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I. LITERARY.

MEMORY, ACTIVITY, AND ANTICIPATION.

SERMON BY REV. DR. HOGE, OF RICHMOND.

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended ; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark."—(PHIL. iii. 13, 14.)

WHEN the apostle refers to the "things which are behind," he is thinking of the experiences of the past ; when he says, "I press forward," he is mindful of the obligations and privileges of the present ; when he speaks of the "things which are before," he is forecasting the recompenses of the future ; so that when we follow him in this comprehensive sweep of vision over the whole field of existence, we have suggested to us these natural divisions of the theme under discussion : memories of the past ; duties of the present ; anticipations of the future.

Let us strive to enter into the import of these varied remembrances, activities, and prospects, until, in full appreciation and sympathy with each, we can make the apostle's resolution our own, and by God's grace at last reach the prize which animated him as he ran the Christian race, and which constituted his reward when the victory was won.

★ The subject under consideration is peculiarly appropriate at the season when we are about to make the transition from the old year to the new.

The most inconsiderate cannot fail to recognize the contrast between the pensive, retrospective thoughts awakened by the

HOME MISSIONS.

It would be well for the cause of Home Missions if that cause could be distinctly defined by its advocates. The general impression seems to be that the ordinary work of the pastorate in our settled churches is Home Mission work, and as such the cause does not appeal to those young men who are willing to go anywhere for Christ's sake, and who are anxious that their lives shall be spent to the best advantage for his cause. On the other hand, when those who see "so much to do at home" come face to face with the real work, they find the field as unattractive as they did that of Foreign Missions, and so the laborers are few.

Home Mission work should mean the preaching of Christ where he is not known, and not a civil war among rival denominations. The statement "that there are three neighboring counties without a single regular minister, where once there were several," loses its force when we find that by minister, *Presbyterian* minister is meant; when we inquire why the candlestick has been removed from the once flourishing churches; and when we compare the statement with the fact that there are 1,500 counties in China without a single witness for Christ. But when we learn that there are really destitute fields in our own country, where the people are practically ignorant of Christianity, and when the appeal is made by men who are actually engaged in the work, then we may hope for the consecration of earnest, devoted men to this cause.

No more fatal mistake can be made by those who have the interests of Home Missions at heart than that of decrying the cause of Foreign Missions. The cause is one and the field is the world. The same spirit of devotion to Christ which sends a man to China or India, is necessary that he may go to the destitute fields of our own country. A sermon or an essay which appeals to the natural selfishness of human nature, in setting forth the duty of staying at home, does harm in three ways. It soothes the consciences of those in whom ambition, the love of pleasure, and the shrinking from hardship are already powerful motives, too powerful for effective work for Christ. It gives those who are revolving the great question, "Where shall I work?" the opportunity of believ-

ing what they wish to believe. They will stay at home, but they will never be *home missionaries*. It places those who have the great cause of evangelizing the world very near to their hearts in violent opposition to the cause of Home Missions. This is the more unfortunate, because it is mainly from this latter class that home missionaries are to be recruited. Those who are anxious that their lives shall be spent in the most useful way possible are naturally drawn to the needs of the dark masses of heathendom. But many of these men are unable to go to the foreign field, however strong may be their desire so to do. They would doubtless consent to undergo all the privations and hardships of a home missionary's lot, when they see that they are providentially hindered from going to the foreign field. But it is manifest folly for an advocate of Home Missions to insult the consciences of these men by depreciating a cause that is sacred and dear to their hearts. Let the needs of both parts of the field be presented truthfully and candidly, and let them be contrasted only by him who is honestly asking himself the question, "Where shall I work for Christ?"