

we should raise our eyes to look further afield. There is something away in the distance; the whole wide world lies open before the missionary zeal. Now we have little of civilization or culture to offer the non-Christian. Now we can perhaps receive more of these great natural benefits, a new zest for human nature and life, from the peoples of the East. All that the West has to offer now is, perhaps, the Faith, the inestimable treasure of true Christianity. It is therefore imperative to learn from them as well as to tell them of Jesus Christ.

It is a great honour for BLACKFRIARS to have the case for the Missions put forward by His Grace the Archbishop of Port of Spain; an honour also to have the Professor of Social Anthropology at Oxford to show the importance of learning from other peoples and religions; and also by a happy chance the most distinguished of any non-Christian writer known to readers of this review, Dr Coomaraswamy, recently sent a contribution which was reserved for this number, as it shows the work that can be done in opening a way to natural understanding between East and West on a philosophical plane. No missionary to the East could afford to neglect the profound work of Dr Coomaraswamy, who is one of the very few to attempt to introduce the *philosophia perennis*, baptized by the Church, to the philosophy that has supported for so many centuries the religion of his own land.

THE EDITOR

SHOULD FOREIGN MISSIONS GO?

THE title of this article has been borrowed from one in *The Atlantic Monthly* for January 1944 by the Reverend Phillips Endecott Osgood, Rector of Emmanuel Church, Boston. In his opening paragraph he records that 'at a recent conference at Columbia on Science, Philosophy, and Religion two delegates voiced the pungent opinion that "the entire missionary movement should be stopped". They raised a vigorous demurrer to the axiom that "the post-war world can be built successfully only on the basis of Christianity" and categorically denied that "we are fighting to save Christian civilization". Granted that only two of the delegates exploded this bombshell, nevertheless there are persons not delegates to this august conference who would second the motion—both at home and, more understandably, among the nationalists in the non-Christian countries'.

The rest of his article is chiefly taken up with an examination of that nationalist attitude in Japan, India, and China, and while he seems to be in general accord with the familiar Catholic thesis that 'the Church can then only be said to be founded in a region when it is

self-governing, with its own churches, its own native clergy, its own resources: in a word, when it depends on nobody but itself' (*S. Cong. Propaganda*, May 20th, 1923), it is not clear that he rejects what he styles a 'steady liberalization of Christian credalism', or that he looks upon Christianity as anything more than an ornament to 'revivified native faiths—a higher Buddhism, a cultured Hinduism, a reborn Mohammedanism, a philosophic Taoism, an assertive Shintoism'.

The 'home attitude' may be illustrated by remarks made on December 8th, 1927, by the Chairman of the P. & O. Steamship Company, at the annual meeting of shareholders, explaining a serious loss of business during the preceding year. 'I have spent a good many years of my life in the East, including a little time in China, and my belief is that we have, in a great measure, brought about the present condition of antagonism to us in China by sending missionaries there to endeavour to convert the people to Christianity. The attempt to break down China's ancient faiths, as sacred to the Chinese as Christianity is to ourselves is, I think, to be deplored. Such efforts, in my judgment, do more harm than good. I would not support them with a penny. The money spent on these efforts could be far better utilized in our own country. My opinion is that the sooner some of our well-meaning people give up their crusade in India and China the better it will be for us all'.

These ideas and particularly the last (that well-ordered charity ought to consider using money and personnel at home before looking abroad) are not uncommon, and as one reads this BLACKFRIARS symposium of Missiological Science, Philosophy, and Religion' it is not amiss to 'enquire within' and be resolved whether or no he harbours them.

The Catholic teaching about the Missions is, of course, simplicity itself. It starts from the dogma of the Divinity of Christ, incarnate Truth. To him 'all power has been given in heaven and on earth', and in virtue of that commission he has commanded his Gospel to be preached in its entirety, for all time, and to all nations—in India, China, Japan, and everywhere else. Indifference or disobedience to this command argues indifference to ultimate truth; it is contempt of Christ and of the Father who sent him—as he himself has said.

We must be on our guard, consequently, against the mistake of evaluating religion merely by its practical effects: the drawing out in the various nations the best that is in them to be or to do. This were to treat religion as a drug, and to take for granted that there must be, or may be, different drugs to suit the idiosyncrasies of diverse peoples. Christianity does not present itself as a drug but as the Truth. The question is not: Does Christianity suit this people?

but, How is this people to be made to see that Christ is 'the Way, the Truth, and the Life': the Way without whom there is no going, the Truth without whom there is no knowing, the Life without whom there is no living? And, How is his Gospel to be presented in a manner acceptable to them because not conflicting with the accidents of their national traditions and culture?

The answer to these questions has been luminously given by our present Holy Father, Pope Pius XII. In an address, on June 24th, 1944, to the President and Officials of the Pontifical Missionary Societies, his Holiness said: 'The work accomplished has been conscientiously inspired by the aim of giving the Missions a character which is not foreign but rather native to the countries in which they are. Hence the principle that the characteristic native outlook, customs, and traditions should be upheld, so long as they are compatible with the divine law. The missionary is the apostle of Jesus Christ. His task is not to transplant a speculcally European culture into the missionary lands, but rather to make these peoples, who in some cases glory in a thousand-year-old culture, ready and able to adopt and assimilate the elements of Christian life and behaviour. These elements of Christian life and behaviour harmonise naturally and easily with any healthy civilization and communicate to it the perfection and fullness of power to secure and guarantee human dignity and happiness. Native Catholics must be truly members of God's family and citizens of his kingdom without thereby ceasing to remain citizens of their earthly fatherlands. The great aim of the Missions is to plant the Church in new regions, to let her take firm root, so that one day she will be able to live and develop without the support of missionary work. Missionary work is not an end in and for itself: it withdraws once the high purpose for which it ardently strives has been attained'.

As matters stand, only something more than a sixth of the world's population is Catholic: obviously there is much to be done in fulfilment of Christ's command. As the Holy Father said in another part of his address, comparing the modern era with the Middle Ages, there is need for a Crusade, and for Crusaders greater than those who fought to liberate the Holy Land. A noble aim, but less than that of the missionary who aims, not at consolidating and protecting positions already won or regained, but at making 'the whole world a Holy Land', at extending the reign of Christ 'over human hearts, throughout all lands, to the furthest hamlet and to the last man that dwells on earth'.

The Catholic answer to the question: Should foreign Missions go? is therefore plain. Not while there is a single nation where the one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic Church founded by Jesus Christ does not

visibly exist. But because of the intensification of national feeling and ambition, as well as of the spread of education among all peoples, the Missioner must act with clear appreciation of the aim and method which the Pope demands. This Missionary number of BLACKFRIARS is, consequently, well-conceived and merits the careful study of all who not only pray conventionally that the Kingdom of God may come upon the earth but are determined to help its coming effectively.

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S O C I A L A N T H R O P O L O G Y

THE subject matter of Social Anthropology, human societies, with special reference to primitive societies, has been a field of philosophic speculation from the earliest times. It has only very recently become a field of scientific inquiry; so recently that Sir Edward Tylor is sometimes spoken of as 'the father of anthropology'. Tylor defined the scope of his inquiry in his classical work, *Primitive Culture* (1871) as culture or civilization taken in its widest ethnographic sense, a definition which excludes what the rest of Europe calls anthropology and what in England is sometimes called physical anthropology: the study of racial characteristics, genetics, and so forth. But it covers what is generally called today in England social anthropology, or the sociology of primitive peoples. Tylor was himself the first occupant of a university post in the subject, from 1883 at Oxford.

Social anthropology is therefore still a very young discipline, hardly yet accepted as one of themselves by the august natural sciences. It has, however, taken the first step towards qualifying as a science by becoming inductive. The earlier social anthropologists were what are sometimes called 'arm-chair' anthropologists. When they wrote about primitive peoples they relied for the material from which they constructed their theories not on their own observations but on the reports of missionaries, administrative officers, and travellers. Sir James Frazer's monumental *The Golden Bough* is one of the best examples of this kind of work—polished, erudite, comprehensive, and occasionally profound. Such writings suffered, in the eyes of men of science, from a serious defect. The facts from which conclusions were drawn were gathered by men untrained to make observations and the interpretations were made by scholars who had no direct acquaintance with the facts. This was largely due to the social anthropologists of the time having come into the subject from the humanities, in which