"The Pope may launch his Interdict,  
The Union its decree,  
But the bubble is blown and the bubble is pricked  
By Us and such as We.  
Remember the battle and stand aside  
While Thrones and Powers confess  
That King over all the children of pride  
Is the Press—the Press—the Press!"

The cinema allows the whole world to look into the back windows of Western civilisation. There is nothing hidden that is not revealed. The non-Christian world, so called, has become thoroughly familiar with the non-Christian character of much of Western civilisation. The name of God is blasphemed among the heathen as it was in Paul's day because of those who do not honour His Word.

In such a shrunken world, in this neighbourhood of humanity, we are called to preach the gospel and the

best way of broadcasting our message always has been by personal contact. Jesus knew the strategy of personal contacts. He wrote nothing. He sent no letters to rulers and leaders, as Mohammed did, asking them to accept His message and mission. He trusted to the human voice, had confidence in the human heart, and knew that truth would set the tongue on fire. "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" "I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves." Without force, without finance, without machinery or organisation, little companies of men and women, two by two, they scatter, tell their message and return with joy. So it was at the first and so it was for two centuries. Silent as the coming of the day, irresistible as the rising of the tide, mighty with the majesty of the risen Christ, these humble folk did the deed which changed Palestine and the Roman world. It is the most stupendous revolution in history, of which we here see the beginnings. Professor Lecky confesses his astonishment in these words:

"That the greatest religious change in the history of mankind should have taken place under the eyes of a brilliant galaxy of philosophers and historians, who were profoundly conscious of the decomposition around them; that all of these writers should have utterly failed to predict the issue of the movement they were observing; and that during the space of three centuries they should have treated as simply contemptible an agency which all men must now admit to have been, for good or for evil, the most powerful lever that has ever been applied to the affairs of men; are facts well worthy of meditation in every period of religious transition."

To-day, we too are in a period of transition, facing the same possibilities in India and China and the Near

East; and when we meditate on the miracle of the first century and remember that it was the changed character of the men whom Jesus chose that was the explanation, we long for their successors, and voice the prayer of the late Frank Mason North:

"O Master of the waking world,  
Who hast the nations in Thy heart—  
The heart that bled and broke to send  
God's love to earth's remotest part—  
Show us anew in Calvary  
The wondrous power that makes men free.

"On every side the walls are down,  
The gates swing wide in every land,  
The restless tribes and races feel  
The pressure of Thy pierced hand.  
Thy way is in the sea and air,  
Thy world is open everywhere.

"O Church of God! Awake! Awake!  
The waking world is calling thee.  
Lift up thine eyes! Hear thou once more  
The challenge of humanity!  
O Christ, we come! Our all we bring,  
To serve our world and Thee, our King."

CHAPTER VIII

THE SOLIDARITY OF THE RACE

"The God who made the world and all things in it, He, as Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in shrines that are made by human hands; he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, for it is he who gives life and breath and all things to all men. All nations he has created from a common origin, to dwell all over the earth, fixing their allotted periods and the boundaries of their abodes, meaning them to seek for God on the chance of finding him as they grope for him. Though, indeed, he is close to each one of us, for it is in him that we live and move and exist—as some of your own poets have said."—Acts xvii. 24-28 (Moffatt's translation).

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE SOLIDARITY OF THE RACE

AS WE HAVE seen in our last chapter, the world was never so small as it is to-day, yet never was it so large. Discovery has increased our knowledge of its vast areas, while invention has decreased its circumference and diameter. The sources of the Nile are known: all Asia has been explored: we have maps of the heart of Africa: the north and south poles have been discovered: desert, jungle and ice floe have yielded up their secrets to the intrepid pioneer. But Joseph Cook's statement in one of his Boston lectures, that "the nineteenth century has made the whole world one neighbourhood, the twentieth century will make it one brotherhood," is not yet fulfilled.

There is in our day a special necessity and appropriateness in the message which Paul, face to face with the Christless civilisation of Greece and Rome, delivered on Mars Hill, a place consecrated to the god of war.

"God . . . hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us."

1. Paul's great declaration of our unity by creation and in redemption was based on his faith in the Old Testament Scriptures. All other voices, however loudly they proclaim the Fatherhood of God and the



brotherhood of man, are only echoes of the testimony which the Jew finds in Genesis and the Psalms, in Isaiah and the Prophets.

Nowhere do we find among all the sacred books of the East such clear testimony to the unity of the race and the possibility of a League of Nations and the brotherhood of man as in the Old Testament. Who can read the sixty-seventh Psalm without breathing the atmosphere of a cosmopolitan spirit? What a vision Isaiah had of the future destiny of the race, and of the time that was to be when God's glory should cover the earth and all nations should see the brightness of His rising! The story of Adam may be a mystery, but it is not a myth to the writers of the New Testament.

The solidarity of the race in its common origin is confirmed by its solidarity in our common redemption. It is with deep philosophic insight that the Apostle Paul builds his theology upon this foundation: "As in Adam—so in Christ." The Apostle John puts the capstone to the Bible teaching on this subject in the Revelation vision of ransomed humanity united again of every tribe, and kindred, and tongue, and people. The Lord Jesus Christ, in His teaching, always took for granted this solidarity of the race. He came as the Light of the world, and commissioned His apostles to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations. He anticipated no barriers which would prove unsurmountable to those who loved Him. When the Jews accused Him of being a Samaritan and having a devil, He passed by in scorn the first insinuation. In Him there was no race pride or race prejudice. He said to his disciples, "Call no man your master; ye are all brethren."

After many vague and bizarre theories, modern science has come back to a belief in the solidarity of the

race and its unity. The microscope can distinguish the blood of brutes from that of humans, but not the blood of the Hottentot from that of the Hindu or of the Chinese. The old hard-and-fast divisions by skin-pigment, the shape of the skull, the texture of the hair and the facial angle have disappeared. Physiology, anthropology and psychology alike testify to the essential unity of the human race. It is a physical unity in which there is no essential difference. Ethnology, sociology, and psychology agree in teaching that the various races, when given equal opportunity, are intellectually and emotionally of the same kind, while the spiritual unity of the race in their varieties of religious experience and in their response to the Gospel is evident from the history of missions.

The fact of this essential unity has been forcibly expressed in a paper on "The Antiquity and Unity of Man" by the late Dr. Warfield:

"The psychological unity of the race is still more manifest. All men of all varieties are psychologically one and prove themselves possessors of the same mental nature and furniture. Under the same influences they function mentally and spiritually in the same fashion, and prove capable of the same mental reactions. They, they all, and they alone, in the whole realm of animal existences manifest themselves as rational and moral natures; so that Mr. Fiske was fully justified when he declared that though for zoological man the erection of a distinct *family* from the chimpanzee and orang might suffice, 'on the other hand, for psychological man you must erect a distinct *kingdom*; nay, you must even dichotomise the universe, putting man on one side and all things else on the other.'

"So far is it from being of no concern to theology, therefore, that it would be truer to say that the whole

doctrinal structure of the Bible account of redemption is founded on its assumption that the race of man is one organic whole, and may be dealt with as such. It is because all are one in Adam that in the matter of sin there is no difference, but all have fallen short of the glory of God (Rom. iii. 22 ff.), and, as well, that in the new man there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman; but Christ is all and in all (Col. iii. 11). The unity of the old man in Adam is the postulate of the unity of the new man in Christ."

It is of great interest, therefore, to note that all of the older classifications and divisions of the human race have been largely discarded. R. R. Marett, of Oxford, in his textbook on *Anthropology* exclaims:

"Oh for an external race-mark about which there could be no mistake! That has always been a dream of the anthropologist; but it is a dream that shows no signs of coming true. All sorts of tests of this kind have been suggested. Cranium, cranial sutures, frontal process, nasal bones, eye, chin, jaws, wisdom teeth, hair, humerus, pelvis, the heart-line across the hand, calf, tibia, heel, colour, and even smell—all these external signs, as well as many more, have been thought, separately or together, to afford the crucial test of a man's pedigree."

But he goes on to show that there is no real race distinction. "Man is very much alike everywhere from China to Peru. . . . Race or breed remains something which we cannot at present isolate."

This unity is far deeper than that of external resemblances or intellectual capacity; it is a moral unity. All men everywhere have been conscious of sin with its suffering and unrest. The human conscience, although largely influenced by heredity and environment, yet

shows a marvellous likeness in its response to the fundamental principles of moral law. The thirst after God and fellowship with Him, the sense of the eternal, the belief in the immortality of the soul—what are these but so many evidences of the solidarity of the race? The human family have shown everywhere the same capacity and possibilities of achievement under similar conditions and privileges.

During the world war, the East and the West mingled as never before, and learned to understand and misunderstand each other. The negro troops from the southern states and those from Algeria fought together against a common foe. According to the daily press the Negroes of the United States have in this way surprised the world. It is said that when the coloured troops left Birmingham, Alabama, they placed placards on the day coaches with this inscription: "This colour will not run!" Every negro regiment made a record that places it high in the military values of Americanism. One white commander of a negro regiment was ordered by a superior officer to take his troops out of a dangerous position at the front, and the prompt answer was: "My men never retreat!" They went on and the wrath of the superior officer was consumed in cheers. The Eighth Illinois came back with twenty-two men among them wearing the American D.S.C., while sixty-eight wore the Croix de Guerre. Army officers who met their ship said there were more decorations visible among the Eighth, or Three Hundred and Seventieth Infantry (as it is now designated), than in any other regiment which had so far returned to the United States.

The Indian soldiers proved their valour on every front. Bengalis, Pathans, Ghurkas won the Victoria Cross for gallantry, and never again will a Kipling

speak of these men as "lesser breeds without the law."

2. This solidarity of the race, however, which must be admitted in theory, which is revealed in Scripture, and which has been illustrated during the war, is denied in fact and made of none effect through race hatreds and prejudices.

In a recent survey of racial problems Julian S. Huxley, speaking as a scientist, under the title and *on behalf of* "We Europeans," preaches the very message for the hour: "One of the greatest enemies of science is pseudo-science. In a scientific age, prejudice and passion seek to clothe themselves in a garb of scientific respectability; and when they cannot find support from true science, they invent a pseudo-science to justify themselves. We all know that the Devil can quote Scripture for his own purpose; to-day we are finding that he can even invent a false Scripture from which to quote. Nowhere is this lamentable state of affairs more pronounced than in regard to 'race.' A vast pseudo-science of 'racial biology' has been erected which serves to justify political ambitions, economic ends, social grudges, class prejudices."<sup>1</sup>

In his learned volume he lays down the pitfalls or fallacies of all ethnic classifications which deny the essential unity and solidarity of the race. The main ethnic groups of Europe have between themselves no cause for arrogance or boasting. He goes on to say: "In all ages law, reason and religion alike have laid emphasis on the brotherhood of all mankind. It was an ancient philosopher-poet who said: 'I am a man, and nothing that is human do I deem alien from myself'; and a murderer who yet earlier asked, 'Am I my brother's keeper?'"

"But especially the common elements that all men

<sup>1</sup> Julian S. Huxley, *We Europeans*, p. 7, 1937.

share have been the theme of the great spiritual leaders. Malachi's question, 'Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?' and St. Paul's assertion, 'He hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth,' have been echoed by a myriad voices. The community of mankind is a sentiment which has particularly appealed to teachers. 'The same sky covers us, the same sun and all the stars revolve about us, and light us in turn,' said the great Moravian educator Comenius (1592-1671)."

And the last sentence in his argument reads: "Racialism is a myth, and a dangerous myth at that. It is a cloak for selfish economic aims which in their uncloaked nakedness would look ugly enough. And it is not scientifically-grounded. The essence of science is the appeal to fact."

Even within the church we have not enough emphasised the great truth that God is not a respecter of persons. How many a Peter still needs the vision of the sheet let down from heaven before he admits that nothing human is common or unclean! The history of western civilisation has many a dark page of international wrongs due to the tramping of the stronger upon the rights of the weaker race. Several years before the war one of our own poets wrote in Harper's Weekly this poem, stinging with a sarcasm based on truth:

"We are the chosen people—look at the hue of our skins!  
Others are black and yellow—that is because of their sins.  
We are the heirs of the ages, masters of every race,  
Proving our right and title by the bullet's saving grace,  
Slaying the naked red man; making the black one our slave,  
Flaunting our colour in triumph over a world-wide grave.  
Indian, Maori and Zulu; red men, yellow and black—  
White are their bones wherever they meet with the white-  
wolf's pack.

We are the chosen people—whatever we do is right,  
 Feared as men fear the leper, whose skin, like our own, is  
 white!"

No one who has read the history of the opium war, the dealings of the Dutch in South Africa with the Hottentots, the *Century of Dishonour*, described by Helen Hunt Jackson, in our dealings with the American Indians, the atrocities perpetrated on the Congo, or the story of the drink traffic in Africa and the South Seas, can fail to justify the sarcasm of the poet. The record is one of which we should be ashamed. If God has made of one blood all nations, we may well hope that He is through Christ the propitiation not only for our national sins, but for the national sins of the whole world.

Speaking of the dangers of mere nationalism, the Hindu poet, Rabindranath Tagore, says: "This nationalism is a cruel epidemic of evil that is sweeping over the human world of the present age and eating into its moral vitality. . . . You must keep in mind that this political creed of *national* patriotism has not been given a very long trial. The lamp of ancient Greece is extinct in the land where it was first lighted, the power of Rome lies dead and buried under the ruins of its vast empire. But the civilisation, whose basis is society and the spiritual ideal of man, is still a living thing in China and in India."

The same sentiment was expressed by the German writer Nicolai in his remarkable, thought-stirring book, *The Biology of War*.

As Bishop Gore said: "In the sight of God, in the judgment of Christ, no nation has any prerogative right; we believe He cares equally for every race of every colour or capacity, and that He lays it upon each nation alike to make the most of itself and its resources

in order that it may better minister to the needs of all mankind, and maintain the universal and impartial interests of justice and freedom and peace."

We must, therefore, Christianise our international relations, and through the work of Christian missions restore the lost spiritual unity of the race in Jesus Christ our Lord. Only Christ can do it, and only in His spirit of compassion and sacrificial love can we help Him to accomplish the impossible. There must be an armistice of passion and hatred as well as an armistice of war. Our missionary work should never be that of condescension, but of communion. The heathen are not "lesser breeds without the law," but prodigal children painfully seeking their way back to the Father's house and the Father's heart. The races less favoured are not the white man's burden—still less his beasts of burden—but the white man's responsibility and opportunity. As the little girl said to the policeman who remonstrated when she was carrying a child larger than herself through the crowded traffic: "*No, he is not a burden: he is my brother.*" The hymns of hate have had their day. Let us tune our voices and our hearts to the hymn of love. The *London Times* of December 26th, 1917, published a woman's reply to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle who at that time preached vengeance on Germany. It is a great message which Ethel M. Arnold wrote for our days of reconstruction:

"O men of the future! Is it hate that your spirits crave  
 To build the new world with vision, to build and to save?  
 Is it hate that we women need as trustees of the race?  
 Is it hate that we want to see stamped on the English face?  
 What but hate, fruit of envy, loathliest weed that grows,  
 Has made of the men who fight us bandits, not decent foes?  
 Men maddened and drugged with hate, a poisoned dehumanised  
     breed,  
 Because they have drunk of the brew, the hellish brew of the weed!"

For the victor's right to avenge, for strength to see justice done,  
 For faith to disperse the darkness now veiling the face of the sun,  
 For power to uproot the weed, the noisome growth of the pit—  
 For these things, not hate, they died, 'the men who have done their  
 bit'."

If there is anything that the great war unmistakably should have taught us, it is the fundamental truth of human brotherhood first by creation and more really in Jesus Christ through adoption. He has broken down all middle walls of partition.

The only Peace Table that really counts is the one at which He is always standing as He did on the night in which He was betrayed. It is the same Peace Table at which He appeared suddenly when the doors were shut for fear of the Jews, and said to the little band of disciples, "My peace I give unto you." Then He showed them His hands and His side. It is when we see Him in His resurrection glory with the evidences of our common humanity—the mark of our spear and of our nails, that we shall forgive each other by remembering Him. Fifteen years ago a British writer in *The Round Table*, discussing the redemption of Germany, told the legend of the soul of Judas Iscariot: "It fled from the suicide's corpse through the void, and passed from abyss to abyss, till at last remorse yielded to grief. And behold a great light: and the desolate ghost from the outer darkness looked in (for the windows of heaven were open), and saw the apostles, his brethren, standing about a table laid with bread and wine, the body and blood of their Lord. Then came One, who took him by the hand, and drew him inside. 'We have waited for thee,' said the Master whom Judas Iscariot betrayed. 'My guests could not sit down to my supper till thou wast here.'" So, after many days, may the soul of all totalitarian states purged and renewed, come

back to the fellowship of the nations. We may taste the communion of freedom meanwhile. But we cannot sit down to the feast till all are there.

Has a new day dawned, a new era with its conception of a League of Nations? Is it a day of reconstruction, not only economic and social and national, but of moral and spiritual reconstruction? Are we ready for the task?

"O see that ye build securely  
 When the time of building comes,  
 With square-hewn blocks of righteousness  
 And cornerstones of faithfulness,  
 And girders strong of righted wrong,  
 And the blood of our martyrdoms.  
 And build on the One Foundation  
 That shall make the building sure,  
 The Rock that was laid ere the world was made,  
 Build on Him, and ye build secure."

## CHAPTER IX

### WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED?

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it. If ye love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth.”—John xiv. 12-17.

## CHAPTER IX

### WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED?

ONE OF THE most remarkable promises and predictions of our Lord is found in the xivth chapter of John’s Gospel. The words at first seem a palpable exaggeration, an impossible paradox, a promise far too great to be taken at its face value. The words stagger our faith even after nineteen centuries.

Listen! “Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.” The works of Jesus were supernatural. He had power over Nature and could still the storm, walk the sea and multiply the loaves and fishes. He was the great Physician who could heal the leper, open the eyes of the blind and raise the dead. He knew the very heart and soul of man and could read it like an open book. Demons quailed before Him. He abolished death and brought life and immortality to light in His gospel. No man ever spoke as He spake. No man ever lived as He lived. No man ever prayed as He prayed; suffered as He suffered; died as He died; arose as He arose. How could He say “greater works than these shall ye do?” Yet, nineteen centuries have passed since these words were uttered, and the Church of Christ is proof of their absolute fulfilment. Even as the life that stirs in every blade and bud when spring comes back, is proof of the sun’s radiance, although ninety-two million miles away—so the greater works of Christ after His resurrection are a proof of His

Divine energy and His resurrection power. That which has been done in the realm of missions by the disciples of Jesus since He left this earth is the most stupendous evidence that He is with the Father and that They are working greater works than Jesus did in the days of His flesh, through His spirit and the Church which is His body.

1. Greater works in the area of activity. How small the village of Nazareth and the little land of Palestine, compared with Paul's empire of Rome. How the area of Christ's activity expanded on William Carey's maps of Asia and Africa, or Hudson Taylor's parish of all the eighteen provinces of China. David Livingstone travelled across a continent; Jesus never left the borders of Palestine. Jesus, in the days of His flesh, spoke by Lake Galilee to a few thousand peasants and fishermen; Stanley Jones and Robert E. Speer address ten million listeners on the radio from coast to coast. Jesus spoke the good news in one language. Then came Pentecost to confound Babel, and the Bible Societies speak a thousand tongues.

2. The disciples of Jesus have had a much longer time of service. His public ministry was less than three years. John lived much longer. Polycarp died a martyr at the age of eighty-six. Many modern missionaries have given fifty or more years to unbroken foreign service. Mrs. Andrew Watson, of the United Presbyterian Church, gave seventy-three years to Egypt; Dr. Wherry, fifty-two years to service in India; Dr. J. J. Lucas, of Allahabad, India, now ninety-two years old, gave sixty-seven years to India. Who can count the long years of service given by the Scudders to India and the Murrays to South Africa? Who can sum up the years of service given during the past century to the one great land of China by the thousands who laid down

their lives for its evangelisation. Arithmetic fails us.

3. They did greater works than Jesus in visible results. The scene in the synagogue at Capernaum when the sun was setting and the sick came, is now multiplied every day ten thousand fold in thousands of Christian hospitals and dispensaries. For example, in Arabia, the eight hospitals on its coast line have far more patients a year than the total pilgrimage to Mecca. *They* kiss the Black Stone and go back home with weary hearts. The patients kiss the hand of the physicians and hear the message of Life and Love and Peace.

Or think of the ingathering at Pentecost compared with revivals in Korea, in India, in Sumatra—larger far in results and in the establishment of Churches. In 1922 I visited the Mission of the German Church in Sumatra and saw the marvel of God's power in changing cannibals and Moslems into a Christian community that numbers a half million souls.

The harvest is always greater than the seed time. There are more Christians in Korea now than there were in the whole Roman Empire at the close of the Apostolic Age. One sign of progress—but perhaps the least significant—is that the total Protestant Christian community in so-called “non-Christian lands” has increased over 50 per cent in the past decade. This is not as large a percentage of growth as marked the previous twenty-five years but the numerical increase has been much greater. In 1903 communicants numbered 1,214,797, and in 1936 there are reported in the same fields 6,045,726—a five-fold increase. At the same time it must be borne in mind that the growth of the non-Christian population in such lands as India, China and Japan has been much greater than the numerical increase of Christian believers.



It is significant to note in a recent survey the very diversified activity of the 27,577 Protestant Christian missionaries. They not only preach the gospel of Christ as evangelists but they have established 55,395 organised churches; they conduct 53,158 elementary schools and 1,923 higher schools and colleges; they minister to health in 1,092 hospitals and 2,351 dispensaries; they support 195 orphanages and rescue homes. They have also translated and printed the Bible in about 1,000 languages and dialects and each year distribute over 15,000,000 Bibles, Testaments and Scripture portions. Other work in Christian literature, social service and industrial education is not recorded here.

This vast Protestant missionary enterprise is supported by free-will gifts from the home lands amounting to \$31,000,000 and an almost equal amount (\$28,738,790) from the Christians on the mission fields.

In the Dutch East Indies alone, there are over a million Christians; and this area was once wholly pagan and Moslem. In a half century they passed from cannibalism into Christian Churches and homes. Count Okuma, speaking of Japan, said: "The indirect influence of Christianity has poured into every realm of Japanese life. The origin of modern civilisation is found in the teachings of Jesus." A leading Chinese public official recently said: "I am not yet a Christian: I am a Confucianist but unless the ethics of Christianity dominate the scholarship of China there is no hope for the Republic."

Peter, at Pentecost, baptised 3,000 in one day; and John Clough, of the Baptist Lone Star Mission, 2,222 in one day in south India. The number of nominal Christians to-day is over seven hundred million—one-

third of the world's population, and more than twice the number of adherents of any other religion. The world has given its suffrage to Christ.

4. Jesus' disciples did greater works in the number of languages that carried the message, by writing and the Press. Jesus *knew* they would. Do you recall the story of the alabaster box and His great prophecy? "Verily I say unto you, whosoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." There was the divine charter for the Bible Societies! That *same* story is now read in nearly a thousand languages.

Christ wrote, only once, on the ground! And His words were effaced by the trampling temple-worshippers. His disciples and Paul, however, wrote the records which are now translated into a thousand tongues. The Bible and its circulation to a total of approximately thirty-three million annually is a startling proof of the Resurrection. No other book has had such vitality, such universality, such marvellous influence on life and literature. All the other literature of the first century is "gone with the wind." This abides for ever.

5. Jesus' disciples did greater works in proportion to their strength. Here all comparisons are relative. "To me less than the least of the saints is this grace given," as Paul said. And yet he did more than all the other apostles. His letters to the early Church became our New Testament. The tax-collector's memoirs of Jesus became our first gospel.

Who accomplished the evangelisation of Europe and of North Africa in the first three centuries? They were simple fishermen. Men and women of like passions as ourselves—cobblers, weavers, men taken from behind the plough and the counting desk—yet they

became Apostles of Christ. Henry Martyn spent only six years on his meteoric course: "Now let me burn out for God"—and yet he translated the New Testament into three Moslem languages. What a star of the first magnitude he was! When we read the story of Mary Slessor in West Africa or of Hudson Taylor in China, we realise how God's strength was made perfect in human weakness and what miracles of Christ were wrought by them.

What has been done in the past nineteen hundred years is the strongest possible evidence for the truth of Christianity. The miracles of missions are the glory of the impossible. Concerning the first five hundred years, Professor Latourette says in his recent history:

"At the close of its fifth century of expansion, Christianity was in a very different position than at its outset. From being one of the smallest of Jewish sects, it had become the religion professed by the majority in the most populous of the cultural areas of mankind. Never in the history of the race had so complete a religious revolution been wrought in so short a time among so large a proportion of civilised man. . . .

"By the year 500, the world in which Christianity had achieved these triumphs was disappearing. Internal weaknesses and pressure from without were disrupting the Roman Empire and bringing to an end the Graeco-Roman culture in which Christianity had been born and where it had lived its lusty youth; a new age was dawning. In the western portions of the Mediterranean basin barbarians from the North were destroying much of the old regime and were setting up new states. From the south-east another irruption was soon to come, overwhelming Arabia, Persia, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, North Africa, and most of the Iberian peninsula and bringing with it a faith, itself bearing

traces of Christian influence, which, though often scornfully tolerant, was the most obdurate and dangerous foe which Christianity had so far encountered."

And what are five hundred years? Five hundred years in the arithmetic of God are only twelve hours, for one thousand years to him is as one day. On God's clock of eternity we can read not only His patience but His power. The glorious accomplishments and achievements of the past nineteen centuries can be grouped under five divisions: The history of missions is His story who began it all and will end it all. What has been done so far?

i. *The penetration and exploration of every land in the world* by the messengers of Christ. As Livingstone said, "The end of the geographical feat is the beginning of the missionary enterprise." There is no continent or island to-day unexplored. That is the challenge of the twentieth century. All doors open. All facilities are ours.

ii. *The occupation of nearly every land by missionary pioneers*, and the establishment of stations where the gospel has taken foothold. There are still a few unoccupied corners and uncultivated areas, but the harvest field is the whole world!

A map of the whole world is required to show the present extent of the Kingdom of God. Take, for example, the Christian occupation of China, or the distribution of missionary stations in Africa.

Literally the voice of prayer is never silent and the praises of Christ continue across every meridian, in unceasing melody. The air is full of the Christian message. It is broadcast from Shanghai to Chicago. On earth and sea and in the sky they heard Christmas carols this year!

iii. *The work of preparation has been accomplished in the*

*translation of the Bible.* The vast and difficult task of the preparation of literature; of the establishment of presses; of schools, universities, hospitals. This has all been done. Others have laboured and we are entered into their labours. Bibles, dictionaries, grammars—an indigenous army of occupation. If the pioneer could see it!

iv. *The great ingatherings* have been proof of the presence of God's Spirit as at Pentecost. Think of the National Churches of China, Brazil, Japan, and of Conferences such as that at Madras, where more than half of the delegates will belong to national churches. For the first time in human history, we have the fulfilment of the greater promises of the Old Testament, and a visual communion of saints from every country constituting one great, Holy, Catholic Church. No œcumenical gathering ever equalled that of Oxford and Edinburgh in its representative character.

v. *The Apostolic succession is yours.* "Christ, the Son of God, hath sent you to the midnight lands; yours the mighty ordination of the pierced hands."

There is an unbroken line of heroes and martyrs down the centuries: the story of their lives should be the inspiration of youth to-day. The eleventh chapter of Hebrews is only the portico of the Westminster Abbey of the ages. As a boy, I used to read Fox's *Book of Martyrs*. When in college I read the life of Keith Falconer, and of David Livingstone. I can never express what I owe to such biographies of men who dared and suffered and died for the truth. They had all the qualities of spiritual leadership—vision—decision. It is a company which no man can number of every tribe and kindred and people and language—and God is adding to them in China and elsewhere. Do you know the story of Katar Singh, the Tibetan? He was

sentenced by the lama of Tshingham, to death by torture for professing his faith in Christ. Sewn up in a heavy, wet yak skin, he was exposed to the heat of the sun. The slow process of contraction of this deathtrap is the most awful means of torture ever devised by human cruelty. At the close of the day, the dying man asked to be allowed to write a parting message. It was as follows:

"I give to Him, who gave to me my life,  
My all, His all to be;

My debt to Him, how can I pay, though  
I may live to endless day?

I ask not one, but thousand lives for  
Him and His own sacrifice.

Oh, will I then not gladly die for Jesus?  
■ Sake, and ask not why?"

This testimony, uttered in a moment of the direst agony, did not go unfruitful, for one of the highest officials in the lama's palace was gripped by the martyr's cry, and confessed Christ that same night.

In north-west China, on the borders of Afghanistan, in Persia and in Arabia, there are those who, for Christ's sake, are destitute, afflicted, tormented, wandering in deserts and mountains, living in caves and holes of the earth. Women are tortured, not accepting their deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.

In view of such a heritage, and surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, what they have done is a challenge to be up and doing. We who are about to die fling the torch to you. We challenge you to take it up and pass it on! This gospel of the Kingdom must be preached in all the world for a witness. While they

scourge and crucify our Lord afresh in Europe and in Asia, putting Him to open shame, it is no time to stand, as Peter did, and warm yourself by the fire.

“Are you sheltered, curled up and content  
By the world’s warm fire?  
Then I say your soul is in danger!  
The Sons of the light, they are down with God in the  
    mire,  
God in the manger.  
So rouse from your perilous ease;  
To your sword and your shield;  
Your ease is the ease of the cattle.  
Hark, hark, where bugles are calling  
Out to some battle!”

*“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on  
Me. . . .”*

## CHAPTER X

## THE UNFINISHED TASK

"Yea, making it my aim so to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, that I might not build upon another man's foundation; but, as it is written,

'They shall see, to whom no tidings of him came,  
And they who have not heard shall understand.'"—  
Romans xv. 20 (R.V.).

"Not glorying beyond our measure, that is, in other men's labours; but having hope that, as your faith groweth, we shall be magnified in you according to our province unto further abundance, so as to preach the gospel even unto the parts beyond you, and not to glory in another's province in regard of things ready to our hand."—2 Cor. x. 15, 16, (R.V.)

## CHAPTER X

### THE UNFINISHED TASK

AFTER THE Edinburgh Conference in 1910 it was my privilege to call attention in a small volume to "The Unoccupied Fields of the World" according to the surveys made at that time by its Commission No. 1. The tragedy of the situation is that after all these years the findings of that Commission and most of the facts are still up to date! They stated: "The unoccupied fields of the world have a claim of peculiar weight and urgency upon the attention and missionary effort of the Church. In this twentieth century of Christian history there should be no unoccupied fields. The Church is bound to remedy this lamentable condition with the least possible delay. Some of these unoccupied fields are open to the gospel, such as Mongolia and many regions of Africa. In certain fields there are difficulties of access to be overcome. Both in Africa and Asia there are large regions belonging to the French Empire in which there are no Christian missions. There are other fields where political difficulties seem at present to prevent occupation, such as Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan and Afghanistan. But the closed doors are few compared with the open doors unentered. It is the neglected opportunities that are the reproach of the Church. A large proportion of the unoccupied fields are to be found within the Mohammedan world, not only in Northern Africa and in Western Asia, but also in China. Indeed, by far

the greater part of the Mohammedan world is practically unoccupied."

In 1928 Mr. Charles H. Fahs prepared a careful survey of "the Unfinished Evangelistic Task," in a pamphlet of 83 pages, for the Jerusalem meeting of the International Missionary Council. But although this was in the hands of all the delegates it was never brought up for discussion, or consideration, and was not printed at all in the Report of the Conference. It was true, as Mr. Fahs remarked, that "the emphasis on pervasive outreach, so characteristic of the modern missionary movement, has tended to lose its primacy. The younger Churches, struggling with problems growing out of the effort to find themselves in the midst of rapidly changing conditions, have apparently had little strength to expend on pioneering among non-Christians; while the missionaries, seeking to steady enterprises and movements in an era that seemed truly dangerous, if not destructive, have in many cases regarded as their first task the salvaging of results already won." And he continued:

"Nevertheless, it is well to bear in mind the fact that the fields surveyed for the Edinburgh Missionary Conference and described as 'unoccupied' still remain largely unoccupied, and that the task of geographical expansion is not to be evaded or forgotten in the increasing sense of the requirement for an intensive expansion."

It is encouraging to note that in the "Survey of the World Mission of the Christian Church" by Joseph I. Parker, prepared for the Madras Council Meeting this year (1938), there is special reference to the still unoccupied fields, and they are once more laid on the heart of the Church.

Once the whole world was unoccupied territory.

Christian missions had not begun; the first Missionary came unto His own and His own received Him not. He Himself told us that "the field is the world," and Christianity sets forth universal claims. Christ gave His disciples a world-wide commission and Christianity's challenge in all ages and to all peoples has been that it is the only and all-sufficient religion. This claim must be vindicated by carrying the gospel to every creature.

When Saul saw the vision of the risen Lord on the road to Damascus and heard the great command anew from the lips of His Master, the whole Roman world, with the exception of Palestine, was an unoccupied mission field. The apostle to the Gentiles began his work at Damascus and Antioch, and then, driven by the Spirit, he pressed on to regions beyond, preaching the gospel from Jerusalem even unto Illyricum, and made plans to go from Rome into distant Spain. Because of this world-wide vision and the urgency of the task, he writes to the Christians at Rome: "So have I striven to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation."

Now missions have made such rapid progress that there is an impression in some quarters that all doors are open, and that the problem of evangelisation has become one of opportunism simply depending on an adequate supply of men and means. The statement has even been made that Tibet is the one country to which the Christian missionary has not penetrated! But this is not the case. In contemplating the unparalleled progress of the work of missions in recent years and the wonderful opportunities which challenge the Church to win whole nations, we must not be blind to the fact that there is still work which remains to be

*begun*, as well as work which remains to be finished, if the plan of campaign is to be all-inclusive in its scope. There are still many portions of the world and great areas of population without organised missionary effort; where the forces of evil hold their own as securely as if the Saviour had never conquered; where the famine-stricken have never heard of the Bread that came down from Heaven for the heart-hunger of the world; where the darkness of superstition and error has never been illumined by the torch of civilisation or the light of the gospel.

What is the condition of the world to-day? We have seen the shrinkage of the globe, but in spite of greater facilities of approach and the proximity of every land through modern invention, we still face the task of carrying the gospel where it has never been heard. It is true, as Mr. Alexander McLeish writes, that "it would be misleading to think that areas unoccupied by missions or Christian churches present merely a geographical problem." To speak of unoccupied mission fields we must remember that Europe and America are yet far from Christian. Nevertheless, the total picture of the unreached areas is a grave challenge for the Christian Church of to-day if the pioneer spirit has not died out.

In Asia there are to-day 15,177 missionaries, or 13 per million people. This proportion is highest in Palestine where there are 172 per million, and lowest in French Indo-China where there are only two. This estimate given in the recent statistical survey<sup>1</sup> also shows that 45 per cent of the Chinese Empire is unoccupied. To be exact, out of 1,608 counties in the 18 provinces, 293 are quite occupied, and 206 fairly so.

<sup>1</sup> Our statistics are taken from the *Interpretative Statistical Survey*, by Joseph I. Parker, New York and London, 1938.

India, with 14 missionaries to the million, is relatively poorly occupied. There are a number of areas with from 2 to 5 million people without a single missionary. The most needy sections are Bihar, Orissa and parts of Bengal.

The great central Asiatic plateau is largely closed to mission work. To this we may add outer Mongolia, Siberia, Tibet, Bhutan, Nepal and Afghanistan. In the words of Mr. Alexander McLeish: "The heart of Asia is the greatest unevangelised region in the world."

The social life, literature, architecture, art, etiquette and everyday speech of all Central Asia bear the trademark of Islam. An ordinary pocket compass goes by the name of "Mecca-pointer" and the wild men of Hunza, shut out by the mountains from every contact with the outside world, have no god but Allah, and no idea of the world save that its centre is Arabia. Islam has therefore put its impress upon the life of the people, and yet the races are wide apart in their special characteristics. The Khirgese of Chinese Turkistan are simple, often stupid, but hospitable and friendly; although Mohammedans, they know less of the Koran and of Mohammed than they do of raising cattle and sheep in their nomad life. The Sarts are somewhat more educated, but also more fanatical. They are artisans and business men rather than nomads. The character of the Afghans is strong and brave, but proverbially vindictive.

The recent survey of Arabia by Dr. W. Harold Storm is a challenge to one of the most difficult mission fields and one of new opportunity. The entire interior, the whole west coast, and Hadramaut are still unoccupied.

When we turn to Africa there are important contrasts with Asia. The baptised Christians are proportionately

five times as numerous and the missionaries four times. There are 56 missionaries to the million of population, and the Church has made greater progress than in most Asiatic lands. With regard to missionary occupation it has to be noted, however, that out of 8,447 missionaries only 767 are in the great Moslem north, and the majority of these in Egypt and the Sudan. The unoccupied fields are, therefore, mainly in the Moslem north, in the hinterlands of West Africa, in Portuguese East Africa, French Equatorial Africa and to some extent in Tanganyika. The northern part of Madagascar and the Comora Islands are Moslem and unoccupied territory.

Such is a brief summary taken from the most recent statistical survey, and one can only conclude with Dr. Mott, who writes in the introduction to this volume: *"A most disconcerting and solemnising fact revealed by this survey, when compared with earlier studies of the last three decades, is the virtually negligible progress being made in reaching the unoccupied fields."*

It surely cannot be without reason that so large a portion of the world is still unevangelised, and that so many areas and sections adjoining mission fields where the triumphs of the gospel have proved its power, are still unreached. It is undoubtedly true on the one hand that the greatest hindrance to the occupation of the whole world for Christ has been within the Church itself. Indifference to the cause of missions and lack of a world-wide vision have delayed the accomplishment of the task for centuries. The neglect, both of the great integral areas and of scattered smaller sections of the non-Christian world, is directly traceable to a lack of adequate and comprehensive vision of the real missionary goal. The history of missions in China and in Central Africa proves that with faith and leadership

it is possible to advance into unoccupied territory where the barriers and difficulties seemed insurmountable. We must not justify past neglect nor present apathy.

Other fields, however, are wholly unoccupied because the external hindrances and difficulties seem, even at present, a real barrier to the entrance of the gospel. Some of them are serious and appear almost insurmountable, while others are not greater than the difficulties and obstacles already encountered and overcome in fields at present dotted with mission stations. Yet it is only natural that the remaining difficulties should be great. The march of missionary progress throughout the past century of Protestant missions has, with some exceptions, been along the line of least resistance. When a whole non-Christian world was awaiting pioneer effort, the Church sometimes postponed the harder tasks and passed by doors barred to enter lands that were beckoning. The entrance into the fields and sections of the world still unoccupied, therefore, by Christian missions will not prove an easy task.

The physical difficulties, because of climate, the dangers and hardships of pioneer travel, the barriers of race hatred and religious prejudice, and the determined political opposition of hostile governments, are not yet things of the past and cannot be ignored or minimised in a thorough consideration of this part of the missionary problem. They must be reckoned with. We gain nothing by deceiving ourselves as to the character, number and the greatness of these difficulties. The task remaining is one that calls for large powers and demands careful investigation before we attempt it lest failure follow our efforts.

Yet, on the other hand, it is well for us to remember,



as John R. Mott remarks, "difficulties are not without their advantages. They are not to unnerve us. They are not to be regarded simply as subjects for discussion, nor as grounds for scepticism and pessimism. They are not to cause inaction, but rather to intensify activity. They were made to be overcome. They are to call forth the best that is in Christians. Above all, they are to create profound distrust in human plans and energy and to drive us to God."

The serious question may be raised by some whether, after all, there is wisdom in expending force in overcoming the difficulties connected with most of these unoccupied fields which have passed in review before us, in spite of their sore need of the gospel, when the missionary forces are so meagre and so sorely needed in countries where the doors are wide open and where there is not only perfect access, but where the fields are ripe for the harvest.

Why should we storm the gates of Tibet or Afghanistan when the doors of China are wide open, and the people are beckoning? Does real missionary strategy call for their occupation now? Are there any urgent reasons why these lands should be occupied, in view of the present opportunities in other fields?

The strategic importance of the unoccupied fields of the world can best be considered by first giving the reasons for their occupation in general, and then pointing out why, at least, some of the fields have a strategic importance and urgency of their own. Their present spiritual destitution, their social degradation and the age-long neglect of all these countries, are the strongest possible arguments for their occupation. The pathos of all these millions still groping restlessly for the true Light, finds a voice in the record of many travellers.

Some of the races and tribes are dying out. Now is the only time to give them the gospel. "As we recalled all our interesting experiences among the Moïs," writes Mrs. Vassal, "we could not but regret that this race, so physically fine in character, so much more sympathetic than the Annamese, should be destined to die out. Yet that is probably their fate."

Others are strong and virile races with a future before them, and must, therefore, be won for Christ. "I remember the rude Mongols," said Colonel Young-husband, "far away in the midst of the Gobi Desert, setting apart, in their tents, the little altars at which they worshipped. I recall nights spent in the tents of the wandering Kirghiz, when the family of an evening would say their prayers together; I think of the Afghan and Central Asian merchants visiting me at Yarkand, and in the middle of their visits asking to be excused while they laid down a cloth on the floor and repeated their prayers; of the late Mehtar of Chitral, during a morning's shooting among the mountains, halting, with all his court, for a few moments to pray; and, lastly, of the wild men of Hunza, whom I had led up a new and difficult pass, pausing as they reached the summit to offer a prayer of thanks, and ending with the shout of Allah."

The student volunteers of to-day must not rest satisfied until the watchword, peculiarly their own, finds practical application for the most neglected and difficult fields, as well as in countries where the harvest is ripe and the call is for reapers in ever increasing numbers. The plea of destitution is even stronger than that of opportunity. Opportunism is not the last word in missions. The open door beckons; the closed door challenges him who has a right to enter. The unoccupied fields of the world have therefore a claim

of peculiar weight and urgency. *“In this twentieth century of Christian history, there should be no unoccupied fields. The Church is bound to remedy the lamentable condition with the least possible delay.”*

The unoccupied fields, therefore, are a challenge to all whose lives are unoccupied by that which is highest and best; whose lives are occupied only with the weak things or the base things that do not count. There are eyes that have never been illumined by a great vision, minds that have never been gripped by an unselfish thought, hearts that have never thrilled with passion for another's wrong, and hands that have never grown weary or strong in lifting a great burden. To such the knowledge of these Christless millions in lands yet unoccupied should come like a new call from Macedonia, and a startling vision of God's will for them.

## CHAPTER XI

## “LE BLOC INCONVERTISABLE”

"I will go before thee and make the rugged places plain; I will break in pieces the doors of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron; and I will give thee the treasures of darkness."—Isaiah xlv. 2, 3, (R.V.).

"The things which are impossible with men are possible with God."—Luke xviii. 27.

"For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries."—1 Cor. xvi. 9.

## CHAPTER XI

### "LE BLOC INCONVERTISABLE"

AT THE IMPORTANT Roman Catholic missionary conference held at Louvain in 1930, the whole world of Islam was labelled "le bloc inconvertisable" and in this phrase we have an expression of a common opinion that it is futile to try to evangelise Moslems. "If you will only organise Christian missions to the heathen in my province, instead of attempting to convert Mohammedans, I will do everything in my power to further and support them, but I cannot approve or allow, at any rate at present, the opening of a mission to the Mohammedans." So said the governor of Nigeria, about thirty years ago. This policy was that of Lord Kitchener in the Sudan, of the British in the Malay States, and is not yet abandoned everywhere.

The validity and the necessity of carrying the gospel message to Mohammedans have been questioned in times past and are being questioned to-day! The late Professor G. Kampffmeyer, of the University of Berlin, in *Whither Islam?* deals with the subject in the same attitude; his conclusion is that missions in the Near East among Moslems are as dangerous as they are futile and, for the good of humanity, should be discontinued.

A secretary of the American Board, in the magazine called *Christendom*, plainly stated that "Christian efforts to evangelise the Moslem have met with signal and consistent failure. The response to such efforts

to-day is negligible and there is little likelihood of any marked change in the near future. . . . The Christian Church ought to quit trying to make proselytes of Mohammedans. It should bring the best works of Christian service to the Moslem world in a spirit of ecclesiastical and theological disinterestedness."

Father T. Bennerth, writing in a Roman Catholic missionary magazine for April, 1930, says: "As the conversion of the great bloc of Islamic nations to the Christian faith is not to be expected in our century . . . it is of the highest value that Islam at least maintains the belief in God in purified forms. If this refuge of belief in God should vanish, then Western Christianity will be threatened by a new seat of danger." What satisfactory reasons can be advanced for the validity and necessity of Christian missions to Moslems?

1. If the gospel of Christ in its simplest form (which is also its deepest mystery) includes the Incarnation, the Atonement and the Resurrection then the world of Islam certainly needs our message, for it is *news*, and offers good news to every Moslem. Islam is not a Christian sect or a Christian heresy. It is an eclipse of the Christ as revealed in the gospel. It is an Arabian palimpsest superinscribed over the message of Jesus by another hand. Its categorical denial of the deity of Christ, of the crucifixion, of the finality of Jesus Christ as God's messenger and of His way of life through regeneration, is evident from the Koran itself.

The analogy of Paul's attitude toward Jew and Gentile holds to-day as regards missions to Moslems and to other non-Christians. It was because the Jew had so much that was true and noble and yet needed the gospel that Paul preached everywhere to the Jew first. Their theism, their knowledge of the Old Testa-

ment, their zeal for God, their passion for the Law did not invalidate their need of the gospel but emphasised it. This implication would hold also for those Moslems of China, Africa and India who live in the midst of paganism or polytheistic ethnic faiths.

In the Near East and North Africa, we have an additional argument. *There* we are not merely trying to lead Moslems to Christ, but rather to *lead them back to Christ*. Here we have the argument of church history; the inspiration of the cloud of witnesses, the apostles and martyrs of the faith; and the very stones of ruined churches and monasteries would cry out if we were silent.

2. The missionary forces have hitherto moved across or around this great Moslem bloc. The following areas, or countries in which the population is wholly or predominantly Moslem, are still practically unoccupied. The missionary conferences of Cairo, Edinburgh, Lucknow, and Jerusalem successively laid them all before the Church, but with little result—Afghanistan; the provinces of Hejaz, Asir, Nejd and Hadramaut in Arabia; Russian Turkestan; parts of Siberia, Bokhara; the eastern part of the Malay Peninsula; Socotra and the Moslem populations of Madagascar, Russia in Europe, British and French Somaliland, Tripoli in North Africa, the French Sudan; the Great Aures Mountains, the Saharan Atlas ranges, the central populous mountain regions of Morocco, and the vast Sahara itself. These unoccupied fields have a total population of approximately thirty-six million. How can we speak or sing of evangelising the whole world and leave all this outside of the programme of occupation for Christ?

3. A religion that once was the hope and glory of millions shows signs of breaking up. Old sanctions are

disappearing. Their anchor-ground has proved insufficient in the rising tide of materialism and atheism. Some tell us that there are signs of a resurgent Islam and of revival of faith in Mohammed. But all signs point in the opposite direction. This year's report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church states: "There is now abundant evidence that the religion of Islam is slowly disintegrating."

The collapse of the caliphate, and the failure of all attempts to revive it, would lead to the conclusion that Pan-Islamism is dead. The policy of the new government in Turkey and the complete secularisation of that republic points in the same direction. The Turkish Press utters severe judgment on Islam and its Prophet, while one by one the old sanctions and customs of religion are publicly discarded. A few years ago a British official of high standing actually wrote to me: "*Islam as we once knew it is dead in Turkey; it is dying in Persia; it has ceased to carry real weight in Egypt; it may survive some generations in Arabia; but the basic truths of Christianity will in the long run even there prevail.*" Such judgment is undoubtedly somewhat premature but it is prophetic.

Islam faces a crisis in the lands where once it was dominant. Its efforts at propagandism in India and Africa "remind one of those sparse green twigs sometimes still appearing at the extreme ends of half-dried-up boughs in trees whose core has for long been decaying from old age." Islam suffers because it feels itself under the tutelage of the West. In Turkey it suffers by being violated in its own bosom; in Russia from Soviet persecution; and in Persia from a revolt against the Arabic language and tradition. Mustapha Kemal Ataturk, of Turkey, raised great expectations, but he has turned out a bitter disappointment for all Moslems.

The disenchantment was cruel but complete. The high hopes fixed on Ibn Saoud of Arabia to revive the caliphate were blasted. The Moslem World Conference held at Mecca, and afterwards in Europe, proved a failure; none of the resolutions was carried out.

The Dutch Orientalist, Dr. Van der Meulen, who spent many years in the diplomatic service at Jiddah, asks, "Are we standing at the eve of a revival, a renaissance of Islam? No, the phenomena do not point this way. Except for the Wahhabi movement in Central Arabia, it has all been a question of self-defence and resistance" (*Moslem World*, October, 1936).

Regarding the enormous area and population of Indonesia, Professor C. C. Berg speaks of "destructive forces that are at work against Islam all over the world." Of the favourable factors he says that they "might possibly result only in the long run in a decrease in the rate of decay" (*Whither Islam?* pp. 306-311).

The geographical expansion of Islam in Africa has often been exaggerated. The latest statistical survey shows a smaller proportion of Moslems in nearly every area in north Central Africa (*Moslem World*, April, 1936). Dr. Deaville Walker wrote a few years ago:

"Within a comparatively short time, we pictured great pagan populations being rapidly Islamised. I am convinced that the position is wholly different to-day. Careful personal investigation in Sierra Leone and Mendeland, the Gold Coast and Ashanti, Nigeria, and in the French colonies and protectorates of Dahomey, Togo, and the Ivory Coast, have made it very clear to me that the advance of Islam is being definitely checked, and that to-day we are winning far more Africans to the faith of Christ than the Moslems are winning for their Prophet. Startling as this may sound, I believe it to be absolutely true."

What elements in Islam are to-day resurgent? Does the old Mohammedan law or jurisprudence any longer prevail under the new nationalism and the new state? Or has the purely Islamic-governed state disappeared even in Arabia and Afghanistan? Has the social structure of Islam withstood the feminist movement and female education anywhere? Can we seriously speak of "resurgent forces" as regards polygamy, slavery, concubinage and the seclusion of womanhood? Was the suppression of the age-old Moharram celebrations in Persia a sign of vitality in Islam? Is the religion of Islam showing a new vitality when three of its "five pillars" are crumbling? The daily prayers are no longer observed as they were ten years ago. The number of pilgrims to Mecca, in spite of new facilities by motor bus and steamships, has dwindled from 250,000 to 80,000. Mecca is losing its importance. Are the uniting forces that remain, the Arabic language and culture, the sense of brotherhood, the Press and Al Azhar of Egypt—are these forces strong enough to counteract the disintegrating factors? Or will the progressive secularisation of Moslem life rob *all life* from the religion of Islam? Will the waning of the Dervish orders and their suppression, as in Turkey, continue?

The fact is that Islam has been severely wounded in the house of its friends. The younger Egyptian modernists, instead of building carefully on the foundations of reform laid by Jamal-al-Din al Afghani and the great Mohammed 'Abdu, have ruthlessly undermined what remained intact. Mansur Fahmi, in his doctor's thesis, proved that Islam was progressively responsible for the degradation of womanhood. Dr. Taha Hussain raised a storm of hostility by a book proving that much of early Islamic literature was a forgery, fabricated to

prop up the Koran and tradition. "The story of Abraham and Ishmael building the Kaaba is all fiction." Ali abd al Razik went even further, and in his book, *Islam and the Fundamentals of Authority*, advocated the abolition of the caliphate, "which has always been a misfortune." Moreover, he proposed the complete separation of church and state, and the abandonment of the vast body of canon law. (Adams, *Islam and Modernism in Egypt*, pp. 254-265.)

When the best thinkers in Islam accept an honest historical research of all her spiritual property, it will mean a revelation of bankruptcy. When the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do? Only the real gold, the theistic spiritual values of Islam, will be able to withstand the heat of this inevitable furnace. A careful study of the whole question leads to the conclusion that as a cultural and even as a political force there is yet a future for Islam, but as a religious force the future does not look promising—*except in Christ* and His gospel for Moslems.

4. Islam is in one sense the great Christian heresy. Present-day scholarship is agreed that the best elements in its dogma and ethics are due to Nestorian Christianity. Professors Bell, of Glasgow, Tor Andrae, of Upsala and Lammens, of Rome, provide ample evidence of this fact in their special studies of the subject.

We notice that the influence of the Bible on Islam began in the very life of its founder and his family. Mohammed was, in a sense, the illegitimate child of the Oriental Church, and Islam is a Christian heresy. Two of Mohammed's wives were Christians. His cousin, Waraka, read the Hebrew Scriptures, and Khadijah, his first wife, was perhaps a Jewess. It is even held that Mohammed himself could read and

write and that he heard parts of the gospel read by Christians. So in many and mysterious ways the truth of God bore its way from within.

From the first the Bible, directly and indirectly, has exerted its powers and has changed Islam. This is true, for example, of Moslem mysticism, which owes so much to early Christian teaching. Then there was the influence of apostates, Christian wives of Mohammedans, and Christian slaves who embraced Islam. The traditions are in a measure the table-talk of these people who told what they knew (and did not know) of the gospel.

The Koran itself bears clear testimony to the Bible. Other sacred books have no reference to the gospel or to Jesus Christ. But Mohammed could not escape Him. This is one of the most remarkable facts in the study of the non-Christian religions. Sir William Muir has collated all of these references and commented on their character and significance. There are 131 passages altogether, 65 of the Mecca period and 66 of the Medina period in the Prophet's life. The Old and New Testament are highly spoken of as God's earlier revelation and as "containing light and guidance for the pious."

It is as if an advertising firm had circulated cheap and gaudy prints of the Sistine Madonna, not at all a true representation, but still calling attention to the great original. In fact, the Koran references have led many toward Christ. Professor Mohammed Ismail, of Lahore, once told me of three things in the Koran which led him to Christ; the fact that all men are sinners; that Jesus Christ as pictured in the Koran is sinless; and that those who want to learn more about Jesus must read the *Injil*, the gospel.

Again the Bible in present-day literature and the

Press is more influential than ever before. It has been translated into all the languages of Islam and circulated everywhere. Take another example. On the cover of an Albanian translation of the Koran there is a reproduction of an old German picture of Christ and the two disciples on their way to Emmaus. But the title reads: "Mohammed, Abu Bakr and Ali on Their Way to Mecca"! So even Christian art is being adopted by Moslems!

The leading Turkish novelist, Yakoob Qadri, states that he owes his style to the Bible, and he is criticised in the Press for using a Christian vocabulary. The leading Moslem poet of Egypt, the late Shauket Bey, found much of the motif for his national poetry in the New Testament. The daily Press of Cairo affords many other interesting examples.

Sirdar Iqbal Ali Shah, in his book, published in 1933, called *Lights of Asia*, writes of the precious blood of Christ in the words of a fundamentalist: "Whatever modernists may think about the blood, God esteems it very *precious*. Saith the Word: 'The blood is the life' (Deut. xii. 23). 'Without shedding of blood is no remission' (Heb. ix. 22). 'It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul' (Lev. xvii. 11). 'God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us' (Rom. v. 8)."

And this from the pen of an Afghan Moslem educated in England!

5. Lastly, we note the response to the message in this very "bloc inconvertisable." This great response, as we see it to-day, should not surprise those who believe God's promises and who have experienced the final fruitage that follows the "patience of unanswered prayer." Others have laboured, since the days of Henry Martyn, and now we are entered into their

bours. Others have knocked long and loud and waited patiently before locked doors—now those very doors are nailed open. Eastern Arabia, Hadramaut and the cities of Meshed, Iran, and Riyadh in Central Arabia, are outstanding examples.

Every hospital and dispensary across the map from Tangier, Morocco, to the Borden Memorial Hospital in north-west China, reports that Moslem patients knock the doors, kiss the feet of the Christian physicians, listen eagerly to the message, and that some at last find new life in Christ. More and more thousands of Moslem youth are sitting at the feet of Christian teachers in every land. Day schools, boarding schools, colleges, and universities tell of an increasing number of Moslem pupils and of the leavening power of Christian education that reaches far beyond the curriculum and the campus area. Every one should know that the emancipation of Moslem girlhood and womanhood began in mission schools. It is not only unkind but ungrateful and unhistoric to trace these modern movements to hybrid sources. Christ alone removes the veil because He demands and imparts purity of heart. Moslems themselves have testified to this fact.

The great Christian literature societies and committees in Cairo, Constantinople, Teheran, Shanghai, across India, and in the Dutch East Indies are producing and distributing ten times as much literature as they did a decade ago. Illiteracy is decreasing. Education is becoming compulsory. The stigma of disapproval now rests on old superstitions that once had religious sanction.

There are public baptisms in places where formerly the "law of apostasy" would have administered public ostracism or private vengeance. In Java alone there are 60,000 Moslem converts gathered into Christian

churches. In North India there are other thousands and in Persia we can truly speak of an indigenous church—weak still in numbers, but strong in the spirit of sacrifice and boldness of witness.

Those who challenge the validity and success of work among Moslems need to remember the lines of Arthur H. Clough:

"For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,  
Seem here no painful inch to gain,  
Far back through creeks and inlets making,  
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.  
For not by eastern windows only  
When daylight comes, comes in the light;  
In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly!  
But westward, look, the land is bright."



CHAPTER XII

ITINERANT EVANGELISM

"For the body is not one member but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? . . . And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the *Head* to the feet, I have no need of you."—1 Cor. xii. 14, 15, 21.

## CHAPTER XII

### ITINERANT EVANGELISM

(1 Cor. xii. 21)

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER of 1 Corinthians contains one of the greatest statements on the organic unity of the race, of human society and of the Church in the whole Bible and in all literature. The parable of the body and its members is, however, not new in Oriental literature. It was used by Marcenius Agrippa 500 B.C. and also later by Seneca and Livy. But Paul raises it to the highest level in applying it to Christ as Head of the Church and to all the diversified offices and spiritual gifts of believers.

Christ once spoke of the unity of the Church as the vine and its branches. Paul often speaks of the body and its members. In every case Christ is the Head. Each member is indispensable to the other. Unity should make jealousy of others impossible. It is Paul who recalls Isaiah's words: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings." (Isa. lii. 7, Rom. x. 15) and he adds: "And how shall they preach, except they be sent?"

But Paul waxes very bold and (thinking of his own missionary career) always on the march and with no certain dwelling place, he bursts out (as the tears fall on the manuscript): "Neither can the Head say to the feet, I have no need of thee." I need Christ but also Christ needs me! Even if He does not need me, He wants me! For Christ cannot carry His gospel to the Roman world except on Paul's willing feet! In the

words of St. Theresa: "Christ has no Body now on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours; yours are the eyes through which He is to look out compassion to the world; yours are the feet with which He is to go about doing good, and yours are the hands with which He is to bless us now." This remarkable statement, therefore, emphasises the indispensability of itinerant evangelism in the Church to-day. Without it the Church could never have been founded. Without it the Church becomes a static and dying enterprise; without it you cannot conceive of national or foreign missions; for the Head of the Church cannot say to the feet: "I have no need of thee." After a whole night in prayer, Jesus chose the twelve to go out and preach!

Indeed, the everlasting glorious gospel remains for ever local, parochial, provincial until it finds willing feet—feet "shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Not to the lame, the halt, the crippled came the great marching order of the Master, but to young, strong, fishermen, "who went everywhere preaching the Word"; to those who "climbed the steep ascent of heaven through peril, toil and pain," on their own feet, as messengers and martyrs of the truth! Dwight L. Moody once affirmed that he would rather save one soul from death than have a monument of solid gold. "The monument I want (after I am dead and gone)," said he, "is a monument with two legs going about the world, a saved sinner telling about the salvation of Jesus Christ."

1. *Itinerant Evangelism* simply means to go everywhere with the gospel message; not to wait on the pulpit-steps for people to crowd your church; not to rest at ease in the manse and expect inquirers to find their way; not to sit still, but to run swiftly with the King's message of pardon; to go out into the highways and byways and

compel them to come in. The Resurrection Gospel began its triumphal march when on the first Easter Sunday the women ran to bring the disciples word. The early Church learned its lesson from the lips and from the life of our Lord. It was a company of believers who went everywhere preaching the Word. Each convert was a willing evangelist! Driven by an inner impulse or scattered by persecution they were always on the go. Their feet were on the march (not marking time)—willing feet, weary feet, bleeding feet!

The life of Jesus Himself can be rightly understood only when we follow on the map of Palestine the itinerary of His ceaseless travel for three years' ministry, when He literally went about doing good. He walked by the sea of Galilee, preaching the gospel of the Kingdom. And what an itinerant evangelist Paul was! The record in the Acts, as supplemented in all his epistles, is astounding! Paul the Roman citizen going across the Empire: Jerusalem, Damascus, Ephesus, Antioch, Rome, and Spain; Paul the intrepid traveller, by sea and by land; Paul the dauntless and the bold pioneer; Paul the prisoner, still preaching by his letters and messengers. Alone and in prison, Paul thought not of surrender, but of world conquest. The two empires were already engaged in a death struggle and Paul knew which was to win; the totalitarian state of Rome or the Kingdom of God. In the Church militant there is no substitute for the missionary passion. When the Church ceases to evangelise she ceases to be evangelical or to grow. What a world vision, what fierce loyalty to truth, what unflinching love for humanity, and what sacrificial service appear in the life and epistles of this world citizen of the first century. Indeed, the history of the Church is the story of itiner-

ant preachers. They kindled the fires of revival in every age and every land. The early Church and the Church of the Reformation had a sense of urgency. The apostles preached the gospel with haste to proclaim it before the Lord's return. If the Christian religion is to live and conquer, it must recover the primitive sense of the urgency and immediate hopefulness of its message. For it is still true that its commission is not to argue but to tell the good news and reap a harvest that is ripe all at once. A synchronising of crises exists now and existed in Paul's day. Therefore his note of urgency.

Paul was a Roman citizen, and his epistles testify by their very language that he lived in the atmosphere of Roman civilisation. In his epistle to the Galatians he recalls the fact that proclamations and edicts were posted on the hoardings under the significant heading S.P.Q.R.—the Senate and the Roman people. "O senseless Galatians," he writes, "who has bewitched you—you had Jesus Christ the crucified placarded before your very eyes."

If Paul had possessed a printing press, how he would have exulted in thus broadcasting his gospel! In our day, missionaries are using eye-gate as never before. The newspaper and the bill-board as well as the radio are declaring the message. Books and tracts are supremely needed, but reach only small circles and the cost of production and distribution is a considerable handicap. The world of Islam is polyglot, and year by year the preparation of literature for Moslems in some new language is required. Take India, for example, few authorities have known more of the situation as it exists than the Rev. A. C. Clayton, who has done so much for this aspect of national development. He says: "It is literally true to say that in Tamil, which has the largest Christian literature, a set of all the books

available could be bought for less than five pounds; that in some of the other languages a sovereign, or even less, would purchase a complete set of all that is to be had; and that the price of one good typewriter would buy a set of all the Christian books in Hindu, Tamil, Telugu and Bengali put together."

Our present methods and outreach are wholly inadequate. We must all learn from China, where gospel posters, simple, beautiful and artistic, are being used widely to tell the old, old story. We must placard Jesus Christ so that he that runs may read, and the surging masses may catch at least a glimpse of His glory.

The Apostles and their successors carried the message into the regions beyond. They were the bridge-builders and pioneers at home and abroad. Every place the soles of their feet trod upon became a promised land. Think of Patrick of Ireland, Boniface of Germany, Savonarola in Italy, St. Francis in Europe, Hudson Taylor in China, John Wesley and Bishop Asbury in America or David Livingstone in Africa! Who is worthy to loose the latchet of their shoes or follow in the footsteps? Ten thousand times ten thousand miles they travelled preaching, teaching, healing, until at length exhausted, not by going the second mile but the second thousandth mile, they fell in their tracks. Every mission station on the map of the world has its God's acre! George Whitefield crossed the Atlantic thirteen times in a sailing vessel and ate hard tack to preach to the Colonists. The first time he was fifty-four days at sea! Asbury and Richard White took fifty-five days of storm and danger to reach America. John Wesley, at the age of eighty, rose at four o'clock in the morning, travelled from thirty to sixty miles a day and preached two to four times daily, besides writing and

visiting the sick and superintending the churches. And in all this labour he says, "I was never spiritually or mentally weary." Such a life was bound to have influence and power!

When David Livingstone's body was brought for burial in Westminster Abbey, the London paper *Punch* wrote a tribute referring to "his last mile." Yet Livingstone is only one outstanding example of "how beautiful are the feet of him that bringeth glad tidings."

"Tis the last mile of many thousands trod  
With failing strength but never-failing will,  
By the worn frame, now at its rest with God,  
That never rested from its fight with ill.

"Or if the ache of travel and of toil  
Would sometime wring a short, sharp cry of pain  
From agony of fever, blain and boil,  
'Twas but to crush it down and on again!

"Open the Abbey doors and bear him in  
To sleep with king and statesman, chief and sage,  
The missionary come of weaver-kin,  
But great by work that brooks no lower wage.

"He needs no epitaph to guard a name  
Which men shall prize while worthy work is known;  
He lived and died for God—be that his fame:  
Let marble crumble: this is Living-Stone."

The message of itinerant evangelism is the same message as that of the Christian pulpit; the same message as that of the Christian press, but it is more personal, more simple, more direct, more penetrating, more powerful. Personal evangelism is a collision of souls. It is the terrific impact of personalities. It is Nathan speaking to David, "Thou art the man." It is like Christ's heart-to-heart talk with Nicodemus; or His unfolding of the mystery of the gospel to one poor

sinful woman at the well. Itinerant evangelism is to carry the cup of cold water to the dying; to go into the bye-ways of life, the lonely huts and hovels, the hospitals, camps, prisons; to leave the ninety and nine and seek for the lost sheep until you find them.

Itinerant evangelists have followed the blood-stained tracks of the Master all down the ages. Out in the desert is the cry for the Shepherd. Lost sheep are on the mountains; not in the green pastures! Thorns and briars do not grow in the church aisles. Moody, Spurgeon, Wesley and Finney were great preachers, but their greatest work as soul-winners was personal evangelism on their feet in the highways of life. Even the average preacher has experienced at some time the ecstasy of "mounting up with the wings of an eagle" in his own pulpit. And he has run to Presbyteries or Assemblies or Conventions without growing very weary; but the climax (according to Isaiah) is to be able to walk and not faint from house to house in your own parish, to do itinerant evangelism! That's what Paul did, according to his own testimony at Ephesus. "Teaching in public and from house to house . . . for three years." And such itineration produced churches that were self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating across the Roman Empire.

Alas, there are Christians and missionaries to-day who have lost the art of itineration. Their strength (or weakness) seems to be "to sit still." They resemble old King Asa "who was diseased in both his feet." Their parishioners might mock them as the Psalmist does the dumb idols: "feet have they, but they walk not." Automobiles have they, but the poor they visit not. If they could only realise the relation between a pastor's mileage and the evening congregation or the weekly prayer-meeting, there would be a revival in their churches.

Was there ever a time when Christ needed willing feet like to-day? Fields "white already to harvest"—that is the true picture of the whole world! It is an exact description of the situation confronting Indian missions. One of the largest movements of the time is that of the outcasts, the "untouchables," away from the Hinduism that has kept them despised and degraded. By thousands they are crowding to the gates of the Christian community, ignorant, depraved, but conscious of their need—and eager for friendship. They have heard that there is a gospel, and they are waiting to be gathered in. And it is an exact description of what has happened again, and again in the new centres of our own home lands—"white for the harvest"—in the great cities of Great Britain and America.

There, where people find themselves in an unfamiliar environment, lonely among a host of strangers, meeting new problems as well as opportunities, the fact is evident that they do not wish to form a pagan community; and especially where, as often, young parents and growing families predominate, what comes home to the Church is not the difficulty but simply the immensity of its task. Dare we substitute the radio or the newspaper for pastoral visitation? Is house-to-house visitation essential to evangelism? Can we ever fill the pews unless we tramp the sidewalks and the country roads? Can we occupy the unoccupied areas abroad without willing feet, without pioneer missionaries? In the days of His flesh, the Master's feet were the members of His body that received highest honour; they served His whole body; He went about doing good. His feet were often weary with travel, dust-covered with toil, and bruised by sharp pebbles and thorns. "Those blessed feet," as Shakespeare calls them, "which fourteen hundred years ago were nailed for

our advantage to the bitter Cross." His feet were wet with human tears of love and wiped by the tresses of penitence and shame. His feet were anointed by costly nard for His burial and after that pierced on the cross for our sins. Can the Head say to the feet, "I have no need of thee," after all that? "He showed them His hands and His feet"—those bleeding nail-scarred feet are a challenge to evangelism.

"Lord, when I am weary with toiling,  
And burdensome seem Thy commands,  
If my load should lead to complaining,  
Lord, show me Thy Hands—  
Thy nail-pierced Hands, Thy cross-torn Hands,  
My Saviour, show me Thy Hands.

"Christ, if ever my footsteps should falter,  
And I be prepared for retreat,  
If desert or thorn cause lamenting,  
Lord, show me Thy Feet—  
Thy bleeding Feet, Thy nail-scarred Feet,  
My Jesus, show me Thy Feet.

"O God, dare I show Thee  
My hands and my feet."