

# WORLD DOMINION

The World Dominion Movement advocates Informed Continuous Co-ordinated Evangelism to reach everyone at home and abroad. Its basis is belief in the Deity and Atoning Death of the Lord Jesus Christ, the World's Only Saviour, and in the Final Authority of Holy Scripture.

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# Adventure Among the Lepers and Beggars of Java and Sumatra

A CORRESPONDENT

ON the outbreak of the Great War a young Salvation Army Captain entered the Recruiting Depot at Poplar and enlisted in the Royal Army Medical Corps. He had equipped himself for emergency work while in the training college by taking First Aid lessons, and held a certificate as a teacher from the St. John Ambulance Association.

'What is your religion?' asked the recruiting officer.

'Salvation Army,' came the reply.

'That's not a religion, that's a pastime!' sneered the official, and put him down as 'Church of England.'

For five years the 'Captain' did his bit on the hospital ships which carried their burdens of suffering manhood to and from the scenes of bloodshed in Belgium, France and the Dardanelles. Then came demobilization, marriage and a return to the 'pastime' work of the Salvation Army.

He had not been a traveller before the War, never having left the Isle of Man until he had entered the Salvation Army work at Clapton. Now he and his young wife were sent to a mission field where the challenge to courage, faith, and love was as overwhelming as anywhere in the world. For seventeen years these two have laboured among the blind, the professional mendicants, and the hopelessly diseased lepers of the Netherland Indies. They have no great thoughts of their own heroism, but are full of gratitude for the marvellous victories of the Gospel which they have seen in the lives of those among whom they have spent their days. It is worth while studying the record of the years in order that this example of Christian service may compel others, who are still young, to follow in their steps. They were not given a long course of specialized training, but had only six months' experience in a leper colony in Java in order that they might get a working knowledge of Dutch and Malay, and some insight

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into administrative work. With such a meagre experience of Eastern conditions they took over the control of a subsidized settlement for professional beggars in Java. Here there were four hundred men, women and children, all 'rounded up' by the Dutch Colonial police, and sent to the 'Army' to be cured of their many diseases, trained to be industrious citizens, and sent out to work honestly. That there were many scores of satisfactory results during each year of their stay, was to the young couple a source of gratitude. They watched the sullen and resentful mendicant gradually change his mental outlook; they saw the dawn of a spiritual conscience, and they saw filth and shameless immorality give way to cleanliness of limb and mind. The economic value of the religious influence they exerted did not occur to them, though the appreciative encouragement given by the Dutch officials bore evidence of this.

From the Beggar Colony they went, after a time, to spend three eventful years at the world-famous William Booth Eye Hospital at Samarang.<sup>1</sup> Here the young couple took part in many astonishing operations, resulting in the restoring of sight to the blind, and curing of scores who had been doomed to sightless lives. The fact that in the Netherland Indies there are estimated to be at least one-hundred-thousand lepers has long been a problem which has troubled the Colonial authorities. Four thousand known and advanced cases are gathered for treatment in a number of leper colonies, a thousand of these being in settlements controlled by the Salvation Army. Outside these leper colonies the cases that are in the initial stages are as yet almost untouched. This means that the stream of new patients is practically undiminished. New measures are now being adopted, but it will take many

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<sup>1</sup> The story of this institution is one more of the missionary romances which waits to be written. A keen young doctor missionary of the Salvation Army was appalled at the widespread suffering in the Netherland Indies, caused by curable and preventable eye-diseases. He began his specialized hospital treatments in a primitive bamboo hut, but before many years had passed he had built up a hospital which to-day draws patients from all parts of the world East of Suez.

## AMONG THE LEPERS AND BEGGARS

years of progressive action to bring the disease under anything like control.

Some of the leper colonies are used for the more desperate cases, including those who have to be sent for treatment from penal settlements. Thus it came about that at one of the first appointments to this type of duty this couple were faced with a number of men who were both violent and hopeless. To deal with them and to make their treatment one which would change them into Christian workers seemed an almost impossible task. Yet these two consecrated people set to work with determined faith. Just how big was the demand upon them may be judged from a single incident.

Two evils existed in the settlement which it was almost impossible to eradicate. One was gambling, and the other money-lending. The two grew side by side, until a system was introduced under which actual cash ceased to be paid to the patients, credit notes of a simple type taking the place of coin. One of the men had for a long time carried on a surreptitious money-lending business, but was not finding his clients too ready to meet their liabilities. He, therefore, threatened them that he would buy up all the meat belonging to the settlement, and deprive them of their food. Such a threat could not have been carried out, but it so incensed the violent criminals among the patients that they decided to murder the money-lender after dinner on the day following the threat. Assembling at the meal, one hundred of them brought wicked-looking Malay knives up their sleeves, and as soon as the meal was over they made a concerted attack on their victim, who fled with loud cries for help, to the missionaries' compound. Hearing the uproar the officer hurried to the spot and got between the hunted man and his pursuers, thus giving to his startled wife the idea that the men had run amok and were pursuing her husband.

In her determination to be by his side she fought her way through the now frenzied mob, wonderfully preserved from the unsheathed knives and uplifted iron bars. Then, with the bleeding victim senseless on the ground behind

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them, these two, the only Europeans for miles, stood before the men they had come to serve. 'What are you doing here in my compound?' demanded the 'Major.' 'Go out at once!' The crowd stood, muttering threats, and feeling the edges of their knives. Then the officer began to call one after another by name. 'You . . . go away . . . and you . . . and you . . .' until at last the two were left alone, save for the senseless, bleeding body behind them. Then came their first-aid treatment, by the light of a hurricane lamp, after which they carried the patient into their own bungalow. They slept as usual, the only people in that settlement of four hundred lepers, who lay down at night without any kind of weapon near at hand, and no effective help which could reach them for hours, should they decide to summon it by telephone.

The greatest satisfaction that these two have in life is the knowledge that scores, nay hundreds, of those whom they have served for physical ills have found their way, through gross darkness and in much ignorance, to the Christ who called the lepers and healed them long ago, and is still to them the Light of the World.

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## A Momentous Pact

The Asiatic Pact recently signed in Teheran by Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan, is momentous. It secures external peace and security as a means whereby radical internal reforms and economic development may be quietly achieved. The harem, the veil, the legal and social inferiority and the static ignorance of women, are gradually passing away. Turkish women are even excelling as air pilots, and 60,000 are being trained to arms. Religious liberty is increasing. After his eighteenth year a Turk may follow the religion of his choice. Iran is tolerant and liberally minded. The Presbyterian and Anglican Missions have gathered in Iran a church of over one thousand members, chiefly Moslem converts. Iraq, notably keen to acquire Western education, is discovering that such education is incompatible with Islamic intolerance. Afghanistan is marching behind Turkey. Egypt is in the sweep of the tide of Westernization. Egyptian women are entering business and professions, discarding the veil and even clamouring for the vote. Religion, politics, industry, finance, all bear the mark of reform and adaptation to the new order.

Even Arabia, the cradle of Islam, is awaking to new light and creative influences from the West. The motor-car, aeroplane, wireless, and the discovery of petrol and precious metals are modernizing the country. Dr. Harold Storm has travelled around the peninsula for a WORLD DOMINION survey, as a medical missionary, and has set ajar a door in Southern Arabia waiting to be widely opened by Christian medical missionaries.