

# THE CHURCH AT HOME AND ABROAD.

SEPTEMBER, 1898.

## CURRENT EVENTS AND THE KINGDOM.

**Missions and Statesmanship.**—At a Christian Endeavor rally for the discussion of “Missions as Imperative upon our Statesmanship,” the Rev. J. Cumming Smith developed these points: “Missionary work is the leaven which is raising the people of non-Christian lands to a higher plane of intelligence and self-respect. In the promotion of these qualities among nations whose cheap labor imperils our industries, lies the solution of the tariff and immigration questions.” The vast importance of this aggressive effort certainly justifies the appeal which the American Board makes to the young people: “Read, as you do the news and politics of the day, the story of the fields where the Lord is making, through mission workers, the world’s future.”

**The Progress of the Kingdom.**—The Rev. H. P. Carson, D.D., synodical superintendent of home missions in South Dakota, who has been much interested in that study of current events recommended by THE CHURCH AT HOME AND ABROAD, writes as follows to the young readers of this magazine: “Current events most assuredly have to do with the kingdom of Christ. It is very desirable that as we read of and contemplate them, we apply to them the principles of his kingdom. In them often is plainly seen the unfolding of his plans, the operation of the leaven of his truth. Certainly to them we should apply the tests of these principles. Our present war is for the progress of that civilization that is eminently Christian. May it not be that all Christian nations will hereafter make a broader application of these principles? Shall Christianity sit idly by and yet be in

touch with barbarous infliction of oppression and open practice of such tyranny as prevents humanity from realizing the high end it was made to reach?”

**Changing Attitude of the Hindus.**—There are the most convincing signs that the temper of the Hindus toward Christianity is changing. Said Dr. E. E. Strong before the National Congregational Council: “The bitter hostility is giving way to respect, and ears and hearts are open that only of late could be reached. Witness that remarkable gift by wealthy Hindus in Madura—one of them a priest of a pagan temple—of a hospital, the whole fine building being given to the mission of the American Board with the full understanding that it is to be a Christian hospital, with daily preaching of the gospel.”

**The Serious Work of the World.**—“Now that the pastime of war is over,” said a Prussian drill-master at the conclusion of the Franco-German War, “we will return to the serious business of life, which is—drilling.” The war with Spain, now so happily ended, has been no pastime; it was entered upon as a solemn responsibility. Nor shall we bend our energies to the task of making ready for another war, though a valuable lesson about readiness for an emergency has been well learned. The events of the past few months, controlled by Almighty God, have opened a new door of opportunity. Ours is a sacred mission of freedom and progress, as Ambassador Hay pointed out at a banquet in the Mansion House, London. We are charged with duties toward others that we cannot evade. Henceforth we must bear a larger part in “the serious work of the world.” Mr.

## REV. IRA M. CONDIT, D.D.

Dr. Condit was born in Mercer county, Pa., and graduated from Jefferson College in 1855, and from Western Theological Seminary in 1859. At his baptism his father dedicated him not only to the Lord, but also to the gospel ministry, though this was never known until he himself had chosen that work.

While in the seminary a young classmate who had hoped to go as a missionary to China was suddenly called to his reward, and a request having come that some one else should take his place, Mr. Condit, who had never thought of being a missionary, accepted it. It was while he was waiting this call that the fact of his father's consecration of his infancy was made known, and it came to him as a call of God.

He married Miss Laura E. Carpenter, a teacher in the seminary of Granville, O., and with her sailed for Canton in January, 1860. They were obliged to return on account of Mrs. Condit's health in 1865.

He was first called to take charge of the Chinese Mission in San Francisco temporarily during the absence of Dr. Loomis. His wife died in Ohio, December, 1866. After laboring in two or three different pastorates, he was invited by the Board of Foreign Missions in 1870 to engage permanently in the work in San Francisco. In 1872 he married Miss Samantha D. Knox, of Virginia, a graduate and teacher in the female seminary at Steubenville, O.

Dr. Condit has been permitted to baptize over 300 Chinamen, most of whom have remained faithful until the end. He has prepared various books for the use of

Chinese pupils. His career has been one to which the word faithfulness is eminently appropriate. He is still in principal charge of the Chinese work on the Pacific coast.

REV. JONATHAN WILSON, D.D.,  
OF THE LAOS MISSION.

Jonathan Wilson was born in Beaver county, Pa., in 1830; graduated at Jefferson College in 1851, and at Princeton Theological Seminary in 1856. He was commissioned by the Board of Foreign Missions in May of that year, and labored a short time among the Choctaws at Spencer Academy.

He reached Bangkok, Siam, with his wife, in June, 1858, and ten years later he began his labors among the Laos people of Cheung Mai. Since reaching Siam he has a been fellow-worker with his classmate, Rev. D. McGilvary, D.D. They were welcomed to Siam by Rev. Stephen Mattoon, D.D., and Rev. S. R. House, M.D., and their wives, who were the pioneer missionaries of the Board in that country. In August, 1859, they witnessed the baptism, by Dr. House, of Nai Chune, the first Siamese convert. In September, 1858, they joined



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Drs. Mattoon and House in the organization of Siam Presbytery, and in 1884, in the organization of North Laos Presbytery. Mrs. Wilson, after a faithful and patient two years' service in Bangkok, passed to her heavenly reward. A second wife, after ten years of work with her husband in Siam and Laos, and a further six and a half years in care of their three children in Oxford, O., died March 5, 1885.

There is a tradition in the Mission Rooms that when the young missionary candidates, Messrs. Wilson and McGilvary, were

asked to what field they would like to be sent, they replied, "That field to which others are least inclined to go." With such a spirit it is no wonder that the Laos Mission which they founded has been a great success. For a time the native church which they had planted was persecuted even unto death by a cruel prince, but for many years they have had an open door and a warm welcome. Dr. Wilson regards the last ten years of his missionary work as the best ten. His translation of the Psalms into Laos was a glad fitting for his work of writing and translating some 350 hymns, 192 of which were published in the Laos hymnal that was printed in December, 1895. His translation of Genesis and the writing of the additional 158 hymns were the work of the year 1896. The same year he put in the press the late Mrs. Wilson's Laos manuscript of "Pilgrim's Progress." Hundreds of the Laos have read this translation of Bunyan with delight. During his present furlough, he and his daughter have secured the preparation of plates for over three hundred tunes which, on their return to Laos, the mission will use in the issue of a second edition of the Laos Hymnal.

Though Dr. Wilson is now in his sixty-ninth year, his zeal for the Laos is unabated, and in this year, 1898, he returns with a beloved daughter, after a furlough, to take up once more the chosen work of his life. Fifteen native churches of the Laos will welcome his return. In the past he has had a large part in the literary work of the mission, especially the preparation of hymns for the use of the native Church. It is to be hoped that he will be spared for like service in the time to come.

## A BUDDHIST'S SALVATION BY FAITH.

Prof. Lange, of Berlin, writing in the *Zeitschrift für Missionskunde*, says of the powerful Japanese-China sect of Buddhism: "A tract expounding the principles of this sect declares that men are too weak to struggle through to redemption by their own strength, by religious and moral action alone, although this is the original and essential teaching of Buddhism. To demand this of men is to ask hens to go into the water. A heart that believes of its own

strength is changeable as an image in water; a heart that believes through the power of another is strong as a diamond. He who possesses the first believes in many Buddhas; he who possesses the latter believes in one Buddha, as a faithful servant does not serve two masters. Accordingly, the adherents of this sect honor Amida Buddha as the head of all Buddhas. There comes to view the remarkable phenomenon that a doctrine which originally can only be called æsthetic has made its way through polytheism to monotheism. But we must never for-



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get that Amida is to be essentially distinguished from the God of the Old Testament, for he is worshiped through an image; he is not the creator and upholder of the world; he is not eternal, for there has been a time when he was not yet Buddha; he is not almighty; he does not direct the destinies of men in this world, and does not punish sin; it is only in his great love and compassion to men, and in the wish that all may be saved, that he comes nearest to the idea of God. Whoever now sets his full trust in the grace of Amida has no occasion to leave house and