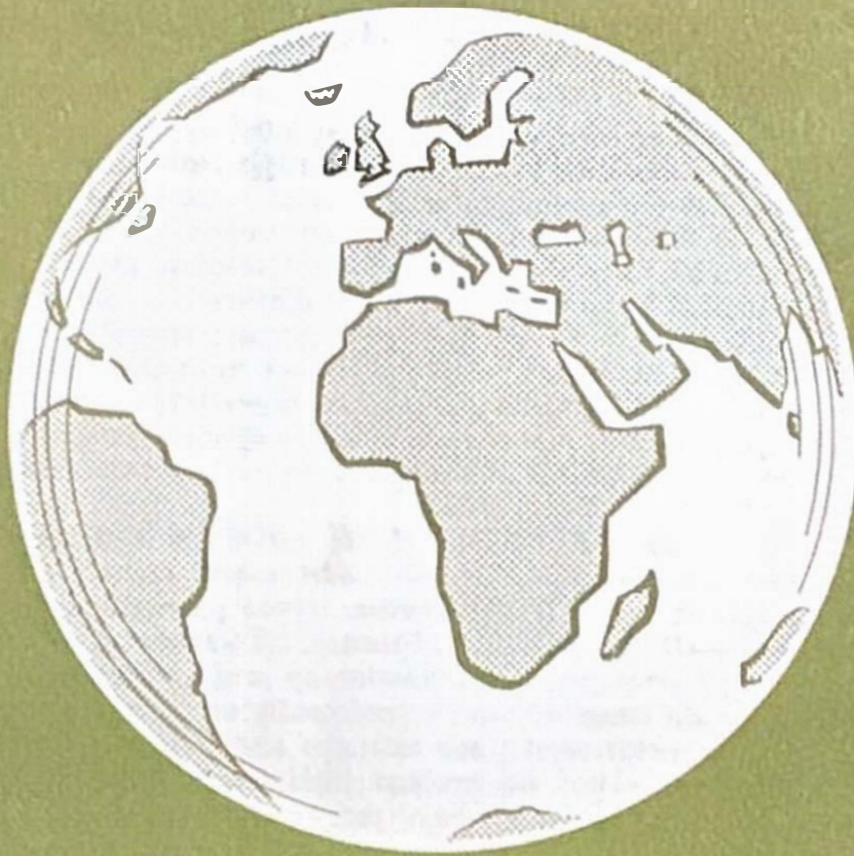
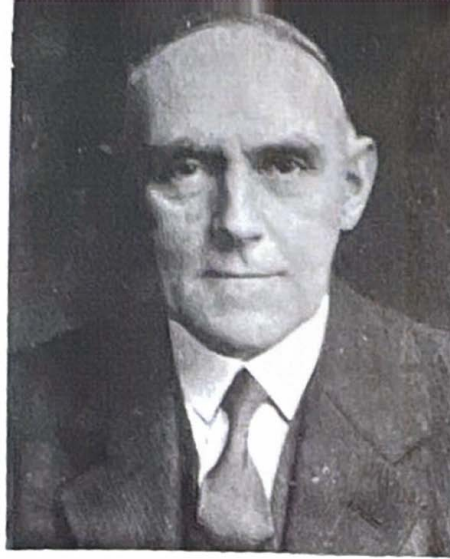


# The methods and principles of **APOSTOLIC MISSIONS**



by the late  
PROFESSOR A. RENDLE SHORT



A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Arthur Rendle Short". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line at the end.

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## FOREWORD

As a young man, Rendle Short wanted to preach the gospel to students in another land. But he was prevented from doing so. He therefore set himself, by every means in his power, to stir up missionary interest among young people in this land.

Believing as he did that the Bible was an all-sufficient guide and directive in all matters of faith and practice, Rendle Short naturally sought to find in the New Testament those methods and principles of missionary work which were most pleasing to God. The result of his enquiries is set out on pages 3-12 of this booklet. These pages are in fact a reprint of the first chapter of a book he wrote for the benefit of young people just after the first world war, entitled,

### "A MODERN EXPERIMENT IN APOSTOLIC MISSIONS"

The next question Rendle Short asked himself (see last paragraph on page 12) was whether it was practicable to follow the same methods in the 20th Century. To answer it he studied the history and growth of missionary work in various lands carried on by those who were professedly using those methods. His brief summaries of these histories and triumphs make fascinating reading but we are not reproducing them here. On pages 13-15, however, we have put the concluding paragraphs of his book, omitting only a few sentences about men who were alive when he wrote but are not now with us, and the chart about finance to which he referred in the penultimate paragraph, and which is now out of date.

The present Editors of "Echoes of Service" have pleasure in reproducing these pages in the belief that the conclusions reached by Rendle Short when he wrote the book are as valid today as when they were recorded in 1921.

## THE METHODS AND PRINCIPLES OF APOSTOLIC MISSIONS

IS success the best test of a work for God? That is to say, when large numbers are genuinely and visibly converted by the preaching of the gospel, or a flourishing church is built up, does that prove that the methods used were right and pleasing to God? Conversely, when the current of blessing runs low, does that prove that there is something radically wrong with the principles taught or means employed?

We often hear statements that would bear out these propositions. We are told that God cannot and will not bless this method or that, or that such and such an evangelist or preacher is so successful, as outward success visible on earth is counted, that criticism of his methods is disarmed. All this has a very important bearing on missionary work. Shall we examine the history of various modern missions, find out which shows the largest results, and confidently adopt its procedure as the best?

To this we suggest the reply, that neither Scripture nor experience teaches that immediate and visible success is the main criterion. There is no accurate parallel between it and faithful service or right methods. But both Scripture and experience do teach that in the long run faithful service and right methods *will* reap a good harvest, both on earth and in Heaven.

There is a remarkable absence in the New Testament, as far as I have noticed, of any clear passage to show that the number of souls converted under a preacher's ministry will be in proportion to his faithfulness. It is true that in the parable of the True Vine we are told "He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit," but this surely refers to the fruit of Christian character, love, joy, peace and the like, spoken of in Gal. v. 22. It is true that in Romans i. 13, "fruit" is mentioned in a way that may well refer to conversions, but it cannot be proved that this is the fruit referred to as growing on the True Vine. There is surely no reason to suppose that John was a preacher whose matter or methods were less pleasing to God than Peter's, yet we have no record that anybody was converted by John's public or private ministry. Although he uses the word "my children" in I. John

ii. 1, III. John 4, and elsewhere, it is such a favourite word with him that it cannot be taken as meaning that they were all led to God by his instrumentality. On the other hand, Peter's preaching in the Acts was extraordinarily successful. No doubt John *had* converts, though it is not definitely stated ; on the other hand, it is quite probable that his brother James had few if any. Yet when we remember the special favour which Christ showed James, it is difficult to suppose that he pleased God less than Paul did—yet Paul's service looks much the larger to us. When Paul himself is setting out the proofs of his apostleship, they are such as are described in II. Corinthians xi. and xii.—his sufferings, his patience, and his mighty works, not his converts. And finally, even our Lord Himself does not seem to have been extraordinarily successful, if success is to be measured merely by counting converts. Probably many modern Evangelists could reckon a greater number.

Experience and history surely tell the same tale. Martin Luther did a work of enormous value, but it is impossible to justify his acquiescence in the drowning of Baptists, or to accept all his theology. The methods and doctrine of William Carey and Francis Xavier in India and the Straits were diametrically opposed in some respects, yet both could show a considerable degree of outward success. Most pioneer missions, such as that of Gilmour in Mongolia, and the work described in chapter VII\*, have an initial period of about ten years in which the visible results are few, if any ; then, without any change in method or doctrine, a great tide of blessing may set in. Take two evangelistic missions in this country ; one is a huge success, and the other looks something very like a failure. Yet a careful analysis may show more faults in the matter preached and the methods used in the first than the second.

On the other hand, Scripture and experience do teach that a work that is pleasing to God will bring success visible on earth, in the long run, though not necessarily on such a scale as to throw into the shade something less faithfully executed. Paul says that his converts at Corinth are his epistle of commendation. Wherever he preached, some believed. "Your labour is not in vain in the Lord." "Let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Although three grains of the good seed fell into hopeless soil, the fourth produced a harvest. It is difficult in the whole history of foreign missions to find one, in which the labour was persevered with for ten years, and in which there was a measure of truth preached by men whose lives were clean and spirits earnest, without *some* conversions following, even in the hardest possible fields. The early Moravians in Greenland, Henry Richards in Banza Manteke, the first missionaries in the cannibal islands of the South Seas, Morrison in China, the Tierra del Fuego Mission, and many other examples go to show that this is true.

\*See paragraph 3 of Foreword

Well, if success is not the first thing to aim at in missionary or evangelistic service, what is? Surely, to preach the gospel in such a way as to please God. This demands a right spirit, and a right method. How can we know that our method is right? There can only be one safe guide. That will be—the pattern preserved for us in the New Testament. It is doubly safe-guarded. In the first place, the apostles were Divinely guided to use certain methods. In the second place, such of their methods as were to be a permanent example to the church down to the end of the dispensation, were written down for us by the Holy Spirit. The work of ten of the apostles, and nine-tenths of the work of Peter and Paul, goes almost unrecorded, not because it may not have been Divinely guided, but because its lessons were not of permanent importance for us. Moses was told, “See that thou make it (the tabernacle) after the pattern showed thee in the mount.” Paul wrote to the Corinthians “that ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written” (I. Cor. iv. 6). It is useless to plead that more modern methods of human invention may be more successful. “It is required in stewards that a man be found *faithful*.” It does not say successful.

It therefore follows that the missionary who wishes above all things to please God is most likely to do so if he makes a faithful following of the apostolic method his first concern, and lets the pursuit of success come second. Certainly the apostles strove might and main to win as many as possible that they might “by all means save some.” But there was something which came first; to follow the guidance of the Spirit.

Shall we therefore go back to the Book, and try to decipher, asking the Divine Author to guide us, what the methods and principles of apostolic missions were?

#### THE MISSIONARY'S CALL.

We find, first, that they were irresistibly attracted (that is, Divinely driven) to the places that were empty of the gospel. The wind bloweth where it listeth, but the wind has laws. It rushes into a vacuum. Every hurricane is caused by the wind hastening to an area of low atmospheric pressure.

How wonderfully this is illustrated in Nature. After a down-pour of rain the garden worms are out crossing even the hard tarred roads. Why? Because they, like every other animal, must continually be seeking some fresh abode where there shall be food and shelter not already taken possession of by other worms. This necessity to seek a far-away unoccupied soil is the key to all the marvels of plant-dispersion—the little wings of the wind-carried sycamore seed, the burr that sticks to the coat of a passing animal who may carry it and then rub it off a mile away, the ripe fruit of the plum or apple tempting some creature to take and eat the pulp, but throw away the stone or core. So Paul says,



"I must also see Rome." He took a pride in getting out beyond other men's plantings. This does not mean that he was for ever rushing from one new pitch to another. He was prepared to spend one or two years in a place, if necessary. Of course he had not to spend time learning a language; Greek would serve him everywhere. Yet mere need was never alone the call. Asia and Bithynia were just as needy as Macedonia, but it was to the latter they were guided by the Spirit.

We notice, next, that their message was essentially an evangelistic one. Slavery, an alien, cruel, and despotic government, and the horrible conditions of the great cities of Greece, Rome and Asia Minor—these were as poles asunder from the principles of the Kingdom of God, but the missionary embarks on no political reforms or agitations; he preaches the gospel. "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." The apostles used gifts of healing, but only as an adjunct to their main mission of personal evangelism. In this labour they were prepared to face even such a catalogue of hardship as those set out in I. Corinth. iv. 9-13, and II. Corinth. xi. Another aspect of their work there certainly was, namely that of raising up a local eldership in each church, and providing them with the written as well as the spoken word of God. Stones were not simply quarried out and left; they were built up into churches, and these had to be guided in worship and service along lines laid down by the Spirit in the Word.

How were the missionaries of the first century church chosen, sent out, directed and supplied? Was there a committee to select them, tell them where to go and what to do, and guarantee their support? Evidently they had the material ready to hand for such an organization. There was a council at Jerusalem, of which James was probably the most influential member, that might have been very suitable for the purpose. As we shall see, there were circumstances in which this body could and did select delegates, but not missionaries.

For our present enquiry we shall rule out the gospels and seek guidance only in the Acts and the Epistles, because there is evidence that the directions for evangelism changed somewhat after the Lord's death. Before that event, the disciples were told to preach only to Jews; afterwards, to go to all the world. On their previous journeys they had taken no supplies, and lacked nothing, "but now, he that hath a purse, let him take it" (Luke xxii. 36). It would be an interesting study, however, to see whether the main principles we are about to study would be altered by including the gospels in the scope of our enquiry. I think not.

With regard to the choosing and sending forth of missionaries, the key passages are Acts xiii. and xvi. 1-3. At Antioch there were five "prophets and teachers." The Holy Ghost took the initiative, and chose the two best, saying "Separate me Barnabas

and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." Paul never forgot that his call was of God.

"Christ, the Son of God, hath sent me  
To the midnight lands;  
Mine the mighty ordination  
Of the piercéd Hands."

Again and again he recurs to it (Acts xxvi. 17; Eph. iii. 7; Col. i. 25; I. Tim. i. 12-14, ii. 7).

But may not a man be mistaken as to the call of God, and think he is called to go forth when the Lord has not sent him? It is indeed possible, and therefore it is added that the church in Antioch shared in the responsibility. They "fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them," and "they sent them away" (or lit.—"let them go"). The laying on of hands was evidently a token of fellowship rather than of official ordination. Could a Lucius or Symeon or Manaen "ordain" a Paul or Barnabas? It was a token that they acquiesced in the call and in the new enterprise. Some months or years afterwards, when they perceived the grace that was given to these missionaries, Peter and James and John also gave them the right hand of fellowship, that they should go unto the Gentiles. Thus we have the call from the Holy Spirit, recognized not only by the candidates but also by the local church, and eventually by the elders of the larger church at Jerusalem.

The other model is found in the call of Timothy. Here was a much younger man. To him the agency by which the Voice came was evidently a direct invitation from Paul, and Timothy saw in it a word from the Lord. But that was not all. He was well reported of by the responsible brethren who knew him best in his own town, and in the neighbouring town of Iconium. Probably it was they who laid their hands on his head in token of recognition of his gift (I. Timothy iv. 14. The gift came not *by* but *with*, that is, it was acknowledged by the laying on of hands).

Again, Paul chose Silas, who was accredited by the Jerusalem church, to accompany him from Antioch, and they were commended by the brethren there.

The church at Jerusalem did not send Peter to Cornelius, or Philip to Samaria or to the desert. The guidance came direct from God in each case.

On the other hand, we do find in three instances, in which a work had already been started and what was needed was something to confirm and steady the faith of the converts, that the council of apostles and elders at Jerusalem with the concurrence of the church sent out delegates for that purpose with a sort of official message. They sent Peter and John to Samaria (Acts viii. 14), Barnabas to Antioch (xi. 22) and later Barsabas and Silas with Paul also to Antioch to communicate an important decision

(xv. 22). There seems to be a designed difference between the sending forth of these men by the apostles and elders to give sanction and blessing to a work already done, and the calling out by God, either directly or through the agency of a missionary's invitation, of the original evangelists.

It is noteworthy that the New Testament missionaries went forth two and two. In some cases it was husband and wife; apparently Peter, James and Jude took their wives (I. Corinth. ix. 5). In others, it was two brethren—Peter and John, Barsabas and Silas, Paul and Barnabas, Paul and Silas, Barnabas and Mark, Paul and Titus, Timothy and Erastus (Acts xix. 22), Titus and a brother unnamed (II. Corinth. viii. 18).

It is also worth noting that when a church like that at Antioch has commended missionaries in their going forth, they return to that same church to give an account of their labours.

#### THE MISSIONARY'S CONTROL AND SUPPORT.

What can we learn as to the degree of control exercised over the missionaries? There is no evidence at all that Paul or his companions were directed by the churches at Antioch or Jerusalem, or by any council of elders. The guidance came direct from God. A study of Acts xvi. 6-10 makes this very clear. When two brethren were working separately, the one, even a Paul, exercises no direct control over the other. Paul wanted Apollos to go to Corinth, but Apollos has his own leading of God and is evidently able to act quite freely in the matter (I. Corinth. xvi. 12). When, however, a younger man is working with a veteran, he is subject to him. Paul is continually "sending" Timothy or Titus and others. This, however, is not merely because the younger is a missionary. Even in the settled churches, the younger are told to be subject to the elder (I. Peter v. 5), and the assembly at Corinth is to be in subjection to Stephanas and those like him.

It would be a profitable study to collect the numerous passages in the Acts and Epistles showing how Paul guided the movements and services of his younger fellow-workers, and how readily they seem to have accepted his direction. This is surely intended to be a pattern to new missionaries going to an established station.

Finally, what about the missionary's support? Control and support always go hand in hand, both in business undertakings and in work for God. The more definitely a man or body of men support a worker, the more he will look to them for direction. So when his eyes are entirely on God for his support, he will expect his guidance from the same Source.

We are not surprised to find therefore that there is no trace in the New Testament of any individual or committee or church promising or guaranteeing a regular salary for any of the missionaries. This is not because the subject of the worker's support



is kept out of sight. As a matter of fact, there is a great deal said about it. The key passages appear to be 1. Corinthians ix. and Philippians iv. 10-18, though there are a number of incidental notices besides. In the Corinthians passage the principle is laid down that the labourer is worthy of his hire, and the ox deserves a mouthful of the corn he treads out. This is applied to mean that when the missionary or teacher visits a local church, it is the business of that church to supply his needs. Evidently Peter and James and Jude and some of the apostles exercised this right, and not only received support for themselves, but for their wives. This brings up a very obvious difficulty when the preacher goes to a place where there is no church to support him. Either he must live on his converts, or abandon the mission, unless he has private means. We know that Barnabas and the apostles, at least, had put all their possessions into the common stock, so they had little or nothing of their own. This was evidently a real difficulty in the way of evangelism, because the objections to the missionary living on his justly-converted or unconverted hearers are plain to everybody.

Paul found two solutions, and used them both. The Holy Spirit has directed that a permanent record of them should be preserved for our guidance.

In the first place Paul, and it may be Barnabas also, was able and willing where necessary to work for his living. All Jews were taught a trade. "Whoso does not teach his son a trade," said one of the Rabbis, "teaches him to be a thief." So, although he was apparently being trained to be a Rabbi, he was also acquainted with the art of tentmaking. The staple manufacture of his native Tarsus was the weaving into tent-covers and garments of the hair of the enormous goat flocks of the Taurus mountains. It was not a highly skilled occupation, and it was malodorous and illpaid, but it had the advantage that it could be conducted in any town without much stock-in-trade, and though it occupied his hands it left his thoughts free, and if, as seems probable, his sight was often defective it would not seriously handicap him. Aquila was also a tentmaker, and in Corinth they went into partnership. Even so it was hard work to keep the wolf from the door (II. Corinth. xi. 9). Paul nobly persisted, because he would not have the efficacy of the gospel he preached discounted by any suspicion that he preached it for money. "It were good for me rather to *die*, than that any man should make my glorying void." At Ephesus, "I coveted no man's silver or gold or apparel. Ye yourselves know that these hands"—spreading them out, stained it may be with the marks of the black goat's hair—"ministered unto my necessities and to them that were with me." At Salonika, "Ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail, working night and day, that we might not burden any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God" (I. Thess. ii. 9.).

This is recorded as an example to be followed, and to some extent it has been followed in modern times. Given men with a Pauline determination and industry, probably it could be followed to a much greater extent. Positions in trade, in railways, in the civil service, in mines, in the teaching profession, and so on, in heathen countries might be occupied not by godless youths who fall a prey to every moral temptation, but by earnest Christians who seek to live and preach the gospel. *But*, and it is an important but, such a course makes great demands on spiritual and moral quality. Experience shows that there is more danger of shipwreck for such a one, than for the whole-time missionary. Also, in some countries it is frankly impossible to earn a living and also do missionary work, or one or two full-time labourers may be necessary to help the part-timers in pastoral or itinerant service.

These are no new difficulties. Paul found them also. No others of the first century missionaries, except perhaps Barnabas, were able to contribute much to their own support (I. Cor. ix. 6). In Corinth, at least, the method proved inadequate, and probably elsewhere. God therefore raised up for him another source of supply; Paul accepted it, and it is recorded for our guidance. The church at Philippi repeatedly sent him gifts (Phil. iv. 10-20) when he was at Salonika, and at Corinth and at Rome. Someone, perhaps Onesiphorus, must surely have helped him during his second imprisonment in Rome, and we know that Epaphroditus brought him a contribution during his first captivity there, and nearly died on the journey. Was it typhus, the old gaol fever, or a malignant Italian malaria, or what?

The whole of I. Corinthians ix. and Paul's commendation of the Philippians (iv. 14), and the exhortations to Christian giving in II. Corinthians viii. and ix., and John's encouragement of Gaius (III. John, 5-6), all show as clearly as possible that it is the duty of an established church and of individual Christians to help financially those who go out to preach the gospel amongst the heathen, and especially if the missionary has been a spiritual help to the church before he sets out. Surely the fact that Christ's command to go into all the world and preach the gospel, and the associated promise of His abiding presence, come not only to a select class but to the whole church; and the other fact that the church shares in the commendation and sending forth of the missionary, both establish a duty that they should support him who as their deputy does their work. It is not a question of charity to the worker, but of giving to the Lord.

Notice, however, the attitude of the missionary himself. First, he never begs. His wants are made known to God only. He acknowledges years afterwards that he had been in need and that their help was most opportune, but for the present he even dares to say that he has all things and abounds—surely not the way to encourage further gifts! How thoroughly the early missionaries

practised this is shown by the fact that in the next generation the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," written at the end of the first century, says that if a travelling preacher asks for money it shows that he is an impostor.

Next, he believes that so long as he is doing God's work, all his *needs* (not, perhaps, all he would *like*) will be supplied, though God may have to use ravens or a widow woman to feed him, and he is therewith content. "All things work together for good to them that love God." "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." "My God shall supply all your need" (note that this is said to donors). Thirdly, although he will not look to the heathen for his support—"for the sake of the Name they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles" (III. John 7)—yet he makes no difficulty about receiving food and clothing and fuel in the spirit in which it is offered, even from unbelievers, such as the barbarians of Malta who "showed us no little kindness." Paul could be quite sure that the barbarians would not feel that they were patronizing a preacher, or exercising the power of the purse over his message, as the people of Corinth would assuredly have done if he had been supported by them to any extent. So the Jews in Ezra's day accepted the gifts of a heathen king for their temple building, but when Sanballat wanted to help them in their work, and get into a position of having a voice in their worship and practice, they risked his bitter hostility and shut him out.

#### THE PRACTICAL CONCLUSION.

Supposing we wish to make a modern experiment in missions on Apostolic lines, what is the pattern we have to follow?

We have learned that there must be the reaching out to regions empty of the gospel. That the main method and purpose of the work must be evangelism, the raising up of a local church and native eldership, and imparting the written word of God. That the missionary's call comes from God, either directly or voiced by the invitation of an older missionary; that it is recognized by his fellow Christians in his own assembly as well as by himself, and by a neighbouring church (Iconium, as well as Lystra; Jerusalem as well as Antioch). That the Holy Ghost sends forth, and the Church acquiesces with full fellowship, but does not seek to exercise any control over the worker in the field. That younger missionaries are subject to elder. That financial support may come in part from the missionary's secular occupation, but that usually it is the duty and privilege of the believers who send him out also to forward money to support him. But that there is no promise or guarantee of a salary, and the worker looks to God, not to man, to keep him.

No doubt objections can be raised to following such a model—that there is no sense in it, or reason for it, that other methods of doing foreign missionary work have been wonderfully successful, that it is altogether too idealist, impracticable, that the workers will be in a state of chronic financial anxiety, that they and the work will inevitably starve.

Well, everything goes back to the main question, have we any right “to go beyond the things which are written”? Is not the New Testament example for us like the “pattern in the mount” to Moses? Why does the inspiration of God include so much personal detail, even to a few books and an old cloak left at Troas, if it is not that we too may learn how best to please our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in our service for Him? That missionary work conducted on other lines has been immensely blessed is true, and we rejoice in the success obtained and the souls saved; we wonder at and admire the splendid heroism of the pioneers of the gospel in India, and China, and Madagascar, and Africa, and Greenland, and the South Seas. But, once more, success is not the principal test of being pleasing to God.

That we may not here and now see a sufficient reason for God's laying down a particular programme for carrying out His work does not matter in the least. We can afford to wait to learn His reasons later. But this, at least, may be said: nothing would be more hopeless than for a few exiled Britishers to expect to shake the ramparts of heathenism, or win souls out of its terrific bondage, apart from the factor of Divine Power working with them. *Everything* depends on mobilizing the Divine factor. And if the missionary has a daily education in looking to God, trusting in God, for his financial needs, and in getting answers impressive and easily understood when God steps in to meet those needs, how much easier does it become to learn to look to Him and trust in Him also for needs in the much more difficult spiritual realm—for power over besetting sin, daily guidance, conversion of the unsaved, preservation of converts from backsliding, overcoming of the hostility of devil-possessed priests and the like!

Again, if the worker in a foreign land looks to God alone for supplies, it greatly reduces the danger of one entering or continuing in the field whom God has not sent. Scattered through “Echoes of Service” there are a very few notices of such, who, led by enthusiasm, mistook a call, found out the mistake only after spending a year or two in the mission field, and quietly dropped out or returned home.

Whether the ideal is impracticable, when God has called a man or a woman, it is the purpose of the following chapters to elucidate.\*

\*See paragraph 3 of Foreword

### GROWTH OF THE HOME BASE.

We have been considering so far\* the signs of God's blessing in the foreign field. Let us conclude by looking at the home base.

The nation has learned by costly lessons during the recent great war that it is useless to have a large striking force overseas unless they are properly backed at home. Food, munitions, money, transport, and sympathy must all be behind the army in the front line trenches. The same is equally true of a work of God overseas. It is one of the characteristics of His handiwork that everything is proportioned to the function for which He made it. The elephant's long heavy trunk demands a massive skull, a thick powerful neck, strong forelegs—and they are provided. The flexible fingers and thumb of a monkey's hand, almost human-like in its cunning and skill, would be useless without a highly developed brain and a wealth of nerve cells to control the delicate movements—and they are provided. It is a universal law in Nature. Therefore we may be sure that if a gospel testimony in other lands, remote from civilization, is a holy war of His organizing, spreading and extending according to His plan, He will also enlarge and develop the missionary spirit in the churches from which He designs to draw His labourers and their support.

This has been the case. There has been a steady growth in the British Isles, in America, and in Australasia, of missionary interest in the assemblies of God's children who have adopted the same principle of following the Apostolic pattern in work and worship that gave rise to the enterprise described in our previous chapters. The labourers have gone out looking not to men but to God to supply their temporal needs, but in His providence their financial support is furnished for the most part by the gifts, to Him, not to them, of His people at home. In the main these gifts have been forwarded direct from the giver to the missionary, and particulars will never be known on earth. Sometimes even the receiver did not know where the money came from. But it was manifestly impossible, as the number of missionaries increased, that those who realised their responsibility to support them should be conversant with all the labourers and all their varied needs. Also it was wasteful to forward small gifts from individual donors separately to remote parts. Hence the need for some means of collecting and publishing, with suitable editing, the missionaries' letters, and for some trustworthy agents for forwarding the donations and intelligently distributing the same when left to their discretion.

Does this savour of human organization and control—of that very system of committee government, sending forth, and guaranteed support which we failed to find a place for in the Apostolic pattern? Is there any New Testament precedent for it?

\*See paragraph 3 of Foreword

We venture to think that a few brethren may serve the church by forwarding gifts and advising as to their destination, and at the same time may carefully avoid either sending forth, or exercising control, or guaranteeing support. We think that only the uninstructed could confuse the two courses, and that there is New Testament precedent for the first, but not for the second. For instance, we find that the church at Phillipi used Epaphroditus as a forwarding agency to send their gifts in a lump sum to Paul, and that Tychicus was willing to make known, on behalf of the apostle to the church at Ephesus, "my affairs, and how I do" (Phil. iv. 18; Eph. vi. 21). And, in more detail, when the church at Corinth, and perhaps other Christians in Achaia, were minded to send a gift to the poor saints at Jerusalem, of some of whom it had been said that "they went everywhere preaching the Word," we learn that Paul advised them as to the need, and sent Titus and another brother "whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches," and probably a third, to receive the money, and to bring it to Paul to take to Jerusalem. We find that it was to be regarded as a love-gift to God; neither Paul nor Titus making any harrowing appeals or telling tales of great privation, nor do they propose to trust to an enthusiastic meeting to get a big collection (I. Cor. xvi. 1, 2; II. Cor. viii., ix.).

For many years moneys were entrusted to Mr. George Muller, not only for the support of the Ashley Down Orphanage, but also for missionary work, and he and his successors have ever since distributed gifts to labourers who look to God alone for their support. By this means Leonard Strong and S. F. Kendall and the early workers in India, Spain and Italy were helped to some extent.

It was felt, however, that more was necessary—some means of making the missionaries' letters public, and someone ready to devote his whole time to studying their needs and forwarding any gifts. Both these were undertaken by Mr. James Van Sommer, of Reigate, who edited an occasional paper called the "Missionary Reporter," which ran from 1855 to 1862. The numbers from January 1st, 1858, to December 10th, 1861, are before me as I write. Most of them contain nothing but letters. The writers in the last number are R. Kingsland, T. Wiley, W. Bowden, E. Beer, John Chapman, A. Henderson (from Belize), and Col. Foquett of the Assam Mission. No account is given of the distribution of funds, but the editor offers to forward gifts. In the preface he says, "The object sought to be promoted by communicating such information is that churches and individual Christians may be aided in strengthening the hands of God's servants:—1st, by making definite prayer on their behalf; 2nd, by affording pecuniary assistance . . .; 3rd, by holding a direct correspondence with them, expressive of an affectionate sympathy and fellowship."



Then for ten years there was no missionary periodical. In 1872, Mr. Henry Groves, son of Anthony Norris Groves, converted and baptized in Bagdad, with Dr. Maclean, of Bath, published the first number of "The Missionary Echo," soon altered to "Echoes of Service in Many Lands." It was a small sheet of 16 pages, beginning with a word of ministry, and missionaries' letters following. The name "Echoes" is derived from I. Thess. i. 8.

As the work has grown so have the contributions, as the chart on next page will show. (See paragraph 3 of Foreword.)

If a simple calculation is made as to the amount that each worker would get if the money were equally divided between them, it will be quite clear that there would not be enough to provide for his or her needs, and a large part of their supplies has evidently been sent privately and remained unrecorded. It must be remembered that in addition to the missionaries there are their children to be supported. One is compelled to view the whole work as little less than a continuing miracle of God's faithfulness. The workers do not beg, nor do the editors of "Echoes" beg on their behalf. God hears their prayers, and moves those servants of His who have the privilege of answering them.

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