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Editorial Notes and Comment



FOREIGN missions is the greatest work that God has ever given to man, and this work was never greater than at the present time. It is great no matter from what point of view we look at it. When we consider the territory to be covered, it means going into every continent on the globe and into the islands of almost every sea. It means dealing with at least a thousand million souls, if we do all the work that is given the Church to do. It means overcoming difficulties innumerable, learning new languages and reducing them to writing, becoming acquainted with the customs and thoughts of strange people. It is no little matter to uproot the religions held for ages and in their places plant a religion entirely new to the people. To do this work requires a multitude of consecrated men and women, and immense sums of money. This work is great if we consider the results. So great a matter is the salvation of one soul, that there is joy throughout heaven. How the heavenly city would resound with the hosannas of the angels of God if all the thousand million of heathen should be brought to salvation. Foreign missions is great, if we realize that it is a work in which our Saviour himself is a co-laborer. Any work done by him is great, and great is our privilege to be honored by having a share in it. The great question for us to consider is whether we are doing our part in this great work.

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SELF-SACRIFICE is offering ourselves to God. When the Israelite brought the lamb in sacrifice to the altar, it was offered entirely and unreservedly to God, and he retained no right in it. In this way we should offer ourselves to God, that He may use us as He sees fit. When we have given ourselves to Him in this way there will be no question as to how we shall use whatever God has given us. Let us remember this, as we are during these weeks asked to practice self-denial for foreign missions.

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WASHINGTON presents some unusual conditions in the matter of civil government. The inhabitants of that city have no part in its government. It is controlled entirely by Congress. This has been the case ever since the establishment of the capital district. Occasionally there has been a complaint coming from Washingtonians that they were disfranchised by living in that city and so could not vote in any election, local or national. The country at large has seemed to feel that this plan was all right, until it was proposed that Congress should pass a law prohibiting the sale of liquor in the District. All at once a certain class of papers all over the country have awakened to great interest in and sympathy for the poor oppressed Wash-

ingtonians, and are crying out that the law should not be passed without the consent of the people expressed at the polls. Why is it that this particular law should demand special privilege, which has never been given to any other? Can it be that the liquor interests are afraid of Congress, while they can trust the people of Washington to stand by them? Can it be that interest shown by papers outside of the city is paid for directly or indirectly by the liquor interests? It is to be hoped that Congress will not allow itself to be controlled by the liquor power.

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OUR country, at this writing, seems to be much nearer the point of being drawn into the great world war than it has been at any previous time. Without going into the merits of the case at all, we feel safe in saying that there are few Christian people in this land who want to see the United States plunged into the horrors of war. There is one thing that every one of us can do and ought to do, and that is to pray to our God, the God of nations, that we may be preserved from this great curse.

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ECONOMIZING is a good thing in some cases, but here is what one of our readers said: "Never economize on the Church paper—cannot keep home without it." We believe this is the sentiment of almost all well informed active church workers. How can a member of the church be well informed without his Church paper is a problem that has not yet been solved.

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RELIEF and benevolent organizations of many kinds and many aims are increasing in number with great rapidity in this country. Many of these are doing a most excellent work and are honestly, economically and faithfully administered. Some are out and out fakes. Some of them are formed for a good purpose and the promoters are honest. Because of these conditions the names of some of the leading men of the community or of the country are secured as sponsors. They do not look into the objects, methods or administration of the organizations. Those who manage their affairs are unwise in the selection of objects for which money is to be raised or are inefficient in managing the affairs of the organization. The result is that much of the money is wasted and does not reach the objects for which it was intended. Before giving money, it will be well to look carefully to see where it is being placed and who is to manage it. In most cases it will be much better to make contributions through the regular channels of the church, or else through well established agencies.

PROHIBITION has been in operation for three months in Virginia. And if the experience of so short a time can be taken as an indication of the sentiments of the people, it is here to stay. We have no figures on this subject except for Richmond, but the total number of arrests for all causes in this city have been just about one-half as many as for the same length of time under the license system. The number of arrests for drunkenness show even a more marked falling off. The city jailer, who has made a very handsome profit in taking care of the prisoners in the past, reports now that he is actually losing money, as the number of prisoner boarders has fallen off so greatly. The judge of the city police court voted against prohibition, but now says he will vote for it if the opportunity is ever presented again. Many other men have expressed the same sentiments. On a recent visit to Norfolk, inquiries made brought the information that conditions there are very much as they are in Richmond. There is no intimation in either city that the police are not doing their duty in arresting all violators of law. It is said that in these cities there have been fewer "blind tigers" operated since prohibition went into effect than there were formerly. We believe, from all that we can learn, that the people all over the State are very well satisfied with the results, and there is no probability that any effort will be made to go back to the license system.

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CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR SOCIETIES are rapidly spreading themselves over the earth. Scarcely a country can be found without them, where the Christian religion has gained entrance. The last annual report of the president shows that there are about 80,000 of these societies, and that their membership is about 4,000,000. During the last year more than 1,100 new societies were organized in the South. The Christian Endeavor Societies are doing better work, we believe, than they have ever done, and the indications are that they will continue to improve. They are giving young people a training in the principles and practice of religion which many of them would never receive otherwise. If our pastors and sessions will take hold of them and train and develop their members, they will find these young people very efficient helpers in almost every kind of church work.

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BILLY SUNDAY gives this as the definition of a Christian, and it will be hard to find a better one: "A Christian is any man, woman or child who comes to God as a lost sinner, accepts the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour, surrenders to him as his Lord and Master, confesses him as such before the world and strives to please him in everything day by day."