

THE PULPIT.

A SCHOLARLY SUNDAY SERMON BY DR. CHARLES EDWARD LOCKE.

Subject: The Universal King.

Brooklyn, N. Y.—Dr. Charles Edward Locke, pastor of the Hanson Place M. E. Church, preached Sunday in the New York Avenue M. E. Church on "Jesus Christ the Universal King." The sermon was the annual one before the New York East Conference. The text was from Revelation xii:15: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ." Among other things Dr. Locke said:

With His own hand God wrote on the foundations of history, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." On the radiant advent morning the angel said to the bewildered shepherds, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people;" and, later, the Great Teacher Himself announced, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." Though Confucius died of a broken heart, fearing he had spoken no truths which would survive him, and Socrates drank in despondency the hemlock in his cave overlooking Athens, yet Jesus Christ, the world's Great Optimist, cried out in triumph in the midst of the agonies of the cross—"It is finished!" and Paradise Lost became Paradise Regained. John, the Revelator, in the seraphic isolation of his exile, saw in his vision the fulfillment of all these prophecies, and exultantly wrote, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ."

It was a long looked for psychological moment when Bethlehem's star appeared above the dimpled hills of Judea. Civilization had slipped down from the hoary highlands of Bactria to the lowlands of Hindustan; it then moved westward, tarrying long enough to build its towers in Persia, its temples in Greece, its tombs in Egypt and its thrones in Rome. At its birth Christianity encountered the fierce opposition of emperors and armies. Rome was mistress of land and sea. The founder of Christianity was a Roman subject, his chief apostle a Roman citizen. The whole Roman empire was hurried across the path of the progress of Christ. His followers suffered, but in the sign of the cross they conquered.

Our forefathers bravely followed the guiding star to the summit of the Alleghany Mountains and fixed the western boundary of the new republic; but the years pushed the frontiers westward, and when at last against the prophecies of American statesmen the plains were crossed by the intrepid pioneer, then autocratic lawmakers defiantly announced that the serrated peaks of the Rocky Mountains would outline the western boundary of the nation, but steadily and gracefully moved that point of light until at last it mingled its silver beams with the golden embroidery of the sunset coast. Then even the wisest of modern magi thought that the star of empire had become a fixed star, but faithfully it has pursued its noiseless tread until to-day it is brilliantly shining above eastern archipelagos and continents. We are the creatures of that star and must keep up with its aerial flight, for wherever it lingers there is another Bethlehem's cradle and another advent hymn.

Within the lifetime of many here present the star appeared in the Asiatic heavens and the angel choir again sang "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will to men." The year 1858 has been called the Annus Mirabilis of modern missions, and truly it was a "year wonderful," for the doors were opened to one thousand million of the human race. In that year India was transferred from the clutches of the avaricious East India Company to the British crown and Queen Victoria became Empress of India. By the Treaty of Tientsin the ports and interior of China were opened and the people were permitted to accept Christianity without persecution, and Japan, after 200 years of exclusion, made its treaty with Great Britain. Now, let us see how these great kingdoms of the earth are becoming the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.

India has a population of 250,000,000 and an area of 1,860,000 square miles. Sutte, infanticide and the voracious juggernaut are gone forever. Because of the huge reservoirs constructed by English foresight famines rapidly disappearing, and the gradual elevation of women is taking place. India will be Christian from the Himalayas to Ceylon, from Bombay to Calcutta.

China has had continuous authentic history for forty centuries. The first real character in Chinese history was the Emperor Yu, who ruled 2204 B. C. The Chinese are supposed to be the descendants of Shem, the oldest son of Noah. They settled on the banks of the Yellow River and established a kingdom coeval with Babylonia and Egypt, and before Abraham came out of Chaldea.

Four hundred and six millions of people and 4,225,000 square miles, and has a coast line of 2500 miles. The climate is very much like our own. There are broad rivers, lofty mountains and valleys of extraordinary fertility. There is vast mineral wealth. Beside iron, gold, silver and copper there are immense coal fields; all of which lie almost undisturbed waiting for the coming of the higher civilization which will some day adorn this drowsy nation. China lies partly in the temperate zone, where the greatest nations have developed and where the possibilities of power and permanency are assured.

They are an industrious people, always busy, quiet and peaceable. Whatever lethargy characterizes the country as a government, the typical Chinaman is a shrewd, active, successful toiler. The Chinese invented printing and gunpowder; first used the magnetic needle; made the finest porcelain and to-day manufacture the finest silk and the most exquisite embroidery.

They are an educated people. All candidates for official position—which is said to be the universal ambition of all citizens—must pass difficult examinations. Of course I do not need to remind you that their standards of education are low; their astronomy is picturesquely mingled with astrology and all their science is pathetically behind the studies of the West.

They are a reverential people. They can hardly be said to be a very religious people. Their religion consists in rites and ceremonies rather than in doctrines and principles. The basis of government and society is the fifth commandment—filial devotion. Obedience to parents and respect for old age are everywhere persistently inculcated and practiced. Herein lies the secret of whatever of virtue and permanency may be found among Chinese. When a man reaches eighty years of age his name is reported to the Emperor, and a yellow robe is presented to him as a mark of imperial respect on the presumption that his life must have been virtuous or it would not have been prolonged.

All that China needs to make it a progressive and useful nation is Christianity, with its Christ and His institutions. They are a more promising people than were our ancestors in Britain before their conversion to Christianity through the preaching of Augustin and the graceful influence of Queen Bertha, the wife of Ethelbert. They have won their way by venerable age to everything which Occidental nations can do for them. Confucianism, with its negative virtues, and Buddhism, with its intangible mysteries, have been tried and found wanting. May China not be a nation which is to be born in a day? There is a tradition that the Apostle Thomas carried the Gospel first to China. As early as 1288 Pope Nicholas sent missionaries to China. There is a God in Heaven who has not forgotten the Chinaman.

What shall I say of Japan, the land of little people and of great deeds; of culture and courtesy, with a population of 45,000,000 living among 4000 islands whose area is 162,000 square miles—about three times the size of the State of New York? A phenomenal nation. Only thirty years ago it was a crime to accept Christianity in Japan. In 1860 an English sailing ship just returning from the Orient reached the Thames. On board were two Japanese youths, who had worked their way before the mast. Disconsolate and alone, they went to bed suppers that first night because all the crew had gone ashore. A few months ago one of those Japanese boys again returned to Great Britain. This time he was welcomed by the Lord Mayor and a distinguished company of such men as the Duke of Argyll and Lord Rosebery. He came as the guest of the city of London, and was lavishly entertained at the Mansion House. He was Marquis Ito, who has been four times the Prime Minister of Japan. This is a romantic epitome of the nation of Japan. Many of its statesmen are Christians. Admiral Togo has a Christian wife, and is himself not a pagan. In the recent war the bravest generals were Christian men. Japan was pagan yesterday, it is agnostic today, to-morrow it will be Christian.

Doubtless among the kingdoms of this world which the ecstatic John saw becoming the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ was the great empire of Russia. The Russians are a mighty, mysterious, paradoxical, providential people. Their ancestors are found among the ancient Scythians in Southern Europe five centuries before Christ, worshipping a sword fixed in the ground as an image of the god of war. Under the reign of Vladimir, 1000 A. D., the Russians became Christians, getting their religion not from Rome, but from Constantinople; hence they are Greek Christians.

The Russian has clear religious convictions and is devoted to the rites of his church. Senator Beveridge says: "The religious side of a Russian is all sides of him." His faith is serene and steady; the holy icons are reverently protected, and the devotion of the soldier is marked. Like Cromwell's army they often rush into battle with sacred songs on their lips.

Russia is in process of evolution. She is not a bear that walks like a man," as Kipling said, but she is a man who has been acting like a bear. But it will be remembered that another nation in its developing history behaved so much like a quadruped that it will probably always be referred to as "Johnny Bull." Russia's medievalism is being rebuked, and her virility, and integrity, and faith, and enterprise will yet bring her forth into a full-orbed Christian nation.

By their men ye shall know them! If there have been cruel and heartless rulers, there have also been epoch-making leaders. A nation must have permanent qualities of greatness which can claim among its master minds such men as Prince Kuropatkin, De Witte, Vereschagin and Leo Tolstoy. The Anglo-Saxon and the Slav are to be the two great regenerating influences of Asia—the former moving westward, the latter moving eastward. The future of the world must reckon with the Russian. Other races have had their chance and failed. The two great peoples who could emancipate their own slaves are destined to teach the liberty of Christ to the nations at the ends of the earth. It is true of the Russian as it is true of the Anglo-Saxon that he not only conquers, but he assimilates.

At the end of the first century there were in the world 5,000,000 Christians; at the end of the tenth century 10,000,000; at the end of the fifteenth century 100,000,000; at the end of the eighteenth century 200,000,000, and at the end of the nineteenth century 500,000,000 Christians. In 1800 the inhabited surface of the earth was 43,798,600 square miles, of which only 3,480,000 was Christian. In 1906 the inhabited surface of the globe is 53,401,400 square miles, of which 44,619,100 is Christian and only 8,782,300 non-Christian. Truly, "the kingdoms of this world are becoming the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ!"

Expect Blessings.

Begin to-day with the determination to find blessing. His tender mercies are about us on every side. Be on the lookout for them and you will find them. "The more we look for them, the more of them we will see. Blessings brighten when we count them. Out of the determination of the heart the eyes see.

"If you want to be gloomy, there's gloom enough to keep you grim; if you want to be glad, there's gleam enough to keep you glad. Say, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.' Better lose count in enumerating your blessings, than lose your blessings in telling over your troubles. 'Be thankful unto Him and bless His name!'"—Rev. G. R. Lunn, in Christian Intelligencer.

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