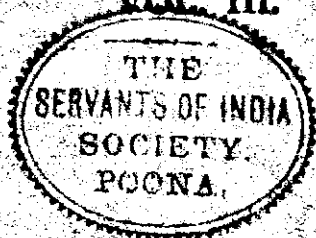


# THE HOME

68  
C.O.P.E. COMMISSION REPORT

VOL. III.



SECOND IMPRESSION

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*First published . . . April 1924*  
*Second Impression . . . July 1924*

# THE HOME

*Being the Report presented to the Conference on  
Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship  
at Birmingham, April 5-12, 1924*

*Published for the Conference Committee by*

**LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.**  
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C. 4  
NEW YORK, TORONTO  
BOMBAY, CALCUTTA, AND MADRAS

1924

## BASIS

THE basis of this Conference is the conviction that the Christian faith, rightly interpreted and consistently followed, gives the vision and the power essential for solving the problems of to-day, that the social ethics of Christianity have been greatly neglected by Christians with disastrous consequences to the individual and to society, and that it is of the first importance that these should be given a clearer and more persistent emphasis. In the teaching and work of Jesus Christ there are certain fundamental principles—such as the universal Fatherhood of God with its corollary that mankind is God's family, and the law "that whoso loseth his life, findeth it"—which, if accepted, not only condemn much in the present organisation of society, but show the way of regeneration. Christianity has proved itself to possess also a motive power for the transformation of the individual, without which no change of policy or method can succeed. In the light of its principles the constitution of society, the conduct of industry, the upbringing of children, national and international politics, the personal relations of men and women, in fact all human relationships, must be tested. It is hoped that through this Conference the Church may win a fuller understanding of its Gospel, and hearing a clear call to practical action may find courage to obey.

## GENERAL PREFACE

THE present volume forms one of the series of Reports drawn up for submission to the Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship, held in Birmingham in April 1924.

In recent years Christians of all denominations have recognised with increasing conviction that the commission to "go and teach all nations" involved a double task. Alongside of the work of individual conversion and simultaneously with it an effort must be made to Christianise the corporate life of mankind in all its activities. Recent developments since the industrial revolution, the vast increase of population, the growth of cities, the creation of mass production, the specialisation of effort, and the consequent interdependence of individuals upon each other, have given new significance to the truth that we are members one of another. The existence of a system and of methods unsatisfying, if not antagonistic to Christian life, constitutes a challenge to the Church. The work of a number of pioneers during the past century has prepared the way for the attempt to examine and test our social life in the light of the principles revealed in Jesus Christ, and to visualise the requirements of a Christian civilisation. Hitherto such attempts have generally been confined to one or two aspects of citizenship; and, great as has been

## GENERAL PREFACE

their value, they have plainly shown the defects of sectional study. We cannot Christianise life in compartments: to reform industry involves the reform of education, of the home life, of politics and of international affairs. What is needed is not a number of isolated and often inconsistent plans appropriate only to a single department of human activity, but an ideal of corporate life constructed on consistent principles and capable of being applied to and fulfilled in every sphere.

The present series of Reports is a first step in this direction. Each has been drawn up by a Commission representative of the various denominations of British Christians, and containing not only thinkers and students, but men and women of large and differing practical experience. Our endeavour has been both to secure the characteristic contributions of each Christian communion so as to gain a vision of the Kingdom of God worthy of our common faith, and also to study the application of the gospel to actual existing conditions—to keep our principles broad and clear and to avoid the danger of Utopianism. We should be the last to claim any large or general measure of success. The task is full of difficulty: often the difficulties have seemed insurmountable.

But as it has proceeded we have discovered an unexpected agreement, and a sense of fellowship so strong as to make fundamental divergences, where they appeared, matters not for dispute but for frank and sympathetic discussion. Our Reports will not be in any sense a final solution of the problems with which they are concerned. They represent, we

## GENERAL PREFACE

believe, an honest effort to see our corporate life steadily and whole from the standpoint of Christianity; and as such may help to bring to many a clearer and more consistent understanding of that Kingdom for which the Church longs and labours and prays.

However inadequate our Reports may appear—and in view of the magnitude of the issues under discussion and the infinite grandeur of the Christian gospel inadequacy is inevitable—we cannot be too thankful for the experience of united inquiry and study and fellowship of which they are the fruit.

It should be understood that these Reports are printed as the Reports of the Commissions only, and any resolutions adopted by the Conference on the basis of these Reports will be found in *The Proceedings of C.O.P.E.C.*, which also contains a General Index to the series of Reports.



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The Members of the Commission are greatly indebted to the Rev. W. F. Howard and Mr. Pite for material contributed to the Report. They also wish to acknowledge information afforded by the Reports of Study Circles on the Questionnaire on "The Home."

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