

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**  
**AND THE**  
**NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS**  
**IN CHINA**

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NEW YORK  
**E. P. DUTTON & COMPANY**  
681 FIFTH AVENUE

## PREFACE

The intimacy and increasing complexity of present and future international relations calls for fundamental changes in the thought and conduct of individuals and the smaller social groups. The development of the international mind and its probable consequences appeal strongly to the imagination. Its appearance is founded on and is as certain as the laws of physical, mental and social development. Pessimism as to the outcome is rooted in a persistent narrow-group viewpoint of world-conditions. Knowledge of human achievements along these three lines seems to justify the formulation of a practical, comprehensive program for working out these changes, and a rational effective optimism as to the results.

In the following pages, the writer seeks to define the aims, ideals and practical values of Christian education in China in order to help secure the right adjustments in this intensely interesting contact of western and eastern nations in the Pacific Basin. These adjustments involve,

primarily, mental attitudes and social forces with which missionary education deals directly.

It is not necessary to eulogize or to apologize for Christian missions. As a sane method of racial and cultural cross-fertilization, mission work is a higher type of mental activity and very evidently has a greater survival value than the murderous and destructive conquest-methods which the race has hitherto employed, and has not yet entirely abandoned.

This fact does not, however, obscure the mistakes and the imperfections of mission work. No matter how justifiable the method may be from the standpoint of science, morals and religion, it has been employed largely on man's "trial and error" basis and with the usual defects. God and His natural laws are not responsible for all that men have done in His name. Christian missions, like all our social institutions, have been only dimly telic and strongly colored by the egoism and small-group interest of the times in which they arose. To correct these defects and to secure right adjustments in the definite, concrete and critical situation now developing in China, there is needed a comprehensive program based on the fundamental laws of biology, psychology, sociology and economics so far as these are now revealed to the race.

Right international adjustments in China now

will be far-reaching in their influence on the entire range of racial adjustments in this new era of internationalism. If Japan abandons the policy of military and political aggression in China, it seems safe to prophesy the early restoration of friendly relations between these two nations.

Mutual understanding and respect, sympathy, confidence and co-operation are the only final solution of international relations. Any social devices or methods that do not contribute evidently and directly to this solution are primitive and lacking in survival value. These desired qualities may be secured between nations, as between individuals and smaller groups, by the right kind of education. Such an education must satisfy the legitimate desires of the individual for self-realization in and through that social process which brings the highest race-realization. The author hopes to contribute to the working-out of such an educational policy and the achievement of happier international adjustments between China and the Western nations.

Special acknowledgment is due Professor Edward P. St. John and Professor George E. Dawson for their personal interest in the preparation of the manuscript and for introducing me to the vital relation between religious education and the fundamental principles of biology and psy-

chology. Professor E. A. Kirkpatrick's *Fundamentals of Sociology* suggested the outline for the study of the cultural needs of the Chinese. Most of the historical data relating to education has been drawn from Professor Paul Monroe's works. Professor John Dewey's philosophy of education and social progress has been particularly helpful. Professor Richard T. Ely's *Evolution of Industrial Society*, although dealing with western society, was very suggestive in the study of China's economic needs as these are related to education. Helpful parallels for recreational needs were found in *Education Through Play*, by R. H. Edwards. Bishop Bashford's interpretation, *China*, has encouraged a more generous valuation of China's civilization. *Our Task in India*, by Bernard Lucas, was helpful in making a distinction between proselytism and real evangelism.

The writer is indebted to other authors in the various fields considered, but the list is too long to incorporate. A number of indirect references and a few direct references have been dropped in publication, in order to avoid the annoyance of frequent foot-notes.

Professor T. H. P. Sailer, Professor D. J. Fleming, Professor E. W. Capen, Miss Evelyn Dewey, and others who have kindly read the manuscript, have given valuable suggestions for

revision. Professor Sailer's personal interest in China and in Christian education has made his suggestions particularly helpful.

Mrs. Yvonne Watkins gave splendid voluntary assistance in putting the manuscript in final form for publication.

My chief acknowledgment is due my wife for her sympathetic encouragement and the assistance she has given in the preparation of the manuscript.

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*Atlantic City, New Jersey,  
March, 1923.*

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# Christian Education and the National Consciousness in China

## CHAPTER I

### A SURVEY OF THE LARGER TASK OF CHRISTIAN WORLD-MISSIONS

A STUDY of the particular field of China and the special task of Christian education must be pursued in all its essential relations to the larger task undertaken by Christian world-missions. This is necessary in order to secure the proper perspective for the observation and judgment of facts discovered in this field. The comparison of the data with that available from other countries will be found to throw much light on perplexing problems.

International relationships have come so prominently to the front that it is impossible to disregard their bearing on every phase of life. Education for the world-society of this century must place these international factors in the foreground. Christian education must be able to see the trend in the various phases of this larger



life and, as these phases may require, to direct, control, or inspire these movements for the advancement of social righteousness.

Christian education must recognize and conserve, alike, all material and spiritual factors and forces at work in this period of new relationships upon which the world is now entering. It must not allow itself to be prejudiced in its judgments by the over-emphasis of specialists in any one of the various material or spiritual forces. Biological, sociological or economic factors do not comprehend the whole field of present and future social needs. No more do ethics, theology, pedagogy, or psychology solve the problems apart from the consideration of material factors. Education can make its proper contribution to society only by re-establishing and teaching the natural and essential relationship between the material and spiritual factors in life.

The separation of these factors has been arbitrary. The limitations of human knowledge have thrown them in opposition to each other. Modern education promises marvelously to broaden the limits of human knowledge. It is becoming more generally apparent that these two elements are not antagonistic but complementary and mutually necessary to each other. Science needs more spiritual interpretation.

Religion is being removed from the field of magic and superstition to the realm of reason and scientific justification. Any monistic interpretation of the development of human society is irreligious and unscientific, whether that interpretation be materialistic or spiritual.

Honest consideration of these various factors which are set forward by their special advocates as explaining all human problems and curing, or making endurable, all human ills, makes one hesitate to decide that any single one of them is even a dominant factor. Not one has been able to ignore all the others and, at the same time, furnish a satisfactory explanation of human society, its history, and environment. Under the pressure of the realities of nature and human life, it seems as though the material factors have too often hidden or crowded out the spiritual factors.

The education of this century will fail in its task if such a one-sided view of life dominates its ideals and methods. Christianity will go the way of other world-systems of religious philosophy if it fails to impress human society with the reality, permanence and increasing power of the spiritual factors in the development of human society.

The success or failure of Christianity in the midst of a world-society will depend upon its

ability to re-focus its vision so that individuals and nations shall not disappear from its sight but shall appear in their proper perspective with relation to the interests of a human world-society. The Gospel of Jesus Christ needs no re-adjustment to meet this new situation. On the contrary nominal Christianity, from the force of circumstances, needs a very radical readjustment of its angle of vision in order to see the coming needs of this century. It has seen the individual, the denominational, and national groups. It must now see international unity in relation to these and change its method accordingly.

The justification for such a challenge of nominal Christianity lies in the fact that the world is challenging it in louder and more imperious tones than ever before. The criticisms come from within and from without its ranks. A moderate degree of satisfaction with the present achievements and influence of nominal Christianity can be found only in a comparatively small group of individuals. The facts for judgment are open to all. They are sufficient grounds for the challenge and a partial list is as follows:

1. Nature and methods of appeals by leaders of missionary activities to churches.
2. Problem of non-attendance of church services by communicants.
3. Acknowledged failure of church to reach almost

two-thirds of the population in the United States for even nominal church membership.

4. War between Christian nations that has shocked even the non-Christian nations of the Orient.

Other equally striking facts might be cited.

These facts should drive all those, Christians and non-Christians alike, who have had a real experience, to search earnestly for real values in the claims and methods of modern Christianity. Has it forces, ideals, and methods that will meet the changing needs of a new era of human relationships? If it has these elements, what are they? The statement of these elements is essential to right thinking and clear judgment in a special study of the work of Christian education in China, or in any other country.

Christianity and Christian education must have clear-cut ideals that comprehend the needs of the entire human race as it rapidly passes into closer and more complex social contact. These ideals must be able to meet, not only the new racial contacts, but also new class contacts within the racial groups. They must provide for the control of or adjustment to the whole range of material and spiritual forces of the universe. Materialism limits the consideration of human phenomena to the field of world-relationships; due recognition of the spiritual, or non-material, forces extends the limits of such consideration

to include the larger cosmic-relationships. The Gospel of Jesus Christ has provided for both of these relationships in its ideal of the Kingdom of God. Nominal Christianity has had glimpses of this ideal and has undertaken its mission to the world; it needs the clear vision of Jesus Christ concerning the Kingdom of God.

#### THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

A provincial viewpoint is an anachronism in this century. The world is demonstrating to itself, more clearly than ever before, its essential unity. Humanity is rapidly becoming conscious of its solidarity in nature, function, and final value. Human society, in its primitive states, recognizes spiritual or non-material forces in its environment, but obscures its thinking about them with a mass of crude superstition. If the primitive mind has vaguely perceived these spiritual forces and sought after them with increasing success down through the centuries of human history, it is not probable that the civilized mind of this century will reach a place where it will dispense with the search for and recognition of spiritual values.

The perspective in which Jesus looked upon humanity and its activities and set forth his teaching about the Kingdom of God, or the Kingdom of Heaven, as an institution to be developed

on earth, meets the requirements of all of the various conditions of human society. It is the only perspective that does do it. It has taken nineteen hundred years for the human race to reach a point where any considerable number of individuals are able to get this perspective. The clearness with which the Man from Nazareth saw the possibilities of the human race and the principles by which the race should attain these possibilities, and his complete dedication of himself to these principles, are the strongest proofs of his divinity. This vision and power the Church has designated as his divinity and has endeavoured to prove this divinity by appeal to miracles in the world of matter. With this perspective only, can Jesus Christ be called the "Saviour" of the world. With any other, he is the "Saviour" of a few "elect individuals," certain groups of society, and of "chosen nations." The history of the thought and activity of the Christian religion is the history of the appearance of these narrower perspectives and their conflict with each other and with the larger outlook which Jesus actually revealed to the world.

What are the essential characteristics of the Kingdom of God? These characteristics must be clearly defined and recognized in the beginning of a constructive study of Christian education in China. Many have written at length

on this subject of the Kingdom in its social implications. It is necessary here only to outline essentials.

*The origin of the conception of the Kingdom.* It is not possible, here, to point out all the individual glimpses of the idea as recorded in the Old Testament. Clearly, it had its beginning before the time of Jesus of Nazareth. The theocracy is probably the earliest form of the idea. The larger conception of the Kingdom does not appear with any marked emphasis until the Hebrew people had been forced out of their provincialism, by their suffering at the hands of surrounding peoples. Then a few of the prophets caught the vision. The emphasis on the social implications of the Kingdom appears with the prophets, in the Eighth and Seventh centuries B.C. Beginning with Isaiah in the Eighth, the idea of the Kingdom as extending beyond the borders of Palestine appears with varying clearness down to the Fourth century.

The Kingdom idea as it appears, even in its highest form, among the prophets, is so colored by Hebrew provincialism and the national theocracy of Jehovah, that it is of little value for this study. However, these earlier forms of the idea show its origin. They indicate that it was a growing conception; and that it started with and grew by means of the wider international ex-

periences. The conception reached the climax of expression and interpretation in Jesus after the Hebrew traditions and ideas had been permeated and moulded by the last and greatest of international contacts, the Greek and Roman.

With Jesus' interpretation of the idea we have the last contribution of the Hebrew nation. His Galilean disciples were unable to grasp and hold the idea as he had presented it to them. Only a Jew who had been born and reared in the Gentile city of Tarsus could understand its international, world-wide message. It will, therefore, be more profitable to confine the search for essential characteristics of the Kingdom to the teaching of Jesus concerning it.

*The scope of the Kingdom.* This includes the entire human race. The first sixteen verses of the Sermon on the Mount are world-wide in their bearing. "Ye are the salt of the earth," (not simply of the Jews); "Ye are the light of the world," (not simply of Palestine). "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," will stand the test of the spirit of Jesus' teaching whether it will stand the test of textual criticism or not. The Kingdom includes the children, the women, even social and moral outcasts. It is not simply a spiritual kingdom in the hereafter. It comprehends the widest



boundaries of this earth and life. This seems to be the clear meaning of Jesus' words when he taught his disciples to pray, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be *done on earth.*"

*The principles of the Kingdom.* These are the principles of a social democracy in which the individual realizes his best self in advancing the welfare of humanity as a whole. The Scribes and Pharisees were found wanting because they had the notion that they were the privileged class to which was intrusted all wisdom and truth. The Jewish nation was scattered among the neighboring peoples to learn that, although they were "the chosen nation," they had not been chosen to the exclusion of the other nations of the earth. Jesus says more about human relationship in the Sermon on the Mount than he does about celestial affairs. The last judgment as described in Matthew xxv is based on the recognition and fulfillment of social obligations to the lowest classes rather than on metaphysical and theological statements accepted. The Fatherhood of God receives more consideration from Jesus than does the theocratic and violent reign of God as the prophets had conceived His Kingdom. The ideas of sonship, fellowship, co-operation with God, the possibility of being perfect as the Heavenly Father is perfect, these constitute the ideals and relations of a Christian social de-