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Not new opinion, but renewed devotion to known duty, is what is needed for the impoverished life of a professed disciple of Christ. This is what was meant by the Old Testament prophet who said: "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."

### EDITORIAL NOTES.

The center and soul of all human history is Jesus Christ. No adequate explanation of the events that happen in this world can be made if Jesus is left out of the reckoning. In man's attitude and relation to Jesus Christ will be found the key to solve all the problems that now puzzle us in connection with events of history. Opposition to Him and to His will results in ultimate failure and loss. Obedience to His will may bring us into temporary losses and distresses, but it will lead us finally into the fulness of His joy.

The true Christian should cultivate a passionate and absorbing ambition to be like Jesus Christ in thought, word and deed. He will strive always to do the will of God in serving others. He will manifest before the world Christian courage and patience. In utter self-forgetfulness, in confident-faith and in consuming zeal he will abide continually in the love of God and cultivate the sincerest abhorrence of sin.

In many homes throughout our land mothers and fathers are anxiously thinking of the time when their sons may be called for service in the army. A Presbyterian woman, anxious that these boys and men may gain a knowledge of the way of salvation if they have not already found it, has suggested that a copy of the Shorter Catechism be placed in the hands of as many as possible. The Shorter Catechism presents in brief form the essential doctrines of God's Word. Every boy who goes forth from a Presbyterian home ought to carry this brief compendium of Gospel truth with him and meditate on it. Of course, a New Testament or a Bible should form a part of the equipment of every boy or man who goes forth to battle. To supply these is a work that may be done by churches or individuals, and is worthy of the serious thought and effort of all Christian people.

An abstract of the annual report of the Executive Committee of Christian Education and Ministerial Relief is published on page 6 of this issue. In the varied phases of the work of this Committee unprecedented progress has been achieved during the past year. There was an increase of more than \$5,000 in the amount remitted to the beneficiaries of the funds of Ministerial Relief, and yet the average assistance to each of the two hundred and sixty-three families on the roll was only about two hundred dollars a year, or fifty-five cents a day for each family. The Endowment Fund is now \$543,651.53, and the Assembly has urged that it be made \$1,000,000. Nothing short of this will adequately meet the need. A final report is made of the affairs of the former "Assembly's Home and School" at Fredericksburg, Virginia.

The topic for study and prayer in the missionary societies of our Church during the month of May is "General View of the Field." This subject is chosen in order that the annual report of the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions, which will be ready early in May, may be given careful study throughout all the churches. A valuable pamphlet has

been issued by the educational department of the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions, Nashville, Tennessee, bearing the title, "The Seven," which gives facts and figures from the annual report, for the year ending March 31, 1917, about our work in Africa, Brazil, China, Cuba, Japan, Korea and Mexico. This shows the total population of our foreign fields as 31,846,127 (estimated). The number of missionaries or foreign workers is 377, and the number of their children 283. There are 894 native workers and 160 earnest congregations with a membership of 38,169 communicants. The number of additions to the Church in foreign fields for the past year was 5,256, the largest ever reported in any single year. Two hundred and five natives are now students for the ministry. The number of communicants has grown in ten years from 10,824 to the present number, 38,169.

For the convenience of our subscribers we send from time to time statements of account printed on the inside of an envelop. These statements save the subscriber the labor of writing a letter. It is only necessary for him to enclose money order or check, fold and seal the flaps, and mail his remittance, and he will receive the correct credit. With this issue statements are sent to many who have not paid in advance.

Christian work laid down by hundreds of men who have gone into the national guard or into the ranks of the nation's army and navy must be carried on by earnest workers who volunteer to take their places. A stirring call has been sent out by the Seabury Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church, of New York, and Presbyterian laymen of that city, who insist that Christian workers who go to the front must have assurance that their work at home will be carried on. In England when workers in the churches went to war, others came forward and were trained as substitutes. Something of the same thing has happened in France, Italy, and even in Russia. America's Christian work and benevolence must not fall off, but rather increase. "A Church Laymen's Recruiting Week" has been called for May 20-27. In the call for this meeting are these heroic words: "The calamity of war must be turned into a blessing by teaching the laymen of American church pews that work for Christ and men is God's scientific prescription for love of Christ and men."

Throughout all the Evangelical Churches there is greater interest in tithing as a solution of church and missionary problems of finance than at any time during the past century. Voluntary agreements to tithe all one's income are being made in many churches. An organization known as the "America Tithers' Union" is enrolling in its membership the names of those who are willing to sign an agreement to tithe regularly. This agreement includes the following statement: "Believing that I am accountable as a steward to God only, I reserve the right to decide as to the objects to which my tithe shall be devoted." The Union desires to lay the foundation for the ultimate enrollment of all tithe payers in the United States and Canada. Application for membership in the Union and free literature on the tithe can be secured from "The Layman Company,"

## Mid-Week Prayer Meeting

BY REV. JOHN M. VANDER MEULEN, D. D.

### FOREIGN MISSIONS.

Topic for Wednesday, May 2, 1917.

The arrangements of these prayer meeting topics permits a great deal of liberty in the choice of more specific topics under the general head of "Foreign Missions." So the present writer has selected for this discussion the subject, "The Future Religion of the Orient," or, "The Crescent or the Cross." And for the Scripture lesson we suggest the passage from the twenty-fourth Psalm reading:

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates;  
Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors;  
And the King of Glory shall come in.  
Who is the King of glory?  
The Lord of hosts;  
He is the King of glory."

In a book entitled, "What Is Coming," being a forecast of what will happen in the world after the war, written last year by Mr. H. G. Wells, the English socialist, the author says that after the war there will be a great renaissance of Mohammedanism. He says it is better suited to the negro in Africa than Christianity; that Mohammedanism as held by the Arab especially is improved and improving, and that the Arab will be the successful missionary of the faith of the Crescent; that, in brief, Mohammedanism is destined to be the future religion of the Orient.

#### I. Either One or the Other.

Perhaps we may concede to Mr. Wells that the religion of the Orient will be either one or the other, that of the "Crescent" or that of the "Cross." In Walter Scott's famous description of the Tournament at Ashby, De Bois Guilbert and Ivanhoe are the two leaders of the opposing sides in the contest of the second day. It was impossible for them at first to meet each other in that struggle. Too many other contesting knights intervened. But at last, when those of lesser skill had been unhorsed or put out of commission in other ways, the two rivals were face to face in the combat.

Now Mohammedanism and Christianity are probably the two last great rivals between whom the future religion of the Orient must be fought out. For Buddhism is in reality only an atheism, and Confucianism is a system of ethics, rather than a religion. But Mohammedanism and Christianity will face each other in something like rival terms. Both believe in a God, the one in Allah, the other in the Father in Heaven. Both have a personal founder, the one Mohammed, the other Jesus. Both have for authority a book, the one the Koran, the other the Bible. Both have an aggressive propaganda and through missionary effort are trying to convert Africa and the Orient to their faith. Out from the Mohammedan University in Egypt thousands of the missionaries of Islam are being sent into all quarters of the Oriental world and are trying to bring the ignorant and degraded peoples into the religion of the false prophet.

The religion of Islam, also, just because it has drawn many of the elements of its faith from the Old Testament and even from the New, is very much nearer the truth than any other of the religions to which Christianity must throw down the gauntlet. Moreover, Christianity is the only one that has strongly challenged it. To quote the words of Dr. James L. Barton: "Only the religion of Jesus Christ has stood across its path and only Christians have made an attempt to convert the followers of Mohammed. All other religions have looked with indifference upon Islam, while Christianity, through the Bible translated into the languages read by Mohammedans, and in many other ways, has attempted to lead them to Christ. This they have violently resented throughout the twelve centuries of contact and conflict."

So we may concede that within the comparatively near future the religion of the Orient will be either that of the Crescent or the Cross.

#### II. The Advantages of the Crescent.

In this coming battle the Crescent has certain advantages.

1. It has first of all the advantage of numbers. There are over two hundred million Moslems and these are, of course, mostly in the Orient already. They are on the ground. The number of Christian converts and missionaries in those lands is but a handful compared with them.

2. It has the advantage of kinship of race and mind. Who was it—Bret Harte or some other of our American poets—that wrote of the intricacies and mysteries of the mind of a Chinaman? Well, there are over eight million adherents of the Moslem faith in China. And it may be taken for granted that these will be better able to understand the Chinese mind than the Christian missionary from Europe or America whose psychology is that of the Western world.

3. We may admit also that a new and better Islam has been arising during the past few years. There has come to be throughout the Mohammed-

an world a conflict in religion as in politics between two parties, the conservative and the progressive. Among these progressives there are some very bright and educated men "whose social and moral ideals are higher than those of Mohammed himself." In the report of the Mecca conference not long ago forty Moslems met together in secret conclave to point out the causes of decay in their religion and to publish these over the Moslem world. It is not merely degraded and ignorant Islamism that the banner of the Cross will have to match its strength, but with this newer and brainier and better party which is still fighting under the flag of the Crescent.

#### III. The Triumph of the Cross.

Despite the advantage which Moslemism has in the Orient of numbers and position, we may believe in the triumph of the Cross not only for the more ultimate but even for the nearer future.

1. The first reason for this expectation is the weakness of the fundamental facts on which the religion of the Crescent is based. Therein lies precisely the strength of Christianity. We can triumphantly point to the perfection of the Saviour and the salvation which He gives all men who will fulfill the conditions and accept it. There are no Christians, even after all these centuries, of whom it can be said that their "social and moral ideals are higher than those of" their Founder. Whatever imperfections there are in Christianity exist in the imperfect application of its principles to individual or social life.

With Mohammedanism the very opposite is true. One may with great gladness contrast the person and work and doctrine of Mohammed with those of Jesus. And it is on the comparative merits of these fundamental facts, of course, that the issue must finally be fought out.

2. And a second reason for expecting the speedy triumph of the Cross is the fact that Moslemism, even as a religion, is disintegrating. This is the message of Dr. Samuel Zwemer's recent book, "Mohammed or Christ." He tells us that it is perhaps a fair estimate to say that from two to four millions of the total Moslem world have so far adopted the Western education and broken away from the old Islamic standards of orthodox tradition that they should be classified as New School Moslems. Not all of them have adopted Western civilization, but Western educational methods and ideals have compelled them to restate their own beliefs or doubts, to modify their social and moral standards to such an extent that they have clearly separated themselves from the masses.

Dr. Zwemer quotes this passage from a Calcutta paper, "Muhammadi": "The fact is Christians are becoming more united, while in Islam, alas! we are all divided. We spend our time watering the poisonous trees of domestic and social quarrels, when we should be starting missions everywhere to check the inroads of the Christian faith."

Or listen to this from Dr. Zwemer himself: "There is not the least doubt that tens of thousands of Moslems in Turkey and Persia and even in Arabia are intellectually convinced of the truth of Christianity as opposed to Islam. The philosophical disintegration of Islam which began in Persia by the rise of Moslem sects, is now being hastened by means of newspaper discussions. There is a general unrest. There are frantic attempts to save the ship by throwing overboard much of the cargo. The attack on Mohammedanism was never so keen and strong on the part of any missionary as has been the attack from those inside Islam."

3. And the third reason for the expectation of the nearer triumph of the Cross is the fall of the secular arm of Mohammedanism. This began first of all with the defeat of Turkey in the Balkan wars. Apropos of that a Moslem writer in the "Hindustan Review" wrote: "The defeat of Turkey in the Balkans came as a great surprise to the whole world, like the defeat of Russia by Japan a few years ago. But it was more than a surprise to the Mohammedan world; it was a crushing blow, a staggering revelation. And because Turkey was regarded as the sole surviving power of Islam, its only hope of glory, this revelation of its weakness was accompanied with all the bitterness of a present disappointment and the uncertainty of a gloomy future. It was such a shock that it unnerved the whole Mohammedan world."

But the present war has served to accentuate and put a climax to this destruction of what has always been the main prop of Mohammedanism. When Turkey entered the present war all Christianity stood on tiptoe wondering whether a united Moslemism was now to be let loose against Christendom. The very opposite has happened. To quote the words of Dr. Barton: "Islam as a united body and as a potential militant force was completely shattered. Mohammedans are fighting beside the English, French, and Russians; Egyptian Moslem troops are beating back the Turks from the Suez Canal, while Turkish Moslems are in Austria attempting to repel the Russian invasion. The hope of resurrecting the dream of Moslem unity has vanished without a shadow of a chance for its return. Mohammedans are in despair, especially since, as a last and final blow, the

Arabs have arisen in open rebellion against Turkey, seizing the sacred places of Islam and repudiating the right to the office of Caliph or of the sultan of Turkey."

So this is the opportunity of the Church of Christ in the Moslem world. Already we can see beyond the dark clouds of the present war the coming of the Kingdom of our Lord in the promotion of temperance, in the advancement of democracy, but not least of all in the fall of the secular arm of Mohammed. And the great battle hymn of the Church of Christ these days should be:

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates;  
Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors;  
And the King of Glory shall come in.  
Who is this King of Glory?  
The Lord of Hosts;  
He is the King of Glory."

Louisville, Ky.

## Young People's Societies

BY REV. WM. M. ANDERSON, D. D.

### LOVE.

Topic for the Week Beginning May 6, 1917.

I Cor. 13:1-13.

(Consecration Meeting).

DAILY READINGS.

M., Apr. 30. Forgiving love. 2 Sam. 18:1-5, 27-33.  
T., May 1. Patient love. 1 Pet. 4:12-19.  
W., May 2. Pardoning love. John 3:14-17.  
T., May 3. Serving love. Gal. 5:1-15.  
F., May 4. Seeking love. Luke 15:1-10.  
S., May 5. Yielding love. Gen. 13:1-11.

The division into verses and chapters is convenient for reference, but is misleading to careless readers, because they think that the ending of the chapter ends the thought, and the beginning of the next chapter is the beginning of new thought. In this passage we have an example of this kind. In the close of the previous chapter Paul had promised to show them "a more excellent way." In the thirteenth chapter he proceeds to show that "more excellent way."

The more excellent way is "Love." It is greater than all other gifts. Without it all intellectual and moral gifts are valueless. Love is the central sun of the emotions; love is the pole star in the night; love is king of the affections; love is the eloquent orator pleading in the council of the attributes of God.

This poem on love is most remarkable as coming from Paul. We might have expected John to write a poem like this, for he is called "the loving disciple," "that disciple whom Jesus loved;" but who would have thought of such poetic eloquence coming from the mind of the logician Paul? John seems to have possessed a tender nature, his Gospel reveals so clearly the heart and thought of Christ, and his epistle reveals fellowship with Christ. Bishop Westcott said, "The theme of the Gospel is 'Jesus is the Christ,' and the theme of the epistle is 'the Christ is Jesus.'"

This poem is also remarkable because it occurs right in the midst of argument; it is preceded and succeeded by argument, and is thus born in the midst of controversy. It seems to have come to Paul like sudden inspiration. He seems to be living and working under a consciousness of a mighty power bringing him into the service of Christ; and it seems to have suddenly dawned upon him that this power was the mighty and compelling power of love. And the thoughts burst forth from his mind like the sun from behind a cloud, and the result is this wonderful poem descriptive of love.

This chapter has been called "The Baptismal Service of Love." Here the word receives a new meaning. The word here translated "love" (agape) is peculiar to the New Testament, and is found in a few places in the Septuagint. And it is better to use the word "love" instead of the word "charity."

The poem may be divided into three sections: Vs. 1-3. The greatest gifts are valueless without love.

Vs. 4-7. The pre-eminent characteristics of love.

Vs. 8-13. Gifts are transient; virtues are eternal, and chief of them is Love.

#### The Gifts.

These three verses do not mention all gifts, but some cardinal ones, enough to show that love is necessary to make any or all gifts valuable.

And evidently there is no substitute for love; for there are many things that men would like to give in the place of love. God wants love, the first place in the heart; and He will not be satisfied with any other. "God is love." He wants us to be like Him. We cannot serve our fellowmen effectively unless we love them. Therefore Jesus said, "Love one another."

#### Characteristics.

There are fifteen characteristics enumerated within the short compass of three short verses. They give both an accurate and attractive description of Christian love. They describe just exactly