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The Urgency and Crisis in the Far East.

BY MR. JOHN R. MOTT.

ADDRESSING the Canadian Club on the "Urgency and Crisis in the Far East," Mr. John R. Mott, of New York city, the world-famous student leader and traveller, said:

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—I am keenly sensible of the honor done me in according me the privilege of speaking to a body of the aggressive and public spirited men of your city under the auspices of a Club which has for its objects those things which are in sympathy with the best life of the nation. In these days, when trade is not as good as it once was, when the spirit of unrest and uncertainty is abroad in the land, men are apt to become pessimists—and a pessimist is a man who puts out the light in order to see how dark it is, or one who of two evils chooses both. Still a better definition of a pessimist is one who is shut up for three days with an optimist and can't get out.

And, by the way, the best illustration I ever heard of an optimist is that related of the man who fell from the roof of a thirteen-storey building in New York. As he passed the fifth storey in his downward flight he announced, "All right so far."

During the past two years it has been my privilege to visit all the continents of the world and not a few of the islands. I have been seeking to observe the tendencies of mankind, to get the viewpoint from the battlefields of the nations. And to-day I bring you my testimony that the outlook over the whole world is a bright outlook. In a great battle, where the lines extend over one hundred and fifty miles of frontage, you may find a certain portion of the army hard pressed, but those in charge, in close touch by constant report and wireless telegraphy, who are taking in the battle as a whole, know that victory is assured. So it is with the world to-day. So, looking out on the world as a whole we may see certain parts where the efforts of mankind are strenuous, some quarters in which the cause of high civilization and righteousness may be hard pressed, but, looking over the whole field, for mankind as a whole, victory is assured for the highest ideals and forces.

In the Far East this is very apparent. I have recently returned from my third extensive journey throughout the Orient and I have brought back the dominant impression that the present is a time of the utmost urgency and pressing crisis there. It is unmatched in the annals of Christendom. It involves the destiny of 500,000,000 people, with their youth and their age, their radicalism and their conservatism, their growth and their decay. It embraces the whole seething force of a vastly multitudinous people. It is the most momentous question that ever confronted thinking men. Talk about the crises being overdone, I tell you that the present is the time of the social, industrial, commercial, educational and religious reconstruction and transformation of the Far East.

First, then, this is a question of urgency because of the stupendous changes now in progress on the main land of Asia. These are so far-reaching and significant that it is exceedingly desirable for the forces of western civilization and Christianity to exert a potent influence while conditions are still plastic. Japan has made unprecedented progress. Her record of the last forty years has been unparalleled in the history of the world. In view of her great development and accomplished progress, it has been assumed that she has practically reached the position where her character is set and the conditions of the country are determined. This is a misconception. Japan to-day is in the midst of profound changes. She is fairly vibrating with the modern spirit. Some have said that her victory over Russia has turned her head, and that she will share the fate of any proud people. This is not the case. The recent successful war through which Japan has passed has rather sobered and awed her social and industrial leaders. They realize that it has given them their coveted position among the powers of the world. They have been solemnized by their greater opportunities. Let us, then, seek to help Japan by the highest offices of national friendliness. Japan holds the key position in the Far East, and it is well to bring our influence to bear upon that point which, in its turn, radiates the largest influence. All the high forces that our friendship can bring to bear upon her development should be leveled in that direction.

Corea, with her ten millions of souls, which has been so long buried to the outer world, has suddenly stirred, answering to the mighty and irresistible currents that are sweeping the whole East. Once the "Land of the Morning Calm," Corea is now aflame with the spirit of modern progress. Railways are webbing their constructive progress into being, the Gov-

ernment has been reorganized, and the people are being imbued with the spirit of modern commercial life and educational life. The country is a splendid spectacle of modern changes under difficult conditions. There may be much question as to methods. Our hearts' sympathies may be touched when we hear of the processes employed. We may recall the history of Finland under the iron heel, when the women dressed in black, and pity the simple-minded and fine-charactered Corean peoples. It is easy to criticize Japan. Japan has not an easy task. Some might say, Leave Corea alone. That's nonsense. Others might say, Make it a buffer state. But we have too many buffer states now.

But by far the most marvellous changes that have ever occurred in a nation are taking place in China. China has made more progress in the last five years than in all the great past of her centuries of history. Sir Robert Hart, that most distinguished civilian of the Far East, puts it aptly.

"During the first forty-five years of my residence in China," said he, "the country reminded me of a closed room without any opening and in which neither air nor light was admitted. They had no interest in any other nation. In the last five years it has been like a room in which every window was open, and through which every breeze from every quarter was sweeping."

Dr. Griffith John, that Nestor of missions, has said that had the changes in China been accompanied by the bloodshed that has characterized Russia in the same period, the eyes of the world would have been focussed on those 438,000,000 of people. I have visited China three times, the first twelve years ago, the second six years ago, and again recently, so that I have been given opportunity to notice. When I visited China six years ago there were not more than 200 miles of railway. Now there are 37,000, with 1,600 being built and 4,000 projected. Six years ago there were few evidences of industrial activity; now modern factories are to be found in all the large cities. Six years ago the telegraph system was just beginning; now it has a network stretched over the country. Then there were no post-offices; now there are 2,500 and they are adding them at the rate of one every day. Then there was only one newspaper to publish the edicts of government; now there are eleven dailies in Pekin alone and one women's newspaper, and they are found in all the great cities, while the printing offices run day and night. The largest press in the world is running twenty-four hours a day in Shanghai. The literature of the sleeping Chinese stages has been put away in the dust, and its

place has been taken by modern literature. Modern literature in translation is taking the place of the old Chinese books. You now find Huxley, Spencer, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," "Ivanhoe," and lastly, "Sherlock Holmes," on the book-shelves. There are many societies for the discussion of public questions; there is an agitation for the improvement of the civil service, and the Emperor has promised a revised constitution. The most remarkable change, however, has been the educational change. Two imperial commissioners have been sent around the world to investigate all the institutions of learning in the various world educational centres, and gather information for the remodelling and improvement of the Chinese system. China has learned the lesson of Japan. She is sending her youth out to study. One thousand of the brightest young men of China are in attendance at universities and colleges in America and Europe. She is sending larger numbers to Tokio. Six years ago at the Imperial University of Japan there were less than twenty Chinese students. In April last there were 15,000, and there are nearly 10,000 students there now. Six hundred of these are from the most western province of China.

All this means the coming out of the proudest and most secluded nation of the world, the "walled nation" she has been called, to sit at the feet of her conquerors and learn the secret of their greatness. It means the thirst and the desire for change. Coming from the western province of China to the university at Tokio requires an eight weeks' journey, equal in time to a journey round the world, all for the sake of getting an education. There are 1,250 students from the Province of Hunan, the province which would not admit missionaries and engaged in fighting the telegraph wires. This fact alone epitomizes the changes of the past twelve years. The modern system of education has been established almost in a day. Modern schools and colleges are springing up like mushrooms all over the country. They are turning out priests and images to make room for colleges. In many cases I realize they are doing a very superficial work, because they are not ready. They are clamoring for teachers from the missionary colleges. But in many cases it is a case of the blind endeavoring to lead the blind. In one school I was surprised and amused to read the advertisement, "English taught to the letter G."

China has waked up. Japan has 5,500,000 of her young men in the schools. The same proportion to population would give China 50,000,000. Very soon you will see China the greatest student nation of the world. China is after education

to learn the secret of commercial, industrial, political and military supremacy in other nations. The call to all of us is to strengthen the hands of our educational missions, that we may teach that the real secret of a great nation does not rest in its battleships, or its armies, or its navies, but in the character of its people. The movement in China is educational, not religious, nor anti-religious, though it may become so. The people wish to discover the secret of the progress, the power, the commercial and political greatness of other nations. It matters to the West whether it is represented in China by men of character and ideals, or the reverse. It matters much whether the face of Canada and the United States, to which they are looking, is set towards gross materialism, or to the highest ideals that should govern nations.

The second reason of the crisis in the Far East is the rising tide of nationalism and race patriotism. I have visited a number of countries, and studied at close range some forty-two nations. Nowhere have I found such intense, triumphant and cohesive nationalism as permeates Japan. Japan is splendidly national, and at the same time greatly international. We are familiar with the rise of the national spirit in India, and it is to the credit of Great Britain that her rule has made possible a growth of national spirit which some people, in their thinking, deplore. Corea has a national spirit, and a similar sentiment is spreading to the Philippines and through the whole basin of the Pacific. Napoleon was a man of sagacity, and, pointing to China, he said, "There sleeps a giant. Let him sleep. For when he moves he will move the world."

I bring you word that China has begun to move her titanic muscles. Her three wars in the Far East, the truth about the opium traffic, the exclusion treaties, the capture of Chinese territory by Germany and the United States, and other historic stories, are reaching the knowledge of the Chinese young men. They are studied by her students in Tokio. They are putting ambition in the Chinese young men. When they hear that in Peking the legations of the western powers are virtually armed fortifications, it begins to assert the national spirit. "Twenty years ago," a prominent Chinese citizen said to me, "you never heard anyone speak of my country or on my country, but now the flag is flying on the school buildings, and there are patriotic text-books and the children sing patriotic songs."

High-spirited young Chinese students are learning history. They are hearing for the first time how other nations have conquered and humbled them. Would not these things excite

national feeling in you? I read an essay of one of these Chinese students. He wrote, "We are going to whip Japan. Then we're going to whip Russia. Then we're going to whip the rest of the world, and take our place as the middle kingdom."

Patriotic discussion societies, constitution debating societies and anti-opium leagues are being organized everywhere and public opinion is growing with amazing strides.

Lord Salisbury was one of the deepest thinkers of modern times. He went away beneath the surface, and he declared that greater than national patriotism was race patriotism. My travels in Asia have told me that the people are coming together with the sentiment of Asia for the Asiatics. From China to Siam they are beating in unison. The nations of the West and of Europe can no more resist this rising tide of race patriotism in the East, than they can resist the tides of the sea. Imagine resisting the national spirit in Canada, if you want to bring it home. The national spirit is the gift of God, as much as is the family spirit or the Church spirit. The spirit in the East cannot be resisted, but it can be guided and dominated. We must take an unselfish and altruistic position. We must seek to influence them by the Christianity of our political and commercial and industrial relations. I may be speaking to some who have no religious affiliations. Then let me say that upon the grounds of commerce and patriotism, we can do no better thing than to strengthen the hands of Christian missions in the Far East these days.

I am aware of the rules of your Club, and I see that the time is up. There are many other points, but I do not wish to transgress, and will cut off right at once.

As Mr. Mott sat down there were repeated and insistent calls of "Go on."

He rose again and continued: I shall omit my third point, but with your kind consent, I shall add a few words. If we are going to meet the crisis in the Far East there must be a statesmanlike policy adopted on the part of the Western nations and the Western churches. Unless I am ignorant as to what constitutes statesmanship, I take it that one of the main features must be comprehension and breadth. There is an isolation and a conceit and a narrowness about us in the Occident that we do not realize. We need to Orient ourselves and develop the poise and the width of view which comprehends the whole field and characterizes statesmanship of the type

that, in such a matter as naval policy, peers down half a century, at least.

You can't break this world up into water-tight compartments. In missionary effort you must study the co-ordination of the forces now neglected. Great waste is due to jealousy, friction, overlapping, and undercutting. True statesmanship studies strategy. There are certain places, the capture of which makes easy the whole conquest. There are strategic races and strategic times, as well as strategic places. And the present is the time of times to do our best and most unselfish work for the far east.

We must develop our latent forces, especially the lay forces. The men we are to send to the Far East, not as missionaries, but as civilians, are aggressive and ambitious men, those who go to represent the West in commercial and industrial enterprises, should be men of character and breadth of view, with a sense of the solemnity of representing a nation and a civilization. No man should stand still. He must either steadily uplift the mercantile and political life of the Orient, or he will be drawn down. And if he goes down, we go down with him.

My third point would have been that this is the last time to send weak men out into missionary undertakings. The men who go out now have to lay the foundations and lead the forces of Christianity. The Japanese lost 457,000 killed and wounded in the recent war, but they did not begrudge them to preserve for their nation the political balance in the Far East. Can we not afford to give of our best a few thousands to this great work? The strongest men the universities of Canada can send should be the contribution of the West to this great work, to develop a friendly sentiment and to buttress the deepest and most revolutionary truths of civilization in this most unselfish and effective way.
