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I. Literary.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

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I.

Where Egypt's sacred river creeps
 Along its plenteous plains;
Where rise its monumental heaps
 And colonnaded fanes;
Where History, Art and Science scored
 In sculptured wall their record old,
And in a myriad tombs were stored
 Treasures of knowledge yet untold;
Where Power has reached its loftiest state
And millions cringed before the great;
 A people known to God
 The path of sorrow trod,
And in hard bondage wrought, and mourned their bitter fate.

II.

The silent stars look down—
 Look down and give no sign;
Dumb is the oracle of On,
 Dumb is Osiris' shrine;
And Memnon's sunrise song
 To them no answer brings;
In vain for them his notes prolong,
 In vain for them he sings;

III. Missionary Department.

THE GROWTH OF THE MISSIONARY SPIRIT AMONG US.

BY JOHN LEIGHTON STUART.

That there is an increasing interest among the students in various phases of mission work has been frequently remarked during the past few months. It is our purpose to indicate some of the forms in which this growth has manifested itself, and to urge that with fidelity and wise enthusiasm we all respect the duty of nourishing it.

Seen in the light of its resources, and contrasted with New Testament standards, our church has done little as yet toward obeying the command of her Redeemer. That such is the case is due primarily to the men who have undertaken to teach and stimulate the people in doing whatsoever He commanded us; and that they have been ignorant or inattentive is due certainly in no small measure to those years of preparation in which they undertook to enlighten themselves on all that concerned their very sacred task. The minister usually develops along the lines originated then. Hence the strategic importance of surcharging the seminary life, individual and organic, with missionary knowledge and zeal. While a long line of missionary alumni, reaching backward to the 'sixties, testifies forcibly that the spirit of missions is not a recent growth at Union Seminary, yet there seems to be an advance in the more complete diffusion of this spirit, and in the desire of the men to develop themselves and their associates into well-informed and aggressive "missionary pastors." This is seen in the more flourishing condition of our

I. SOCIETY FOR MISSIONARY INQUIRY.

This organization is now composed of all the students. Its membership fee secures a continuous enlargement of our missionary library and literature.

1. *Sessions.* Besides controlling one popular Sunday evening service every month, the society is addressed each week by one or more of the students on some department of current home or foreign work. Untrodden byways in our Southern States and mission fields from Cuba to Korea are brought before us in weekly panorama; their always crying needs and often stirring results; the workers and their work; the fruitful harvest ripe and rotting everywhere. In these discussions there is a good improvement undoubtedly. We have less of idle verbiage about the *fauna* and *flora*, less of the climate-customs-and-crops style, with its whiffs of high-school geography. The manuscript is not so much in evidence, nor the tell-tale marks of Saturday night preparation. Most of the speakers have really talked as if they had something to tell us, and not something they had been "asked to get up." In short, there certainly seems to be a more worthy conception of the real purpose in these meetings, and a fine abatement of the shoddy, perfunctory work,—indifferent in two senses,—with which we are all familiar.

We note progress also among the hearers. Not only is there a decidedly better attendance this year; there seems to be less of the amiable but stupid coming because it is a meeting, or from habit, or to see whether the leader will give a "good talk," as if this were a drill in homiletics, or a lyceum for mutual entertainment. Men are even beginning to bring their note-books, to make the instruction—for such it really ought to be—more serviceable. If persevered in, this will also help to elevate the standards of our future speakers.

2. *Elective Study Classes.* The purpose of these classes is briefly to render more intelligent and intense the missionary spirit among us. The idea took form last year with a class of some eight or ten men. Early in the new session the class was reorganized with twenty-three members, which number soon doubled itself. It is now conducted in five sections under leaders elected by the classes themselves. Perhaps no better evidence of the growing missionary interest among us could be found than this—that forty-six busy students should spend one hour weekly in purely voluntary work, calling for some little preparation and parallel reading, and at the sacrifice of other plans.

Our text-book at present is "The Evangelization of the World in this Generation," by Mr. John R. Mott, and the little book is

very largely the cause of its own wide study here. It is reviewed by Dr. Strickler in another department of this issue. A vast amount of research, correspondence, thoughtful observation and spiritual earnestness have gone into the making of this volume, and with reasoning and facts alike unanswerable the author clearly demonstrates that the world can be evangelized far more speedily than we are apt to suppose. It is full of Carlyle's "logic set on fire." After reading it thoughtfully—one can scarcely read it otherwise—it seems strange that any follower of Christ could or would want to look upon this watch-word coldly as the chimerical dream of "college boys," but rather as an idea "so reasonable, so practicable,"—I am quoting from a veteran bishop of India—"and the duty to perform it so imperative, that every one would begin to wonder why any intelligent Christian had ever doubted its possibility or been content to let weary years go by without a vast universal movement throughout all the churches of Christendom at once to go forward and complete the task."

Some of our young men are seeing new visions of duty, and the fact that in the past ten years over one thousand and six hundred of them have gone out from North America alone under this motto proves at once the reality of their consecration and the practical effects of having such an ideal. Is not this watch-word truly apostolic in its essence after all?

Another feature of value adopted in these classes is that the last ten minutes of each session are occupied with recording, in specially prepared note-books, statistics, illustrations, striking occurrences fresh from the outposts, and all other useful mission *data*. These little books, if they are stocked with system and vigilance, will prove copious fountains for all phases of sermonic work, and for those unexpected missionary talks, which we will all be asked to give. Why store our minds with records of the past and be ignorant of all the history that is making in our own church and age? Something of this sort seems essential if one intends to arouse any intelligent interest in his charge. Why not begin now?

3. But the society does not confine its energies to self-instruction. Last year it sent a recent graduate to Korea, and after twelve months of successful experimenting, it has decided to continue his support. Seventy-one students, in the years when

nothing is earned and much must be spent, most of them struggling to get through, and themselves depending on the church, are contributing, together with their faculty, \$600 per annum to spread the gospel on a distant Asiatic coast. That this involves no little retrenching and some real hardship is known to all who know anything of ministerial students. Is this not an illustration of the zeal which follows fuller knowledge? Is it not an object lesson of what the church could do were she better informed and enthused? But like all unselfish work, this is better than the workers know. It is unquestionably a cause as well as an indication of our growing missionary spirit. It is very impressive to note how steadily and with what fervor the public prayers revert to "our representative," as we love to call him. This little service and the concrete interest it develops will tell upon our future ministry, as they have already plainly affected our Seminary life.

4. Perhaps on the principle that the light whose beams reach furthest shines most brightly nearest home, the society has this session begun to work among the colored people "right at our own doors"—to use some anti-missionary cant. This we summarize:

(1) A Sunday-school in the heart of the city's negro population (Jackson ward), opened, in an old store, on November 18th, with seventeen scholars and five teachers, but since enlarged to fifty-nine scholars and seven teachers. The effort is making to associate Christian workers from the local churches in this mission, one advantage of which will be its continuance during summer months.

(2) A country Sunday-school, a mile further out, where three students, assisted by resident helpers, teach fifty-six negroes of all ages.

(3) A class for servants of the Seminary and neighborhood, in charge of two students, and with a roll of over twenty.

II. THE VOLUNTEER BAND.

This is composed of students who have the fixed purpose of working in heathen lands. Their single reservation is "if God permit." These men have perplexities and problems largely peculiar to themselves, and their weekly meetings aim for mutual sympathy and strengthening. Informal discussions are held

bearing upon their own spiritual or scholastic preparation, or otherwise tending to their more complete equipment.

An examination of our records discovers some interesting comparisons. Thus far the Seminary has given twenty-eight graduates to the foreign work of the church for life—seven prior to 1880, eight within the next ten years, and thirteen in the decade just completed. The class of '94 is notable in that six of its men are now in mission lands. But there has since been retrogression. While in the first thirty years (1865-'95) of our church's "wider obedience" the proportion of missionary graduates was as one to twelve, in the last five it has averaged but one to fifty-one; that is, only two men. However, it must, in fairness, be stated that during these years men applied whom the committee was temporarily unable to send out. Does not this mortifying impotence of the church help to explain the coldness which followed here?

But matters have brightened again. There are now thirteen men, or almost one to five, ready to offer themselves on graduation. Five of these are seniors.

III. EVANGELISTIC WORK.

Another evidence of the growing missionary spirit among us is the prevalent desire to be doing something practical and immediate. We have had fine opportunities for this since the removal to Richmond, and each year the work has widened. The current activity is:

1. That done by the society, as described above.
2. That done by the three classes as such:

(1) *Seniors*. Efforts have been chiefly concentrated in Barton Heights, a flourishing little suburb. Here, as early as last February, a church was organized with eighteen members, since increased to twenty-six. Four students preach in turn to congregations averaging over sixty. There is also a large Sunday-school, a Ladies' Aid and a Girls' Society, a mid-week Bible class for young people, and a prayer-meeting, a Children's Missionary Society of sixty members. Developed entirely by students, Overbrook Presbyterian Church contributed in its first year to all causes \$560, and *gave more per member to foreign missions than any other church in East Hanover Presbytery.*

(2) *Middlers*. An unused church in Fairfield, a more remote suburb of the city, has been reopened, and is regularly supplied

by four members of this class. A Bible study service also is conducted in the afternoons with especially gratifying results, the average attendance being over fifty.

(3) *Juniors.* With fine enterprise this class soon found an abandoned store in North Richmond, where it conducts a very encouraging Sunday-school, and a gospel meeting in the week, controlling also a regular Sabbath service at which upper classmen preach.

3. Independent work by individuals or little groups includes preaching, Bible classes or Sunday-schools at Granite and Rio Vista (rural mission points); in the city Almshouse, the Penitentiary, the Y. M. C. A., the Virginia Medical College, various city churches, etc. At Granite a chapel has been erected through our efforts. Nor can we overlook in this list the neighborhood Sunday-school conducted in the Seminary itself.

Recapitulating, we learn that thirty-seven students are regularly engaged in evangelistic efforts, while many others assist with more or less frequency. This work is chiefly of a distinctive missionary character, and can have little of selfish motive, even from the standpoint of applied homiletics. Naturally, therefore, it reacts with power upon our own spiritual vitality. The question, however, must arise, whether all this extraneous activity has not injured class-room work. Of course we are here for one specific thing, and whatever interferes with it is both unwise and wrong. But on this point our professors authorize the statement that they do not find any deterioration of scholarship. As a student, I can merely add that we try to see the danger clearly, and to be on guard.

4. *Vacations.* Another development of this spirit is the perhaps increasing preference for real home mission work during the summer months. Thus one man spent the past vacation among grossly ignorant and lawless mountaineers. An overhanging cliff sheltered from the hot afternoon suns. A niche dug out from this, with a stake driven into the dirt and topped by a rude board was his pulpit, the preacher being architect. His pews were forests trees felled and trimmed on the spot. Without detailing his personal circumstances, it suffices to give assurance that they were fully in keeping with these ecclesiastical arrangements.

Practically all the students agreed among themselves to preach

one missionary sermon in their summer charges, if feasible, and to organize or energize young people's missionary societies. Nor is it improbable that some will be found again to devote a month or more next summer exclusively to the latter work. This is made possible by the generosity of one of our laymen, who agrees to furnish literature (as he does copiously), and meet the necessary expenses of all who will give their time.

5. Another manifestation is the willingness with which recent alumni have entered home mission territory—as Arizona and Texas—with the intention of spending some years thus rather than “accept” the best field available on graduation. Our professors strongly urge the general principle that every man ought to occupy his first years in some such pioneering work; ought to do it for these needy peoples themselves and for the church's growth, ought to do it also for his own larger development in spiritual earnestness and persuasive power. Years thus spent, they assure us from the fullness of their observation, will color and invigorate one's entire ministry. They give a clearer conception and a more truly Christlike ideal of our duty as ministers of the gospel.

Having reviewed some more tangible indications of what seems to be a deepening missionary enthusiasm, we wish to call attention to a few of its very direct advantages.

(1) It can exert a tremendous influence upon the spiritual tone of the student body. We believe it has this session. It is the antidote to that deadening of the soul which comes from continuous and technical treatment of holy things, while the intellect only is active. It frees from the strong tendency to professionalism. It tends to annihilate self-centred ambitions, to purify the consecration, and to generate a healthy and hearty devotional atmosphere. Personal and intercessory prayer for very definite objects; above all, a more throbbing and specific remembrance of our Master's fullest interests, is one of the most richly beneficial effects of having the missionary spirit among us this session.

(2) This is the surest means of developing *missionary pastors*. Most of us come to the Seminary with our conceptions of duty, our standards and purposes, largely unformed; and naturally,—we are here to form them. But when we remember that we ourselves are to influence vastly the future efficiency of our church

in mission work, can we be indifferent to any effort that helps to prepare us and our fellows and the classes that will follow for such weighty responsibilities? Excellent as is the class-room instruction in this matter, incisive as occasional appeals may be, the most durable impressions will come from a vital and vitalizing zeal among the students themselves.

And we need such pastors sadly. *Almost one-third of our churches* are giving nothing to missions home or foreign. The ladies and their societies contribute more than half of what goes to the latter cause. There is need, then, of a more manly appeal to men. Our members are denying themselves to the extent of *three two-cent postage stamps* per month, being greatly helped in this by non-communicants. The people have not been altogether faithful then. But "the stream can rise no higher than its source." And that the pastors can do more than on the average they are doing is very evident, and may be made more so from one or two illustrations. Read, for instance, the forceful record of what one church is doing, as given in this number by the pastor himself, Dr. E. C. Bradt. Or this from our own church: A young man, only in the ministry two years, has a charge in the poorer districts of one of our great cities. The Sunday-school, organized as such into a missionary society, is paying one-half toward the support of a missionary; and when a recent issue of one of our religious papers stated that in these two years the little church had grown from thirty-eight members to one hundred and seventy-five, we found herein a suggestive instance of Dr. Duff's assertion, "Foreign missions act upon a church not by exhaustion, but by fermentation." Again, a "missionary pastor" went to a little Georgia town in 1898, at which time his people were contributing \$12 annually. The next year they gave \$80. But all this is patent. Every one knows that the church has grand potentialities: power of wealth, power in its youth on whom the call to direct Christian service ought to be more faithfully enforced, power from superabundant information, power of opportunity, power of truth, power from the God whom our puny efforts have already proven to be more ready to give than we are even to ask. We want *men* to convert this power into realities. Such men no longer belong to the village or presbytery, but to the forces that are regenerating the earth. And we insist that

missionary pastors are made in the main at the Seminary and by the spirit which pervades the student body.

(3) Enthusiasm for the prompt and thorough winning of all peoples brings the individual student to his supreme decision—whether he can do more to evangelize the world in his generation by going into heathen countries or by keeping the power-house at home at full-blast, and smoothly swiftly generating greater energy. It keeps the issue clearly before him. It furnishes him with fuller knowledge of the facts. It supplies the sympathetic fellowship and the spiritual environment that count so very much. This is perhaps its greatest benefit.

In fine, it helps us all to realize that the spirit of missions is indeed,—as Livingstone said it was,—the spirit of our Master; the very genius of our religion. The evangelization of the entire race is the only adequate object for such a life and death as that of Jesus, and the reason for existence of His church.

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