

assembled here, are trying to think for and with one another and to think constructively. Whenever women have been organized, they have aimed to do. I do not forget that band of militants of which we have heard. However, I have heard no objection raised to the part that the women have had in manufacturing bombs for use in this destructive war, organized and carried on by the men. The fact of the organization of women in other lands for constructive work has made me wonder whether it might not be possible in the Latin lands of which we are thinking, to get hold of the women. Several speakers have said that the women of the upper classes in South America are very willing to do organized work for general social welfare. Would it not be possible to induce some of them to organize for higher ends, as the women in North America organize? In North America women have by their organizations learned to do things in a way that would not have been possible had they not been organized. It might be a good plan if the women's Boards could take more account than they do of such women. The Society I represent, in its work among the Spanish-speaking people of the southwestern part of the United States has worked out certain ideas in Porto Rico, and some Spanish women are helping in our work. Their help is indirect, and still they are organized and are taking considerable interest in the work in Porto Rico. Possibly we should make the women of Latin America feel a certain share of interest and responsibility in the work done for their countries, thereby bringing unto our counsels some of the natural leaders.

THE CLOSING WORDS.

MRS IDA W. HARRISON, LL.D. (Lexington, Ky.): My closing words are necessarily a supplement to what has gone before and are therefore necessarily impromptu. The one time when we are told that Jesus was deeply moved in his spirit was when His critics came to Him and asked of Him a sign from heaven. They were already familiar with the signs from heaven that were daily unrolled before them. What they lacked was the open heart and diligent mind to read the meaning of the wonderful times in which they lived, and his comment was "Ye hypocrites, you can already read these signs from Heaven, but you cannot discern the signs of the times." This reproach of Jesus to these people of old might be uttered afresh to every generation since. It is always easier to accept the lore of the fathers and the traditions of the past than to understand and interpret the signs of our own times. Our God is a God of things as they are, and there is no place in His work for easy acceptance of things of the past and for blindness to the conditions of the days in which we live. No generation since the days when Our Lord was on the earth has witnessed swifter changes and greater needs for adjustment to new conditions than the difficult and complex times in which we live. The

Commission on Women's Work has attempted to pitch its report in the key of our own days, to do its work and thinking in twentieth-century terms. The meeting last night emphasized the home as the citadel of Latin life. We must not forget that women and children are thrust out of the home under modern conditions. The public schools and state universities are taking the place of education in the home and of the select private school. From six years of age to twenty or more, the child passes from kindergarten to university, from one highly specialized teacher to another. The old question, "What manner of child shall this be?" must be answered by the State, as well as by the parents of the child to-day. How important, then, that women should be in touch with those who control education!

Women are thrust out of the home by modern industrial conditions. Oliver Schreiner says, "Fully three-fourths of the ancient and honorable occupations of women have shrunk away forever and the remaining one-fourth still tends to shrink." These modern changes have brought perils especially to young women. The Commission advises cooperation with the many large women's organizations in order to develop a social conscience that will impel women to study conditions brought about by the education and industrialism of to-day, and to create in them a sense of responsibility for safeguarding the womanhood and childhood of the nation. Allusion has been made to the necessity of literature for women and children. Biographies of women who have been the incarnation of the types of modern endeavor are recommended, such as Florence Nightingale, the patron saint of the noble army of nurses; Elizabeth Fry, a pioneer in prison reform; Frances Willard, in temperance; Clara Barton, pioneer and founder of Red Cross work; Susan B. Anthony, advocate of women's suffrage; Jane Addams, in settlement work; and many other noble women of our day.

Emphasis has been laid upon the qualification and preparation of missionaries. We need women of faith, courage, adaptability, social gifts, thorough training and marked spirituality. We crave the finest and highest type of American womanhood to go to this great and promising field. Their method should be to teach the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and let it do its work, rather than to attack the Roman Catholic Church. The words of Melinda Rankin should be an example to us. She said: "It has been a fixed principle with me not to attack the Roman Catholic Church, but to present the truth and let that do its work. If you wish to enlighten a room, you carry a light and set it down in it, and the darkness will disperse of itself." A definite educational policy is recommended, which will make adequate provision for all ages, from the girl of tender years to the woman in the university—for kindergarten, primary, secondary, vocational and college training—not forgetting special training for Latin women as teachers, social and evangelistic workers. The necessity for higher Christian education for Latin

women has been emphasized by much that has been said at this Congress. No one Board is able to furnish the facilities and equipment for such education. It is recommended, then, that in large centers of population, where there are sufficient primary and secondary schools to provide a constituency the various mission boards cooperate to establish women's union colleges. Evangelistic work should include the old lines of Bible women's work, district nursing, visitation in the homes, the following up of students of mission schools, and other methods of personal approach. In addition to this, wherever the way is open, women evangelists should seek to reach the women and children by teaching and preaching, and to carry the gospel message, not only to our missions but to the great unevangelized fields of Latin America. What Miss Coope has said this morning in regard to her work among the Indians on the Isthmus is an example of what women can do in this line. As far as possible, Latin-American women should be employed in the social, evangelistic, and educational work of the mission. If the women of this great domain are to be reached and helped in any large way, it must be mainly done by their own country women. In view of all that has been said and many things yet unsaid, we feel that there must be large increase in all the lines of social service, education, and evangelization. The numbers of missionaries and teachers must be increased. The plants now in operation must be enlarged and more fully equipped and the great unoccupied fields in this continent of opportunity must be entered and evangelized.

THE REPORT OF COMMISSION VI
ON
THE CHURCH IN THE FIELD

Presented to the Congress on
Friday, February 18, 1916

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THE REPORT OF COMMISSION VI ON THE CHURCH IN THE FIELD

CHAPTER I

THE ORGANIZED INDIGENOUS CHURCH

I. ITS DEFINITION AND SIGNIFICANCE

By "Church" as used in this Commission Report we mean the indigenous bodies of Christian believers of the evangelical faith and practice growing up in the field under consideration.

We rejoice that there is such a Church in this great field. The fact of its existence has made this gathering of Christian workers possible and necessary. The welfare of this Church and plans for its better establishment, for its more rapid growth, and for the deepening of the springs of its spiritual life, must form the basis of the larger part of our discussions. So far as it is possible for statistics to give an adequate impression of the strength of this Church, such impression will be gained by the study of the summary showing membership, property, native preachers, Sunday schools, institutions, and much other information prepared with great labor by Commission I, on "Survey and Occupation." The entire exhibit is fully set forth in the third volume of the Congress Report.

2. ITS GENUINE STRENGTH AND INFLUENCE

Readers of such statements regarding the growth of the Church in the field should remember that those who are reported as members are far from representing the entire strength of the churches. Back of these tens of thousands stand double or triple their total of friends, sympathizers and adherents. These are convinced of the truth of our message. Many of them have been convinced for years. They worship with us, their children are in our Sabbath schools, and many of these will come into the Church in the future. The reasons that hinder the consummation of membership are such as usually operate in new fields. Many of the members are from the poorer and less cultured classes of society, where steady ecclesiastical, political and social pressure is brought to bear against them. In such circumstances it is natural that our membership should be less in numbers than the actual body of those who not only believe our doctrines and accept our principles of life, but also support them and assist in a greater or less degree in propagating them. From this large body of more or less loosely attached adherents a part of our increase naturally comes, and each year witnesses the addition of new friends and sympathizers from whom, in turn, recruits are gained as the years go on.

It must be kept in mind in any fair appraisal of the strength of the Church in Latin America that, as a social force, it is influential out of all proportion to the number of its membership. This is true because "the kingdom of God is as leaven," and it is of the nature of leaven—though small in bulk in comparison to the meal in which it is hidden away—to permeate steadily the remainder of the whole mass and to bring it into conformity with its own nature. Ideas are powerful, and the evangelical Churches in Latin America possess these germinal ideas of truth regarding sin and its cure, the ethics of the daily life, and the life to come, which have won their way in every country against all obstacles confronting them. This minority will yet leaven the whole lump.

The Commission presenting this report wishes to call attention to the great difference which exists between it and the report presented by the parallel Commission at the World Missionary Conference. There the religious divisions called for treatises which, although still incomplete, filled hundreds of printed pages. In this report we are dealing with three great divisions of beliefs: the first is represented by the pagan tribes of the aborigines; the second is represented by those whose historical development is the result of a special type of Christianity; the third is the evangelical, the institutional growth of which in the midst of the other two types is the occasion for our study. Our problem is a very great one, yet much more simple than the one presented at Edinburgh in 1910.

3. ITS AGGRESSIVE POSSIBILITIES

The evangelical Church in the field is practically a new force. It did not exist when the first missionaries landed and began their work. The visible agency was then the foreign missionary and such aids in the way of literature and helpers as he could bring with him. But now, early in the twentieth century, we find ourselves in possession of a new agency, the organized Church. This force is so new that it is not yet fully understood, and not being understood it falls far short of being efficiently utilized. The planting and development of this Church is the true object of wise foreign missionary endeavor. We cannot hope to render the service that we owe to Latin America exclusively by means of foreign agencies. The task is beyond us. The aim has been, and must continue to be, to raise up an indigenous Church, all the time saying in our hearts: "This must increase, but we must decrease." The leaders must make a fresh estimate of this new agency, must understand its difficulties, see its opportunities, and aid as best they may in marking out the different ways along which it may go forward toward the accomplishment of the larger purposes of God. Grateful as we are for the evident blessing of God upon the efforts put forth in Latin America up to the present time, there may be some stand-

ing here in this Congress who shall not taste of death until this infant evangelical Church of 257,000 members has grown to at least a million, and until strong, self-supporting churches in all parts of these lands are not only raising up their own sons and daughters for the ministry and lay membership for their local societies, but are in turn furnishing workers for the campaigns of Christ among the pagan Indian populations about them.

CHAPTER II

ITS MEMBERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION

I. THE RACIAL COMPOSITION OF THE CHURCH

The membership of the Church in the field falls into several racial groups. In Mexico, Central America and South America, the population has been gathered from two principal sources: first, there are the inhabitants of Indian origin who are native to the several republics, and secondly, the immigrants, these being chiefly Spanish and Portuguese, who form the largest part of the population, having immigrated several centuries ago, with the more recent addition of the Italians, Dutch, British and Germans, who have come during the last hundred years and form about five percent. of the population. In Brazil, the West Indies, Central America and other parts, a negro element is prominent. Throughout the entire field little impression has been made upon the Indian population, principally because little has been done to master their languages and to utilize siege methods through schools, printing-presses and hospitals, as well as through churches. From a social viewpoint, church membership comes largely from what would be called the lower classes and former Romanists.

There is a far greater degree of homogeneity in this membership than might be expected on first consideration. First, with the exception of some immigrational additions of later years, it is racially Latin and Indian,

the West Indies, Central America and Brazil adding a variant of African blood but little encountered in other countries. In Mexico, Central America and the Spanish republics of South America, members come into the evangelical churches with either Spanish or Indian blood predominating. In some communities the one predominates, and in communities often not far removed, the other. It comes as a matter of surprise to many workers in those fields to learn that the element from which they draw their members is more Indian than Spanish. The extent to which the Indians of the Andean plateau, of the Brazilian coast and uplands, and of Central and Southern Chile, as well as of Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay and Mexico have contributed of their blood to the composite peoples among whom this work is carried forward, would form a fascinating subject for the ethnologist and for the student of social phenomena in general.

In lands outside Brazil, and, to some extent, even in that country, much that is commonly understood to be Latin is Moorish. The strong bent given to the Spanish mind during the centuries of Moorish rule registers itself in many ways in the daily life of those who are accounted Castilians. Their architecture takes on Moorish types. Politeness and courtesy, in the extreme forms sometimes met with, strongly suggest the same origin. This influence over the membership of the evangelical churches is one that should not be disregarded by educators or evangelists and particularly by administrators of Christian work. It demands both comprehension and great patience. When understood, it furnishes a ready explanation for some temperamental, domestic, social and even religious phenomena otherwise most baffling to our minds.

2. ITS MORAL AND SPIRITUAL ANCESTRY

a. *Unfamiliarity with the Scriptures.*

The membership of the Latin-American evangelical Churches is not characterized by those religious ideals which are the common property of the majority of converts who unite with evangelical Churches in Anglo-

Saxon lands. The Latin Americans are not acquainted with the Scriptures. The pagan ancestry of this membership had no sacred or other book of any kind, and their Roman Catholic teachers have laid little stress upon Biblical instruction. The preacher constantly finds himself unable to use familiar Scriptural illustrations. These are not understood. The Sunday-school teacher cannot safely take it for granted that one child out of twenty knows about Samson, David or Daniel or about the leaders of the New Testament.

b. Inadequate Conceptions of Sin.

With the current of Indian blood in the membership have come no just ideas of sin, no deep hatred of its defilement, and no idea that it is ever possible to live free from its contamination. It would seem that little has been done by their later spiritual guides to remedy the defect. One's heart overflows with a great pity as he thinks of the blight which has come to the intellect, to the conscience, to the domestic relationships, and to life as a whole through the idolatries and fetishism of the millions of Indians with whom we are trying to deal. It should curb our impatience and teach us to hold a loving and Christlike attitude toward those in whose mental and spiritual lives there is no helpful contribution from the past, whose tendencies are against the high objects which we seek.

When we turn to those who have received their early training chiefly from the Roman Catholic Church, one correspondent declares that the prime obstacle in missionary work among that section of Latin America is a wholly inadequate conception of sin and a lack of any horror of it. There is little popular support in dealing with moral issues and reforms. Dissimulation is the law of life. Everything is excused on the plea of temperament, precedent, or custom. The masses know nothing of an independent and inflexible moral standard. With such an environment it goes without saying that many church members will retain certain lineaments of their former selves and will need instruction

and correction along many lines. The same correspondent later speaks of "the emotionalism, responsiveness and demonstrativeness of the Latin temperament," and every experienced worker will be ready to confirm these views.

c. Laxity as Regards Marriage.

Another condition affecting the work of the evangelical Churches is the practice with respect to marriage which prevails among large elements of the population in many of the lands. The systems of contract marriage and of open concubinage have become appallingly prevalent. In one city in the Argentine Republic, sixty-two percent. of the births in a five-year period under report were illegitimate, although the rate in Buenos Aires is not much more than thirteen percent. In Santiago, Chile, the percentage in 1911 was fifty-five; in Concepcion, fifty-seven. It is said of a certain town in Colombia that "half the children are returned as illegitimate, and the editor of the leading paper insisted the proportion is near three-fifths."¹ The same authority goes on to say, "At Lima, through a series of years, the proportion of 'natural' children has been fifty-one percent. The Peruvian statistician, Fuentes, writes of the 'sad picture' Lima presents and adds, 'a shocking proportion of the people avoid marriage and live in a complete libertinage, which increases as one descends the social scale.'" One missionary says: "In Peru marriage is considered a luxury for the rich. Even civil marriage is costly. The poor regard each as unobtainable." In speaking of Bolivia, Professor Ross quotes an American long resident there as saying, "Among the cholos here there is very little marriage. . . . In the relation between man and woman there is very little steadfastness or loyalty, while in the community there is no crystallized moral sentiment regulating the conduct of the individual. Social standards do not exist, so each does about as he likes." He further says, "In Colombia and Ecuador it is frequently declared that many loyal couples live

¹ E. A. Ross, "South of Panama," 225, ff.

unmarried owing to the high cost of the church marriage. Eight dollars, the minimum fee, is a serious charge for a peon earning a few cents a day. . . . Yet, after such allowances are made, the marriage institution appears to be weaker on the west coast of South America than in any other Christian land, in the Mussulman countries or in the societies of India, China and Japan."

3. ITS PRESENT ORGANIZATION

a. *Still Denominational.*

In organization, this membership falls somewhat naturally into the denominational groups whose leaders brought them their first knowledge of evangelical truth. Thus we have the same types of church organization which prevail in North America and Great Britain—Presbyterian, Baptist, Congregational, Methodist, Episcopal and others—with which all students are already familiar.

b. *The National Share in the Administration of Funds.*

Until within the last decade there has been little recognition of the duty of missionary leaders and administrators to admit members of the native churches to the various boards and committees through which the administration of foreign missionary money and church discipline is carried on, and it is needless to say that even among the missionary body may be found those who are rather conservative with respect to devolving such large responsibilities on an immature Church, yet nothing has been made more clear by the scores of communications which have reached the Commission than that the Church in the field should be given a larger share in the initiation and prosecution of the common task than has been accorded it hitherto.

A valued correspondent who has had large experience on the mission field in China urges this important step, as follows:

"No more marked indication of the new day in missionary organization has manifested itself than through the new methods of missionary administration on the for-

eign field. In a not very distant past the control of the field was vested in the foreign missionary. It is with a great deal of gratitude that the leaders of the modern movement see that old day passing. The Episcopal and Congregational forms of government continue to find their varied expressions on the mission field. Until most recent times, it was really an unheard-of thing, except in very rare instances, to have other than the foreign missionary or the foreign bishop in control. If the wisdom of the present generation had been put into practice at an earlier time, many of the independent movements of the foreign field would have been avoided. It is still maintained by some administrators that the missions on the foreign field are to be controlled by the missionaries rather than mutually guided. But an impossible condition arises when any foreign missionary takes the position that he must control the native Church. From that moment division or utter dependence is engendered or cultivated. The new method of control is welcomed by every sane leader of the native Church. The native leader knows instinctively that the missionary has back of him superiority of training and of experience. It should never come into the mind of the missionary leader that he is more than a counselor and a friend. The native people are essentially reasonable, if they feel that there is a real friendship on the part of the leader, but if they think that he is trying to exercise authority, they follow the usual inclination of human nature and go to any length in resenting it. The changes that native leadership has wrought are marvelous. Some years ago a small mission in China was having a serious struggle over the question of whether the native Church should have a representative on the committee on administration. One of the chief objections made had reference to the control of the finances. It was felt that any native leader would become a special pleader for larger salaries for his own people, and would be unreasonable when it came to the question of financial regulations for those of his own nationality. It was a genuine surprise to the advocates of the plan when,

after election, he became the most conservative member of the committee regarding the advancement of salaries, and the severest man on discipline on the committee. He brought an interpretation of his own people to the intimate meetings of the committee that no other individual could bring. It was indeed a revelation even to the oldest and most experienced. This isolated incident is typical of the condition that exists to-day in the foreign field. Autocratic management of the native Church has passed forever. The lack of independence in many missionary fields can be traced almost entirely to this cause. The most important problem that faces a missionary executive, be he foreign or native, is to develop the native Church. Some one has well stated that the world has become a neighborhood and it remains for the Church to make it a brotherhood.

"There are three things that we must do with the native Church: Trust it; put responsibility upon it, and enlarge its sphere of activity.

"1. The native Church has been greatly hindered because it has not always been trusted in the past. We have looked with suspicion upon it because its members were weak and because their abilities were limited. I trust that the day has passed forever when there will be other than the greatest confidence in the native Church, even though the members are not as strong as we feel they should be.

"2. Responsibility should be put upon it. The church members should not be treated as children, but as men. They may fail in many respects, but growth can come only by actual service. By the doing of the task they will become strong.

"3. We must enlarge its sphere of activity. The native Church in many cases is in real danger of losing all missionary fervor, because of the fact that its local task is emphasized. Broad vision must be given it, and though its own work is tremendous and trying, it must be taken out of itself by giving it other tasks."

What has been so well said out of the experience of the missionary in China would be echoed by many a

missionary in Latin America. It must not be forgotten that a young Church or group of Churches must first develop educated, clear-thinking, responsible, considerate leaders before the assumption of entire freedom can be safe and salutary.

c. Experiments in Independence.

Several Communion find that it has proved advantageous to advance Latin-American leaders to the same ministerial standing as that enjoyed by the ministers who come from foreign countries, when these Latin Americans meet the prescribed tests. In a number of instances the Latin-American clergy have been appointed on committees charged with the making of appointments to pastorates and with the distribution of funds granted by the Boards, a policy which has worked remarkably well. This is in accord with the policy long ago adopted on many other foreign fields.

The question of the establishment of Churches made up wholly of national members and ministers and entirely cut off from support, direction or guidance in any form by the Boards and Churches which brought them into being has not, in any serious fashion become a mooted topic throughout Latin America. There are two Presbyterian groups of Churches in Brazil, each of which offers an interesting example of progress. One of them, while maintaining ecclesiastical fellowship with the mother Assembly in the United States, is now practically independent of the supporting Board in New York, which largely limits its responsibility to the supplying of a certain amount of money each year to be appropriated for the weaker churches on the usual home missionary plan, ten percent. of the grant being cut off each year. Missionaries cooperate with the Brazilian Presbyterian Church by developing new fields which are turned over to the Church. In every other respect the Church has full control of its own activities, the missionaries, in the main, having no official connection with it. The other Church in Brazil is independent both financially and administratively.

d. Conditions of Membership.

The conditions of membership are more nearly uniform than might at first be supposed. Evangelical workers from every part of the field report that some form of testing is indispensable before the enrolment of converts as full communicants. It is wise to enrol them as catechumens for a preliminary period of instruction. Of course, the demand is everywhere made for faith in Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord, and for evidences of conversion. There are two dangers to guard against with reference to the conditions demanded before members are received. The one is an extreme of caution which chills and repels the timid but earnest seeker after truth, and the other is an overeagerness for numerical results which prevents that careful scrutiny of motive and life which alone can protect the infant Church from being filled up with men and women who at the best are "stony ground" hearers, and at the worst are designing enemies. A zealous evangelist once baptized within one month two hundred people who had never previously heard the gospel message. Six months later not one of these remained and all would seem to have been worse off than before. In Latin America practically all applicants for membership in evangelical Churches except those from Indian tribes have been reared under the same general religious, social and political conditions, and require for their sound religious training similar methods.

Conditions of membership are embarrassed by some special circumstances. Ideas regarding Sunday observance, gambling, the marriage relation and temperance have led to standards that are quite different from those which are current in other Christian lands. Many offer to connect themselves with the Church, counting themselves already Protestants merely because of an antagonism which they have conceived against Roman Catholicism. They do not even pretend to have broken away from their sins, or to have entered into any kind of Christian experience. Such, however, are not given recognition by most evangelical Churches. The meeting of

all these varying needs requires the loving spirit of Jesus Christ rather than a rigid set of rules, and the fixed determination to take every means to keep the Church free from the evils against which it must continually bear its witness.

c. The Need of Enlisting the Educated Classes.

There is a growing conviction that the Church in not giving more attention to the needs of the cultured class generally and of students in particular is neglecting those whose need is unquestionable, whose desire for the truth has been demonstrated and whose influence for good or evil is out of all proportion to their numbers. The feeling is increasing also that whatever may be the risk of producing class distinctions in the churches through specialized effort, the hazard is still greater if men of high social standing and influence are not won to the open confession of Christ. They need the gospel quite as much as do the humble and poor. Apparently past experience has shown conclusively that the cultured class is not readily reached through the general methods of approach hitherto used. On the other hand, the little specialized work conducted for this class, scattering and utterly inadequate as it has been, is so encouraging in its early aspects that it has had the endorsement of all who have been acquainted with it. The educated classes make quick response to appeals and considerations in which they are naturally interested. These and other considerations are leading thoughtful laborers, both Latin-American and foreign, to seek the way to some form or forms of specialized effort in the interest of the cultured class. Exactly what form this specialized work should take is not at present apparent. That such work should be thoroughly in harmony with the general spirit of the work of the evangelical Church goes without saying; that it must be, in its incipience at least, unconventional in its type seems demanded by the varying legal and social conditions which it would have to meet to be successful. That it should be under the guidance of the wisest and most sympathetic leadership at

the command of the Church is conceded. One of the greatest hindrances, hitherto, has been the lack of amply educated native Christian teachers and leaders, able to meet cultured men on their own ground.

CHAPTER III

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE CHURCH

I. THE STANDARDS OF JUDGMENT

Much variation of opinion regarding the present status of spiritual life in the Churches throughout Latin America is manifest in the contributions received by the Commission. It is difficult to make clear the total impression received from these. Some correspondents write in a pessimistic vein. Others speak with almost glowing hopefulness of the present spiritual attainments of the membership of the Churches and express the confident belief that they are but the beginning of what will be a great spiritual forward movement. Any estimate must take into account two distinguishing facts which must affect the judgment of those who attempt to interpret the spiritual conditions throughout this field. First and foremost is the possibility of raising expectations too high. It is easy to underestimate the discouraging conditions from which members come into the evangelical Churches, and the low moral standards and lack of spiritual ideals prevailing about them. It is easy to contrast the meagre spiritual attainments of converts who have no background of Scriptural knowledge and no advantage derived from generations of evolution in spiritual and ethical affairs, with the attainments in grace and the elevation of moral standards which obtain in the best church life in older evangelical communities. It has been

well said that the true test of spiritual attainment is not made by measuring the distance of the individual from the goal toward which he is being urged, but rather the distance which he has travelled. We should compare the spiritual state of members throughout Latin America with their former state rather than with the condition of those who have been more fortunate in regard to spiritual opportunity. The second danger lies in an easy optimism which overemphasizes all signs of grace in the newly recruited member. All who have read the missionary literature produced in the form of reports, accounts of individual conversions, etc., in the earlier days of missionary effort, will understand what is here meant. The impression was made upon the minds of those who heard or read these reports that the new converts had attained a high state of Christian experience at a bound, quite shaming the slower progress of older Christian communities. Later it often became necessary to bear testimony to the ephemeral character of this experience. The only fair and final test of Christian progress is that which our Lord imposed, "By their fruits ye shall know them." All other tests fail to appraise or recognize and distinguish spiritual growth.

2. THE TESTS OF GENUINENESS

a. *An Ethical Sensitiveness.*

A great battle must be waged before the membership of the Christian Church at large is likely to gain what Dr. Speer calls "a certain hard veracity" in the contacts of daily life or a sensitive conscience in matters affecting personal purity and the sacredness of the family relationship. These Christians in the forming are surrounded by an atmosphere of moral indifference. Converts to whom the Apostle Paul addressed his letters were hindered by the habits and tendencies of the life from which they had come into the primitive Church and by the example of those still living in sin all about them. So true was this that Paul found it necessary to write to the church in Ephesus, exhorting them "to put away lying, and speak every man truthfully to his neighbor," while the darker

sins which had stained their past were plainly and lovingly rebuked. It must be admitted with shame that these sins are still prevalent and in other places than Ephesus. There is much to be said for the helpfulness of an ethical environment in the processes of character building, and converts whose lot is cast where a vigorous ethical tone characterizes the churches of their choice have a decided advantage, whatever be their nation or name.

b. Conformity to Christian Standards.

It is encouraging and inspiring to record the achievements which have been attained in spite of obstacles, either inevitable in all character building or interposed by a hostile ecclesiasticism. Scores of men have given up lucrative businesses of various kinds because they would not work on the Lord's Day, or because the giving or receiving of bribes was demanded by those who employed them or by inescapable conditions in the business itself. Others have restored money unlawfully taken. Some have banished liquor from their stores, thereby losing many of their most profitable customers, while every worker of experience could give particular instances where unlawful family relations have been ended by a marriage which was in itself a public confession of former wrong-doing, not easy for those who made it.

c. The Endurance of Persecution.

To those whose experience in actual work is measured in decades rather than years, one of the most satisfactory evidences of inner spiritual transformations is furnished by the readiness of disciples to endure persecution and to suffer loss for Christ's sake. While this is not to be regarded as in any sense an ultimate test, it would take much hardihood to deny that those who a year or two ago could not be induced even to attend a service or to be seen visiting the home of a missionary, much less to take any public stand or to participate in any way in a public service, have undergone a true spiritual change affecting fundamentally their whole life, when they now do all these things freely,

eagerly, and with evident joy that they are counted worthy to bear the cross. Entire volumes could be written showing persecutions ranging all the way from malicious libel and the petty social slights and business boycotts which are the commonplace experiences of new members, up to imprisonment in public jails for months at a time. This kind of warfare is met by the membership of the Church in the field in the spirit of good soldiership. Those who have once identified themselves openly with the Church are rarely known to have permitted persecution to swerve them from their loyalty to Christ.

d. Attendance on Public Worship.

If attendance upon the stated public worship of the several churches can be taken as a barometer of spiritual life, even here the members of the Church in the field do not suffer by contrast with the membership in other lands. When one considers that this matter of regular attendance upon public services consisting usually of extemporaneous prayer and preaching has not been expected of the membership in the past, it is truly gratifying to have so many evidences reach us from widely separated points that the attendance upon these services is for the most part encouraging to the workers. In many of the churches a considerable proportion of the membership is found at every preaching service and at prayer-meeting and other public functions of the church, attending in all five or six services a week.

e. The Habitual Use of Prayer.

The prayer life of the growing Church should reveal to us more clearly the advancement in spiritual things than any test thus far mentioned. If the prayer-meeting is a spiritual barometer of the Church, then it must be admitted that the spirituality of the Church in the field is perhaps deeper than at home, for the attendance is greater and the praying more spontaneous in the former than in the latter. If one should judge by this

alone, he would be forced to concede the deeper spirituality to the mission field. However, many factors besides spirituality or the lack of it determine one's presence in the prayer-meeting. The greatest difficulty is not in getting people to pray, but in getting them to realize the true significance of prayer, as the attitude that brings the soul into the presence of its Creator, where it is filled and strengthened by His power. One of the first impressions gained by an acquaintance with evangelical Christianity in Latin lands is the large number of church members who lead in public prayer, but on closer acquaintance the observer may begin to feel that prayer with many of them is rather perfunctory. Some persons converted late in life find it hard to free themselves entirely from earlier influences. They no longer cling to the idea that there is merit in mere repetition, but their spiritual vision is clouded to such an extent that they are unable to realize the close union that exists between the Father and His child or to enter into that sweet fellowship which makes the union complete.

f. Activity in the Study of the Bible.

An additional proof of the genuine spiritual life among many Latin-American Christians is seen from their customs of reading and studying the Bible. Many new converts put older Christians to shame by the assiduous way in which they drink at the living springs of revelation. Many of them who are relatively unlettered experience a freshness and novelty in the Scriptures seldom encountered in members of older Christian congregations. In the Church at large, however, there is the same lack of personal Bible study which is encountered everywhere.

g. An Increased Evangelistic Activity.

It is not so easy to arrive at just conclusions as to the spiritual status of the membership by the evangelistic activities in which they appear willing to participate. The larger number of those who are ready to take an active part in aggressive evangelization are far more

ready to denounce evil ways than to instil righteous purposes. There is, however, a steady increase of true evangelistic zeal. It is taking the place of what in an earlier day, and in some parts of the field until the present time, has been the more negative method of opposing the religious beliefs of those among whom the work is carried on. Here, as in every department of such life, leadership decides the outcome. A member of the Commission writes from Brazil: "A deeply spiritual pastor tends to make a deeply spiritual church, and a spiritual church, if properly led, inevitably becomes an intensely aggressive church. The ability of an army to win victories on the field is determined more perhaps by the ability of its officers than by the men in the ranks. There are churches composed of promising material which have become effective in the work of evangelization through sheer force of leadership. On the other hand, here as elsewhere in the world, there are churches composed of promising material but which are most inefficient for lack of leadership. Our greatest need in Latin America is for competent, aggressive, Spirit-filled leadership. Our people are willing to follow where such leadership is found taking part in personal evangelism, in tract distribution, in the holding of cottage prayer-meetings, and in the manifold activities of church up-building. The discovery and training of such leaders brings us to the very heart of the problem of the truly spiritual Church, through which alone the evangelization of this field will become possible. In every age and in every nation, since the day of Pentecost, true spirituality in the churches has been secured when those who were called of God to be spiritual leaders were filled with the Holy Spirit, and whose word came to the people not "in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." A ministry commended from on high, with lips touched with a burning coal from off the altar of God, is the divinely chosen means for bringing about a spiritual Church.

3. HINDRANCES AND HELPS TO GROWTH IN SPIRITUALITY

There is a serious lack of suitable devotional literature in the Spanish and Portuguese languages. One correspondent writes: "Notwithstanding an extremely limited number of special books, we have been able to accomplish much by placing in the hands of our people such as existed. The avidity with which our people devoured what literature we were able to supply shows what a vast influence good reading would exert not only in the intellectual and moral development of the people, but in deepening their spiritual life as well." Another writer urges the preparation of brief spiritual booklets on devotion and recommends their publication in a form which can be easily carried in the hand or pocket.

Many of the members of the Churches have little or no sense of personal responsibility in the performance of their ordinary church duties. They have been brought up to feel that the Church will go on, whether those that compose it actively cooperate or not. Many evangelical converts accept official positions in their church, as deacons, Sunday-school teachers or officers, and yet attend to their duties only when they have an inclination to do so. Their children attend the Sunday school as often as they please and no oftener, and they do this without being rebuked by their equally negligent parents. This unfortunate lack of personal responsibility is a serious hindrance in true spiritual growth.

Leaders should have a deepening confidence in the power of the Holy Spirit to produce a perfect New Testament Church whose members live in the Spirit, walk in the Spirit and show in their lives the necessary fruits of the Spirit. No pastor or leader can hope to raise his people to a higher spiritual level than that on which he himself walks. Lack of faith here is fatal. It is even more necessary that the entire membership should be definitely enlisted in some form of aggressive work for Christ. The principal aim of every intelligent pastor should be to set every member to work. Every member who is not interested in some branch of Christian work will very likely soon be lost to the Church. By the em-

ployment of these varied methods, the problem of self-propagation will have been solved, and the spiritual life and missionary spirit of the Church will have been aroused to its highest pitch through the spiritual life and activity of each member coming fully to realize what is his duty to God and to the dying world round about him.

CHAPTER IV

PRACTICE AND DEVELOPMENT

I. THE LATIN CHURCHES NO MERE IMITATORS

So vast is the area over which the Church in the field is developing and so fundamentally do the social and political conditions surrounding the several groups of evangelical communities differ that a helpful summary of the activities of the churches is very difficult. Many of the usages of public worship which have been found wise and beneficial in the United States and Europe are not practical in Latin America. Many of the converts are not sufficiently well trained to participate in any form of elaborate ritual, however desirable. In some places the opposition of outsiders has been so intense and unyielding that song could not be largely used in stated worship. Again and again, those who have visited humble churches in the interior of South America have heard the statement made, with what it may be hoped was pardonable pride, that the church was prospering and gaining a large influence among those who were formerly its enemies. Not infrequently the statement would be made, "We now sing hymns in the services and nobody molests us." A majority of the churches seem to have a marked preference for simple yet dignified services of public worship.

ings was most gratifying at all of the places named, and the results in conversions, in the awakening of Christians, and in new additions to the churches was sufficient proof that this form of evangelism is worthy of careful study and where practicable the plan should be tried throughout the field.

c. Evangelistic Campaigns.

When such campaigns as those of Mr. Sherwood Eddy in China are called to mind, it would be well to consider whether or not the time has arrived for trying out the evangelical possibilities of concerted interdenominational evangelistic services extended over weeks, or at least, over several days, in the stronger centers, under the leadership of men having a fine sense of local situations and able to speak to the people in their own tongue. It might be well to have in every region an evangelist at the service of the churches, trained also to organize the converts he has made.

d. The Support of Aggressive Evangelization.

One of the surest signs that the Church in the field is moved by the Apostolic spirit is the way it is seeking to contribute its fair share to the great cause of world missions. Not only do many churches send an annual contribution to the Board which has assisted them, but in several instances they have taken the initiative in work on behalf of other peoples. Five years ago a group of Christians of one communion organized a Board of Missions, raised among the churches a fund of \$1,000 a year, appointed two of their number and sent them in true apostolic fashion to three of the Indian tribes of central Mexico. They have administered their own funds, and have supervised their own work with creditable skill. This organization has also sent an annual contribution for the last seven years to help sustain an independent work in the republic of Chile. In Brazil a group of churches commissioned one of their best-trained native pastors to carry the message of salvation back to the mother country.

c. Personal Work.

The winning of new converts is effected in many instances not by public preaching or by ordained ministers, but by the fervent testimony of souls who have become conscious of their own salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. A missionary in Central America, in emphasizing the importance of personal work, writes: "We are not permitted to hold open air meetings. In nearly all the other mission lands of the world this privilege is enjoyed. Even where, as in Guatemala, the government is willing to approve a local desire for such meetings, permission is not often given. There is wide-spread prejudice against attending our meetings. The threat of excommunication is over the heads of people in case they should come to our services. This keeps away a large number of those who are interested in the discovery of the truth. Such false statements are made about us that many do not want to come. Great tact must be used in talking with these people, but also plainness and courage are needed to show many that the ideas in their minds are without foundation, and also to win their friendship and good opinion. People are afraid of becoming 'queered' by attending evangelical meetings. The greater part of these people will never be reached if we wait to get them into formal services. The people who have not heart interest in evangelical teachings and practices are afraid of being ostracized. Even Protestant business men are afraid of business boycott. They know that it means financial ruin, so a great many men who were formerly honest lose their strength of character and play into the hands of our opponents. The greater part of evangelical business men, and even diplomats, are wary about allying themselves with Protestantism for fear criticism will come upon them. By personal tact, by grace of manner and by an unshrinking persistence, the very persons who are thus made the unwilling victims of such treatment may be won from their prejudice and error. To neglect the God-given opportunity of doing personal work with the thousands with whom we meet day by day, is to run the

risk of showing ourselves unprofitable and unworthy servants."

3. THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD SUNDAY OBSERVANCE AND TEMPERANCE.

The practice of the Church in the field regarding matters of moral reform has been in harmony with the position taken by the supporting constituencies, and can be said already to have exerted a great influence upon conditions as these were at first encountered. The Church has thrown its influence solidly in favor of a more Scriptural use of Sunday than that which prevails all too widely throughout Latin America. It has borne its testimony against Sunday sports, Sunday buying, Sunday excursions for pleasure only, and against elections and other public functions upon this day, and undoubtedly is wielding an influence to help swing the current of public opinion in the direction of a cleaner and more devout day of rest. Some of these influences have already crystallized into statutes. Argentina, for example, has passed a Sunday-closing law which has been in force nearly ten years. It is a boon to the workingmen who formerly had no statutory claim to any fixed day of rest in the week. In many cities it is as well enforced as in North America. One member of the Commission about two years ago visited a city of 95,000 people and on Sunday could find but one small place of business open in a walk of several blocks up and down the business streets of the city. Other countries have initiated legislation having the same object in view. When it is considered how openly the day is profaned in the United States and Great Britain it should be a matter of gratitude that the republics in Latin America are beginning to practice the same loyalty to the command to rest one day out of seven, which has given us all that is good in Sunday observance elsewhere.

A missionary in Rio de Janeiro pleads for the essential in Sunday observance: "Even in North America the church members, as a whole, to-day observe Sunday in a way very different from that of the same class of

people fifty years ago. The real 'Sunday problem' before the mission churches to-day is to find out reverently and prayerfully what is essential with respect to Sunday in the light of God's word, and what is only traditional. The Saturday or Wednesday half-holiday is almost unknown in Latin America. Sunday is the only available day for healthy games or for out-door exercise. The evangelical forces must come to some conviction as to the ideals of Sunday observance which they will seek to bring to bear on the life habits of their converts. There must also be an attempt by constructive processes to bring about a more wholesome use of the Sunday holiday by the social groups which live apart from the disciplinary and cultural processes of the evangelical Churches. The very best experience of Christian leaders in all parts of the world should be drawn upon to this end."

Throughout Latin America the European viewpoint as to the use of intoxicants is held rather than that which growingly prevails north of the Rio Grande. Native wines, imported liquors, alcohol made in the great sugar areas in Peru, Argentina and Brazil—these are sold in almost every kind of commercial house, and are accessible in every restaurant, dining car and hotel. The practice of the evangelical Church in this wide field is practically unanimous in its condemnation of this evil. Temperance societies are now being formed by Latin Americans in the different countries. Scientific temperance instruction has been introduced into the public schools of Peru, and with less completeness into those of Uruguay. Whatever there is of teaching throughout these lands as to total abstinence from alcoholic liquors is due in its inception to evangelical sentiment.

4. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS

The Sunday school deserves a large place in the plans for a vigorous church life. The impression exists that it is futile to expect the conversion of adults and that the hope for the development of a true church life centers