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THE NEED FOR REALITY.

One of the results of the present shaking of the nations has been to reveal the great need for reality in life and religion. All that is unreal is being found to fail. The men who are in the midst of the grim tragedies of the war are seeing things from a new standpoint, and the realities of life and death stand out clear and distinct. They are impatient of all that savors of unreality on the part of those who are concerned with their lives and their spiritual welfare. "What we want," writes one of them, "is genuine downright reality in all things . . . The men appreciate reality as nothing else."

This demand for reality has a searching application to the message of the Christian Church. The outbreak of the war startled the world into a sudden discovery of the awful unreality that lay beneath the crust of modern civilization, and in their perplexity men turned to listen to the voice of the Church. Not in generations has the message of the Church been tested as it has been by this war.

What has been the result? A recent report of the student movement of Great Britain and Ireland, published in "The Student World," con-

tains this significant passage: "There has been marked disappointment throughout our entire field at the impotence of the Christian Church in the present crisis. When the war broke out there was a conviction that the Christian Church ought to have had something clear and commanding to say about the subject of war, and should at least have made her influence felt as a powerful factor at this time among the nations, and it was with growing disappointment that our student class realized that the church's voice was an unimportant one among all the voices raised after the outbreak of war, and that everywhere the church seemed to have found nothing further to do than to second the demands of the State in all the countries at war." This frank statement expresses the feeling of many thoughtful Christians throughout the churches in Canada as well as in the old land.

A similar confession of disappointment is made by a well-known Christian monthly in its latest issue. "The war has been a disappointment. Before it began there had been for some time a depression in religion. Church-going was falling off. There seemed to be so little to go to church for. Meetings for prayer had often to be

abandoned. When the war began it was believed that all that would be changed. It was thought that men would go to the House of God in order to understand the meaning of the calamity of war. Women, it was confidently expected, would go for strength and consolation. It has all been a disappointment. After two and a half years of war and unparalleled suffering, religion in the land is as lifeless as ever."

What is the meaning of these things? It is not that Christianity has failed, or that the Church has not toiled faithfully. It is because the sense of reality has gone out of her message.

—The reality of the Word of God has been obscured. The modern view of the Bible, on which so much of the teaching and preaching of the Church is now based, has been put to the test and has proved unreal. It has failed to meet the needs of the human soul in the face of the world's greatest crisis. It has no light for the present darkness, no comfort for the present distress. If God has not spoken in the Scriptures in a way that can be trusted the Church can no longer persuade men that she has a divine message for them. More than anything else what is needed to-day is a new tone of authority, a new note of reality, an authority and a reality springing from a renewed conviction that in the Christian Scriptures we have the living Voice of the living God.

DEEPENING OF SPIRITUAL LIFE.

Early in the year a series of meetings for the deepening of spiritual life was held in the assembly hall of the Bible College. They were not under the auspices of the College, but members of the staff were in close fellowship with those who planned the

meetings, and the students as a body shared in the benefits and blessings which resulted from them. Rev. R. P. MacKay presided at all the meetings. The speakers, with one exception, were local ministers. Rev. H. W. Frost, of Philadelphia, had been invited to take part, but has been so long identified with Toronto that we regard him as one of ourselves. He gave a series of three Bible readings in the afternoons, and the closing address on the last evening.

The meetings were very largely attended from the very beginning, and the interest deepened and widened to the close. It was quite evident that the people gathered from day to day in an earnest spirit of prayer and expectation. The addresses were of that high order in which the speakers magnify Christ. They were interspersed by time that was given to prayer. The presence of Christ was felt with increasing power as the meetings went on, and when they came to an end there was a deep and joyous sense of thankfulness on the part of all for one of the most helpful and blessed conferences held in Toronto in many years.

THE PRESENT SESSION.

When the session opened last September it was expected that there would be a falling off in the number of students attending the day classes. This seemed inevitable in view of the conditions caused by the war. It was found, however, that although the number of young men had been cut down about one half, yet many more young women had been enrolled, and the daily attendance of students was about the same as the year before. Since the New Year sixteen new students have come in, making a total of sixty-eight. The enrolment is now higher than it was at the close of last session.

From the Bible College Family Scattered Abroad

The following are extracts from letters received recently from some of our former students in different parts of the great world field.

Mr. Lloyd C. Donaldson, Oro, Northern Nigeria:—"For some time I've been thinking of writing you just to let you know I haven't forgotten the old School and its instructors, even though I am far enough from everything serving to remind me of it. Things move very quietly with me here. I am alone a good deal of the time. There are perhaps twenty-five thousand people living within easy reach of the place we live at. We hope, if the Lord tarry, to give ourselves unsparingly to the work of evangelizing. Many of the people are pagans, but Moslemism is there, too, with its sin-begetting, soul-hardening doctrines. Mohammedism is Satan's masterpiece, the damning device of the powers of darkness. It deceives, deludes, deters, destroys. Like the scribes of old it enters not in itself, and those who would enter in it hinders. Wherever it goes, hearts are hardened to the true message, and eyes are blinded to the entrance of the "Light of the World." Mohammedanism is the enemy of the Gospel, the enemy of the Cross, and the enemy of the missionary. It is my enemy, and by the grace of God it may never hope to have any mercy at my hand. So much for Mohammedanism. I see I've been running off on the subject. It does make one hot, though praise the Lord, we have a message that can pierce and smite and break, and then can heal and save. No Moslem heart has an armour coat so tight that it cannot be pierced by the sword of the Spirit, the Word of the Living God. So we take heart and press onward."

Miss Maude Sweetman, Penghsein, West China:—"Penghsein is a pretty place, a city of about 30,000 inhabi-

tants, and is our farthest station north in Szechuan. In the morning on clear days we can look to the north and see the great decked mountains. It is a glorious sight I can assure you. The mountains are just thirty miles away. Our Methodist Mission is the only one here. In our own Compound we have a day school, with over twenty girls attending, besides nine women who come for two hours a day to study, one hour for their language, and one hour for Bible, then after that they do embroidery work for us. As rice is very high just now, the women are glad to get any work to do. We hope and pray that day by day they may become interested in the Gospel story, and soon come to know our Saviour as we know Him. It takes these uneducated women a long time to grasp the full meaning of what we are trying to do for them. Our hopes are in our school girls, who are to be the making of the coming generation."

Corp. Mervin Ganton, 134th Battalion, Canadian Contingent:—"The life in camp is not as hard as I expected. Have met a number of earnest Christians, among them two T.B.C. students, and there is a third one in our Battalion if I could only find him. There is much to enjoy were it not all in preparation for the battlefield. I am quite satisfied that I am in the place where the Master would have me, especially since I got into the Red Cross training. I am sure there are fewer places of larger opportunity or greater need for faithful testimony. Was in a meeting the other night where two soldiers came forward boldly and said they wanted to find Christ. We have the Bible read almost nightly in our tent, and daily by a number. I have not heard one speak slightly of a comrade or of the Christian life. I can see there is a marked absence of desire to air

atheistic views or raise arguments against the Word, yet we are in perilous times. The need of faithful and true testimony is great, and the hour is late. Pray very much for those who seek to bear witness in our camps."

Dr. Edward S. Fish, Anshun, West China :— "Although several years have gone by since I was privileged to be classed among the students of the Bible Training School, and years that have brought a great many changes, still I cannot but thank God for the many pleasant and happy memories ever associated in my mind in connection with that institution. You may now know, you *cannot* know, all that institution means to me, and has meant to me, during the years that have gone. When I was a medical student carrying, what was to me *then*, a heavy load, only God knows the uplift, the blessing, I received every time I passed the 'School' on my way to the University or Hospital, as the case might be. And as I have seen the students coming out, or going in, my heart has gone out in gratitude to God for the lessons I had learned and the blessings I had received there. And yet it was all in His plans, preparing one for greater things farther on. I cannot tell you how grateful I have been to God for the fellowship the Missionary Society has had with the work committed to my hands. They have made it possible for me to have native helpers, which have been sorely needed here ever since the work has been opened. It seems very touching to me that this need should have been supplied by the dear friends connected with the institution that has meant so much to me in the days gone by."

Miss Annie Soper, Lima, Peru :— "The Hospital here is a very large place, quite as large as the Toronto General, with about 900 beds, which are always full. My work is simply

to look after and train the nurses. There are thirty-eight in all, ten boys and the rest girls. It is absolutely under Roman Catholic authority, and although I am supposed to have absolute control, it is merely in name, for I have really no authority whatever. My coming seems to have caused a big uproar amongst the Madres (the Catholic sisters, of whom there is one in each ward), and also the priest who is in charge. Although there has been a Protestant nurse (a Seventh Day Adventist) here for a year, there has been comparatively little opposition until my advent. And although I have not said a single word about Christianity, thinking it wisest not to at first, yet there is no disguising the hatred and antagonism they feel towards me, so much so that last week the priest wrote to the director and asked that I and one or two other Protestant pupils be turned out. The director so far has taken no steps in the matter, whether he will or not I cannot say. I am wondering very much whether God means me to leave and enter into work where I am free to speak of Him. It is awful to have to keep quiet, and it seems to me wrong, when all around there is such terrible need of the purifying influences of Christ.

"Very precious, indeed, is the sense of my Master's continual presence and the certainty that He will make no mistake if we trust Him fully. Even though I look back on those quiet, happy days spent at the College, as a time of sacred communion with God, yet I believe He has been more real, an even more constant communion, here amidst so much opposition. The bondage in which these people live makes one rejoice more than ever at our own freedom, and long to give them the message that will set them free. I find I rely very much on the prayers of the students. Often the memory of the little prayer-room, and the certainty that they are

praying, gives strength far beyond anything human."

Rev. E. C. Austin, Bogota, Columbia:—"My department of service includes itinerating when such is possible, but since last writing you I have only been away once. On this tour I was accompanied by a young man converted two years ago, who is very devoted and energetic. He has a remarkable facility for finding Bible texts to deal with all manner of problems and meet all kinds of situations. He also has a remarkable fund of humor, which, if a missionary himself does not possess, it is important that his native co-workers should have. We had good receptions in the places visited, and found next to no opposition or fanaticism. It is true that the department we travelled in is noted for its liberal sentiment, but the Bishop of the diocese is also famed for his intolerance.

"I enclose an account of our visit to one of the Government leper colonies, which may interest the students. Handbooks on Colombia, written primarily to attract capitalists, mining engineers, and others, for obvious reasons, don't have much to say about these plague spots. It must not be imagined, however, that all the lepers are in one or other of the three Government settlements. Many are to be found mingling with healthy folks in towns and villages, and form a constant menace to the public health.

Mr. A. A. Wilson, Kasempa, N. Rhodesia, writes of his wedding trip as follows: "I was granted two months' leave, the first holiday since my arrival in 1914. We spent the whole of that two months in Bulawayo in the fellowship of some missionaries of the New Zealand Church of Christ. They hospitably entertained us, and for a brief week or so we had charge of some of their work among the "colored" people of Bulawayo. We left there at the end of

August, and travelled by train to Livingstone, about 400 miles. Here we stayed for a few days in order to have a trip to Victoria Falls. "Wonderful" is hardly the word for those Falls! They are almost beyond description, and the wild tropical scenery enhances their magnificent splendor. From Livingstone we journeyed another 300 miles by the Cape to Cairo Railway to Broken Hill, and here we left the last evidence of civilization, at least the last except for the Government outstation at Kasempa, where two white officials and two traders reside. The journey from Broken Hill to Kasempa is 230 miles, and from Kasempa to our station is another 70 miles. The journey occupied full twenty days, and at the last my wife and I made a dash on our bicycles to get out of the tsetse fly which had been plaguing us for the last ten days of our trip. Our station is so situated that we are not bothered with these pests in the immediate vicinity, but all around us from a radius of a mile or two they are very thick. They are very fierce and won't be shaken off, and when they bite it seems something like a red hot needle being stuck into the flesh. One gets used to them, however.

Our passage through the villages *en route* was marked with occasional excitement among the villagers as they turned out in hundreds to see "the white lady on a bicycle." This was especially so when we came nearer our destination, for Mrs. Wilson is about the second white lady most of them have seen, and the first for many of them. Our welcome home was very warm. Mr. Vernon (my colleague) extending a glad hand of greeting and congratulation, and the natives giving us a real enthusiastic welcome after their own peculiar manner, first "popwela," sitting on their haunches and clapping their hands to the utterance of "mu-

tende" (peace), then standing in a group and staring in silence at the new "Mrs." as the white woman is generally known among them.

"TILL THE BOYS COME HOME."

This is the title of one of the most popular songs sung in camp all over Canada, the chorus of which runs:

"Keep the home fires burning
While your hearts are yearning:
Tho' the lads are far away
They dream of home.
There's a silver lining,
Through the dark clouds shining:
Turn the dark clouds inside out,
Till the boys come home."

It is easy to see why this chorus should grip the popular mind both of those who go overseas and those who must remain behind, for it centres our thought in the home, where the tenderest feelings and deepest interests abide.

The practical question, however, is to what extent are we helping to keep the home fires burning, and are we merely thinking of the material elements in this connection, or does our concern reach out to those deeper, truer "altar fires," around which our hearts must gather if we are to be true to those who fight for us and help towards the ultimate issue of this fearful struggle.

It is evident to all careful observers that this is no ordinary test of arms, and many Christian people feel the issue will not be ultimately settled by weight of metal and sinking of ships, but by the soul of the nations being brought into the will of God. If this be so, then there is a very real duty to be undertaken by all who are hindered from going forth, and who must perforce stay by the home fires, that they keep them bright.

To what extent then, and in what spirit, are we fulfilling this service? We say we believe in prayer, and that God does things because His children ask Him. Is our praying and asking merely a matter of words and times

of convenience? or have we given ourselves to this service as our soldier boys have given themselves to the service of King and Country, wherein they have left all, and given all, for the defence of our lives and liberties, and are day and night facing all the hardships and dangers of warfare. When we have, then we may feel we are fulfilling our home duty and meeting the expectation of the boys.

Much could be said to show that there is an immediate and continuous relation between the "effectual fervent prayer" of believers at home and the experiences of the men at the front. Suffice it to say that more than one message has come from the trenches saying, "they can tell when we stop praying."

There is, however, another aspect of the matter at hand, and that is: *the Boys have begun to come home.* Already 10,600 have reached Canada, and of the 12,000 now in English hospitals it is expected 2,000 a month will be able to return. This brings the country face to face with the grim reality of what the war means, for it is one thing to cheer the boys as they start off in the fulness of health and enthusiasm, and another to meet those who are spared to return broken in body and health. The Government is taking up the matter of material compensation for them with commendable interest, but when that is done will the men personally find the "dark clouds turned inside out" as they try to face life anew?

For the past several months it has been my privilege as Assistant Company Chaplain to meet with these men in the several military hospitals and convalescent homes in the city, and I have been constantly surprised to see the spirit of cheerfulness and hope that pervades the men. When you meet a young fellow, just twenty-two, with his left arm off at the shoulder and his leg off at the body, unable to use a crutch, and another, a bit older,

with his right eye gone, right arm disabled, left leg off below the knee, and telling you they are "not so bad," you wonder if they realize what it all means. And this is true in almost all the cases you meet in the hospitals.

But how is it when they try to take up life again? Well, that is different, and I must not attempt to detail some of the experiences I have heard. This, however, should be the concern of each of us—that so far as it lies in our power we will unite to show the silver lining, both by word and deed as we are brought in contact with these, our hero boys, and thus showing our sympathy and willingness to help enable them to feel the warmth of the "home fires" that are burning in so many hearts.

T. B. HYDE.

STUDENTS ENLISTED.

The following students, so far as we know, since the beginning of the war have enlisted for active military service. There are several others whose names and rank we have not yet secured:

Private Ernest Griffith White
(killed in action).
" Robert Mitchell.
" Edwin E. Preston.
" Clarence Elcombe.
" Stanley Schwalm.
" John C. Proctor.
Corporal Mervin Ganton.
" George Young.
" J. H. Woodward.
Bandsman A. Barrow.
Lieutenant J. T. Gawthrop.
" T. R. Sorton.

THE POWER OF THE SCRIPTURES.

A most impressive testimony to the power of the Bible over the hearts and lives of men was given in the visit of Mr. Ralph C. Norton early in February. Mr. Norton came to Toronto under the auspices of the Bible League, and addressed a public meet-

ing in the Bible College. A comment made in "The Globe" on his visit is worth quoting:

"There have been few, if any, meetings in Toronto during recent years which have so stirred the audiences as they listened to the remarkable stories of the power of Divine grace through the distribution and reading of Gospels and other portions of the Scripture. In particular, the way in which the fourth Gospel has been found efficacious in the lives of hundreds, if not thousands, of soldiers—British, Canadian, French and Belgian—is at once remarkable and encouraging. It is almost impossible to speak without exaggeration of the profound impression made by Mr. Norton's simple, yet moving testimonials."

DR. GRAY'S VISIT.

One of the notable events of this session was the visit of Dr. James M. Gray, Dean of the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. Dr. Gray came to Toronto at the invitation of the Bible League of Canada, and spent the greater part of a week giving two series of public lectures in the Bible College. In the afternoon he gave an exposition of the First Epistle of Peter. In the evening he spoke on such subjects as the authenticity and inspiration of the Scriptures. In a quiet and logical way Dr. Gray opened up these themes night after night. The result was impressive and persuasive. In point of numbers and interest the meetings were most successful, and much good was done by his visit.

PRAYER FOR REVIVAL.

Last summer a daily prayer meeting was held for several weeks in the Bible College in behalf of the nation for victory in the war and for a revival of religion. At the present time a meeting is being held every Saturday night in the Assembly Hall rep-

representing people of all churches where the object is to pray for a spiritual revival. There are groups that meet in other places also with this same object. It is being felt by an increasing number of earnest Christians that only by a revival of genuine religion will we be ready for victory, and that to pray for such a revival is the surest and quickest way to bring victory.

PERSONALS.

A son, Richard Duncan, was born to Mr. and Mrs. Duncan McDonald, of Central India, on September 26th, 1916.

Rev. F. R. Vine is the Vice-President, and Rev. T. S. Dunk is the Secretary-Treasurer, of the Ministerial Alliance of the Huron Baptist Association of Michigan, which has recently held its thirty-ninth anniversary.

Mr. Arthur Hawtin, of the Gwalior Mission of Central India, spent considerable time last year visiting other missions in order to make a study of methods of industrial work.

Miss Etta Brubacher, who is engaged in important work in the Mennonite Gospel Mission of Chicago, writes of her training in the Bible College: "I realize more and more how the work we covered and the experiences which were given us prove to be just what we need in the things we daily meet and have to deal with."

Mr. and Mrs. Silas Fox have reached their field of service in Southern India, and are now working away at the language.

Mr. Geo. Booth has been appointed Superintendent of the Bethany Mission in Toronto. Mr. Ivory Jeffrey is in charge of the Lappin Avenue Mission.

Mr. Ivor Pritchard, who has been carrying on the work of the Caroline Street Mission in Hamilton for the past four years, has been meeting with great encouragement. A genuine work of grace has been going on in the mission this winter.

Dr. E. S. Fish, of Anshun, West China, a passage from whose recent letter is quoted in another part of the Recorder, has been called to suffer a sore bereavement in the sudden death of his wife, which occurred early in February.

APPRECIATION.

The following letter was received from a Toronto business man a few weeks ago:

"In sincere appreciation of the work of the Bible College, I have felt for some time that I would like to have a share in its support. I enclose my cheque for \$25, and wish I could afford to make it more. Praying that the Holy Spirit may continue to guide and bless your work."

A lady in Hamilton, who was a student in the early days, writes as follows:

"Please find enclosed—toward the maintenance of the Toronto Bible College, with deepened appreciation of the spiritual benefit I received twenty years ago, and earnest prayer for God's richest blessing on all concerned."

RECEIPTS FOR GENERAL FUND.

Donations received from November 14th, 1916, to February 14th, 1917:

No. 62.....	\$ 5 00	No. 93.....	\$ 5 00
" 63.....	25 00	" 94.....	5 00
" 64.....	5 00	" 95.....	25 00
" 65.....	10 00	" 96.....	2 00
" 66.....	1 00	" 97.....	10 00
" 67.....	200 00	" 98.....	25 00
" 68.....	100 00	" 99.....	10 00
" 69.....	100 00	" 100.....	50 00
" 70.....	5 00	" 101.....	2 00
" 71.....	3 00	" 102.....	5 00
" 72.....	1 00	" 103.....	20 00
" 73.....	10 00	" 104.....	10 00
" 74.....	10 00	" 105.....	20 00
" 75.....	5 00	" 106.....	10 00
" 76.....	20 00	" 107.....	5 00
" 77.....	5 00	" 108.....	11 51
" 78.....	5 00	" 109.....	10 00
" 79.....	2 00	" 110.....	10 00
" 80.....	20 00	" 111.....	25 00
" 81.....	5 00	" 112.....	3 00
" 82.....	20 00	" 113.....	100 00
" 83.....	10 00	" 114.....	5 00
" 84.....	25 00	" 115.....	5 00
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" 92.....	5 00	" 123.....	5 00