



The World Prayer Band at The Missionary Training Institute, Nyack, N.Y.

The role of prayer in the history of The Christian And Missionary Alliance deserves special attention during its second century. A. B. Simpson said, *"The Alliance must closely follow Scriptural standards; having as its ideal a life of prayer, faith, simplicity and sacrifice."* The early records are filled with accounts of vital prayer meetings. Nothing of importance was undertaken without prayer. District conferences and General Council were marked by fervent intercession. The district conferences were "prayer conferences" designed for extended seasons of waiting on God.

Early editions of *The Alliance Weekly* (now *Alliance Life*) carried a column of prayer requests sent from every part of the world. Local Christians main-

The Night Watches



tained prayer circles to intercede for these needs. For decades an all-night prayer meeting was conducted by some Alliance church every night of the year. *The Alliance Weekly* listed the church and pastor where the "Night Watch" would be conducted for each night of the month. By 1955, for each night of the year at least four churches were assigned a "Night Watch."

It was common practice throughout the fellowship to gather for pre-prayer services before both the morning and evening services. Evangelistic campaigns and missionary conferences were bathed in

prayer. Midweek prayer services were well attended, vital vanguards of intercession.

The C&MA Women's Ministries became the prayer battery for overseas work. This remarkable organization stood in contrast to most church women's organizations in that it gave priority to the ministry of prayer. Hours, days and sometimes nights were devoted to earnest Spirit-energized prayer for Alliance missionaries and national Christians around the world.

When the Alliance celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 1937 the leadership set a goal of 100,000 prayer partners. Says the Golden Anniversary Brochure, *"God has given us a prayer fellowship that is fundamental to pressing the battle..."*

As the Alliance looks back over the last century, we become aware that with all the prayer that has gone forth, we still have great needs to respond to throughout the world. We shall only meet these needs with a great outpouring of sacrificial prayer. May year 2003 be a fresh call to prayer and a realization that nothing in the development of the Alliance has or ever can take the place of prayer.

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-Dr. A.B. Simpson