

THE UNION SEMINARY REVIEW

VOL. XXX.

OCTOBER, 1918.

No. 1.

THE SEMINARY AND THE WAR.

By THE REV. PROFESSOR WALTER W. MOORE, D. D., LL. D.,
Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va.

Union Seminary has an illustrious record of patriotic service in times of war. Its students responded to the call of their country in 1861. It is one of the cherished distinctions of the institution that it emptied its halls into that immortal army which was always outnumbered but never outfought, and that its students took part in that tremendous struggle in which the North won the victory and the South in so great a measure won the glory. A number of these students laid down their lives in that conflict, the first three to fall being the Rev. Dabney Carr Harrison, chaplain, killed at Fort Donelson; Edgar Wirt Carrington, killed at Seven Pines, and Captain Hugh A. White, killed at Second Manassas—all in 1862. About seventy others served as chaplains or soldiers in the ranks. One of the most distinguished of these, still with us, a universally honored and beloved citizen of Richmond, is the Rev. James P. Smith, D. D., captain and aide de camp to Stonewall Jackson, and for nearly fifty years past stated clerk of the Synod of Virginia. One of the professors in the Seminary, Dr. Robert L. Dabney, was General Jackson's chief of staff, and subsequently his biographer.

The Seminary, therefore, is simply showing itself true to type in sending so many of its sons into the great army which in our day is going forth to battle for the saving of Christian

THE CHINESE MINISTRY.

BY THE REV. J. LEIGHTON STUART, D. D.,

Professor in Nanking Theological Seminary, Nanking, China.

With the absorbing spell of the great war upon us all, it is simply impossible to avoid thinking of our missionary enterprise in terms of that colossal conflict. Perhaps this is as it ought to be, for our spiritual warfare cannot afford to lose the lessons it is teaching of daring and devotion, of surpassing heroism and passionate self-abandon, as well as of efficiency in method, wise foresight, almost uncanny ingenuity, and always untiring improvement, co-ordination of command and concentration of effort. It is the latter aspect, especially, that I want to stress—the question of strategy for the time being, rather than of sacrifice—in asking you to think this morning of our problem in the all-important matter of Chinese Church leadership, the problem in more specific language of securing a Chinese ministry, adequate in numbers and in quality to the present situation. We can all recall the shortage of the British forces in trained officers during the early months of the war, and its ghastly cost in young life. Also the unpreparedness of America and its fateful consequences.

What, then, is the present situation in China? Let us try to face it unflinchingly. We want no roseate, Reuterized reports. When, after more than one hundred years have passed, we compare the range and intensity of Christian effort in China with the reaction thus far upon the nation's attitude, I think it must produce a haunting sense of disproportion. Thousands of missionaries are devotedly using every variety of method; millions in money are being spent annually with painstaking attention to their most economical use. All that careful organization, all that energy, equipment and experience can supply seem to be at our service. Yet, despite all the en-

couraging signs—and there are many such; despite all the arguments and explanations whereby we steady ourselves—and the force of these is not to be questioned; the tangible results thus far seem very meagre. Last year, with some 25,000 paid workers, our net advance was practically the same figure, a gain within the twelve months of one new convert for each. These figures would be the more distressing if we included the families of the 25,000 employees who ought to be thought of as part of our working staff. This failure to force our lines forward any faster is the more disappointing in view of the readiness with which the Chinese can accept, and the rapidity with which they can spread, whatever seems to them worth while. Besides, as one gains in sympathy and insight, as one learns to appreciate the blend of intense ethical passion and a strongly mystical strain in their religious ideas, the conviction grows that the Chinese of all peoples ought to appropriate Christianity. Or leaving the viewpoint of missionary results, shall we think of the situation in the light of China's present desperate need and danger? Second scarcely to our intense interest in the course of events in Western Europe must we be watching with anxious concern the progress of events in China—the follies and futilities of recent political and social reforms; the shameless corruption among even the highest officials, more prevalent than ever among them all; the stealthy aggressions of a neighboring power encouraged by the selfish greed of her own rulers; the break-down of the fine old ethical sanctions of the past; the recrudescence at once of superstition and of scepticism; the inroads of every novel and noxious vice from the West; the deliberate tendency of government education toward purely materialistic and economically useful studies; the lawlessness and looting, the immorality and gambling, the use of opium and morphia, all of which are on the increase; the danger in short of China's disruption or destruction as a nation. And if China is to be saved, it must be done quickly. As a Christian official who feels all this with a great ache at his heart said to me last week, it will all be over in less than twenty years. Furthermore, we can do more than

use the phrasing suggested by the war. This nation will be the next great point of disturbance. The road to the future peace of the world lies through China, just as her weakness may provoke a world war, vaster and more bitter even than the present one. This fact can reassure us when we wish we, too, might be doing our bit "over there." Finally, apart from all passing or political phases, there are these millions of as yet unreached human souls waiting for our victorious advance, these potential members of the Church of Christ, through whose salvation she can become the glorious triumphant Church of which we dream.

There is moreover a third element in the situation. Not only is the missionary movement failing to carry forward to an extent which challenges our searching inquiry as to the causes; not only is the whole country in a plight so dire—the whole head sick and the whole heart faint—that what service we render her requires haste; but this is also the day of superlative opportunity. The evangelistic campaigns of the past year are evidence of this. So are the encouraging openings among government school students in various centres. Perhaps all of us can testify to the readiness with which people of every class will listen to our message. Ignorant prejudice has been very largely overcome. Superficial acquaintance with Christianity, and a presumption in its favor, are widespread. Men of prominence are taking their stand as Christians, thus removing one stone of stumbling in the past. The Y. M. C. A. is making it clearer than ever before—though there never has been reason to think otherwise—that it stands ready to serve, and to reinforce with its great influence, the organized Church. There is more practical co-ordination among the Christian allied forces in China today, both denominational and sectional, than perhaps ever before anywhere on earth. In short, we are ready for our great offensive. Enemy resistance will still be stubborn along our vast battle-front, and there will be no easy sweeping drive. But we can and must advance more rapidly and resistlessly than hitherto. Wherein—so far as strategy is concerned—lies our weakness? The

causes are doubtless many. Each of us will naturally urge that which has become the burden on his own soul. I wish to speak to one deficiency which has seemed to me, with growing conviction, to be fundamental, the lack of more comprehensive planning for an adequately trained Chinese ministry. Most of our great problems trace back to this. Self-support, reaching the educated classes, home mission schemes, conserving the results of special evangelistic efforts as well as of the quiet, steady work through which students are won to Christ in our mission schools, a church life, and a religious literature more true to the genius of the Chinese race, etc. Dr. Eddy said to me that his keenest anxiety when out here four years ago was the evident incapacity of the majority of Chinese pastors to win the men who then showed interest. In proportion as the meetings of the past year indicated an advance over those of four years hence was the lack of preparedness in the pastorate—there were notable exceptions—the more disastrous. In many places now it is not so much the difficulty of winning men of a certain type, as of finding a congenial church life where such men can be absorbed and nurtured. And if we are to be forward-thinking men we need to realize that this state of things will become greatly accentuated in the future, unless we begin to plan now for a program covering many years ahead.

In all this I am pleading primarily for a type of clergy whose native ability, combined with sufficient general and theological education, will enable them to be leaders. And if I seem to place undue emphasis on scholarship, it is not for empty appearances, but for practical efficiency. The proper technical training can best be given only to those who have already had a thorough course in arts. Two dangerous tendencies which have recently come to my attention will illustrate what I mean. One is that men with rich Chinese culture, but with little Christian knowledge, in accepting Christ, will undertake to interpret him and his message, and because of their literary style and psychological sympathies, will win a wide acceptance which may result in serious injury to essen-

tial Christian truth. Another is that in the present currents of theological thought, scientific and philosophical study, conflicting views of a transition period, our Chinese ministry, unfamiliar with the issues, unable to argue with, or even to understand, those in need of intellectual guidance, will take refuge in an ignorant dogmatism, from which the foreign missionary is protected by his general culture and special training. Real, therefore, as is the possibility of cleavage hereafter among missionaries on traditional versus modernizing views, the real danger is among the Chinese, where a superficial knowledge and a sincere desire to popularize Christianity on the one hand, with a loyal intention on the other to stand for what are supposed to be fundamental doctrines, may produce an alignment among Chinese, which, while perhaps unnecessary, would yet prove more disastrous than any present lack of unity. If such ruptures come, we missionaries will have been chiefly responsible through failing to furnish the leaders competent to appreciate historic Christianity, and to express its essential teachings with convincing power to thoughtful Chinese.

Much more convincing evidence of the hindrance this lack of a better trained type of native preachers is to our cause, arises from the Chinese themselves. Perhaps the best-known of Chinese Christians gives his opinion thus:

"I have been an advocate for a higher standard of Chinese preachers for the last decade or so. It has been my conviction that the preacher's is the most important position that a young man could aspire to hold. . . . Hitherto I fear that the kind of preachers we have had has been far below the standard. For the ignorant classes, these preachers have filled their positions well, but Christianity is bound to reach the higher classes. In order to attract and teach the educated classes, the preacher must also be a man who is equal to the task. And in order that preachers shall have the same intellectual stamina, as well as spiritual power, to cope with the new situation, it is important that their training should be of a higher order than that of the present preachers. . . . That has been the experience in

every land. God has raised up from among the different peoples men of ability and education to be the leaders of the Church. The same must be true of China."

In similar vein the Chinese Secretary of the China Continuation Committee writes:

"The Christian Church in China is meeting a new situation today. With the incoming of more non-Christian men to the Church, and with the growing desire for a true indigenous Church on the part of the church members, unless there is a well-trained and strong ministry, the Church will not be able to meet the needs of the present and the coming day. . . . The present situation is different from that of former years, and it is necessary that the workers should receive the best possible training. More intellectual training does not mean less spiritual qualifications. God wants the entire man for His service, head, heart, soul and all. I am sure higher theological education will draw more of our best-trained men to the ministry, and men of the right spirit."

There exists a still more disastrous, though negative, consequence of the present failure. Popular conceptions about the ministry are being formed, based on the type generally seen, and this, among other bad effects, is actually acting as a deterrent in giving the better students an adequate vision of what the ministry really is. Among sympathetic non-Christians this sentiment is everywhere prevalent and pronounced. Making all allowance for unjust or unintelligent criticism so general a testimony is significant, and is a summons to serious thought.

The writer has tried through various processes to ascertain the causes why our mission schools have furnished so few of the higher grade of men for the gospel ministry. These causes can for our present purpose be roughly summarized into three groups: (1) Moral and spiritual defects; (2) economic and family considerations; (3) mission policy. These divisions are, of course, not clear-cut. For all those which are due to faulty moral and spiritual attainments on the part of our students, however they may explain or excuse our lack of men, are most emphatically within the scope of mission policy

to try to remove. Again, each of us well knows how inseparable from every phase of our work is the eternal money question, this spectre at our spiritual feasts, this pertinacious intruder into our every discussion. We know also that in the East, where the social unit is not the individual but the family, even a consecrated student cannot free himself from economic responsibilities having to do with parents, younger brothers or sisters, intricate financial issues which no Westerner ever can wholly unravel. Conversely the attitude of the family has been one of the potent factors in winning young men to the ministry in the West. Out of 128 ministers, including the 100 who would be regarded as the foremost of the past five hundred years, all but nine came from homes which were decidedly favorable to the decision made. Out of 400 of the leading ministers of North America, more than four-fifths assigned the influence of Christian parents and of home life as the chief factor affecting their decision. Four sons went out from the home of Bishop Westcott into the service of Christ in India. The eight sons of Dr. Scudder became missionaries. Illustrations of this sort can be indefinitely multiplied. Here again it falls within the sphere of missionary policy and privilege, so to Christianize family life, as to secure the spiritual atmosphere, the holy and helpful influences, which will make it easy for choice young men to decide for this sacred calling. Family opposition—nowhere more to be reckoned with than in China—can thus be turned to a correspondingly powerful aid. While there are not lacking among our candidates, sons of Chinese clergymen, a few even of the third generation, yet it is discouraging to note how many such deliberately turn away from their fathers' vocation, not infrequently with their approval.

But in the narrower sense of mission policy there are two outstanding hindrances. You will have surmised the first to be the perennial and perplexing matter of salaries. I am not quite so rash as to attempt a discussion of the vexed problem of salaries, but I do believe with increasing conviction that in most societies there is need for a radical change of policy—

not necessarily a raising of the whole scale. One wonders whether if in the proper effort to guard against (1) unworthy men being attracted to the ministry and (2) retarding self-support, we have not erred in excessive caution. Certainly the salary ought to be so regulated as to make it no temptation to the grade of men concerned. Self-support may be accomplished, rather than defeated, by securing a stronger type of preacher. The more expensive man may be even in mission finance the more economical. This is what a Ningpo pastor meant—one of the wisest and most loyal of Chinese preachers—when he remarked to me that this was the time for the foreigners to make heavy investments, investments in young life. costly perhaps, but paying heavy dividends.

The second hindrance consists in the low grade of theological education. There has been notable improvement in this respect during the last few years. But that there is no occasion yet for smug optimism can be made apparent from the following paragraphs of the report on "Modern Missions in the Far East," by Dr. William Adams Brown, of Union Seminary, New York. This sympathetic but acute observer is also a specialist when dealing with this particular phase of his subject. You must allow me two or three paragraphs from Dr. Brown's admirable statement of his impressions about us and our work:

"Most critical of all is the situation in China. Here I must confess to disappointment. When one remembers how long Protestant missions have been at work in China, how many and how able the missionables, how great the influence of Christianity upon many phases of Chinese thought and life, it is discouraging to find the Chinese Church still so weak, and to see the contrast between it and the Japanese Church in independence and efficiency.

"Nothing impressed me more in passing from China to Japan than the contrast in the standards of theological education. The state of the theological seminaries is a good indication of the spiritual standards of the Church and, judged by this test, the schools of China leave much to be desired. In

their standards of requirement they are at least a generation behind the schools of Japan. Many of them are really Bible schools, rather than theological seminaries, as we understand the term. Men are admitted with little preliminary training, and even in schools of higher grade the course is necessarily of a very elementary character."

There is a third hindrance in the matter of mission policy which has obtained in the past, but is now happily being in many quarters removed. This is the feeling students have that in entering the ministry they are placing themselves under the control of a foreign organization, or become employees of missionaries. Rightly or wrongly, this has bulked large in their minds, weighing most heavily with the students of spirit and force. The following testimony from Dr. Brown will be supported by all who have talked much with Chinese Christian leaders or students facing the question of the ministry:

"It was interesting to get the opinion of the Chinese as to the reason for the failure of more able and intelligent Chinese to enter the ministry. All those with whom I talked agreed that one of the reasons was that the position of the native pastor had not been given sufficient dignity to attract men of independence and force.

"For the point to be insisted upon, is the fact that there is material for Christian leadership in China, if only we can discover it and, when discovered, properly utilize it."

The splendidly hopeful thing about these three hindrances arising from mission policy is that they are chiefly a question of mental attitude on the part of missionaries, and will therefore fade away with deepening determination on our part. Salaries, always less than the earning power of the man in question, but sufficient for him to live according to Chinese standards of self-respect, and with freedom from financial anxiety; higher standards of theological education; a larger share in ecclesiastical duties and privileges—these are all matters easy to remedy, when once we have a sufficient realization of the supreme importance of more men of the right quality.

Now a few words by way of constructive suggestion. What can be done about it?

(1) First of all, let me insist that the demand for a large number of adequately trained ministers is one that involves every missionary. One of the most thrilling features of the present war is that it is being waged by nations, not by governments or armies. Men and women, children and criminals, rich idlers and rustic farm-hands, all have their essential part. Public sentiment is an essential factor. The belief of the people in the cause of their government to the point of untiring effort and enthusiasm is what will win the war. Apply this to our present problem. Every missionary, whatever his or her time of service, or type of work, can be a recruiting agent, always on the alert for capable, promising young men, presenting the claims of this sacred calling to them personally, entering sympathetically and helpfully into their practical difficulties, steadying them in the purpose once formed, giving them a vision of the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ as we ourselves conceive it to be. I think of one elderly lady missionary, working in a very simple limited way, who has found and is seeing through his preparatory studies, one of the strongest volunteers in his college. Many a man in the homelands and here greatly used of God has been led to decide for the ministry through the quiet influence and unknown self-denial of some consecrated woman. What I am trying to urge is that the failure to secure a better quality of man-power involves the work of every one of us in defeat. America may carry out her program in every other respect, but unless she has the ships, she fails. No less dependent for success is our whole program upon the ability to furnish a qualified Chinese leadership. To illustrate our weakness, let me be very concrete, and refer to the theological school with which I happen to be connected. In order to make our contribution toward the problem, we have planned to open this autumn a department limited to college graduates. Thus far we have had only one student to apply, able to meet the entrance requirements, the brother of Dr. Cheng, and not therefore from the Yangtse

Valley. Now of course there are a few other institutions which are providing for this grade of students. Still more is it a matter of course that we must not limit our thought to college graduates. But the fact remains that such a showing indicates disaster for the constituencies affected. I have cited one institution because—with certain inspiring exceptions—it is typical of all China. I have a file of letters from every section of the country confessing to the lack of such men or of the facilities for securing them. One of the very finest mission colleges in China has in its otherwise noble history sent only one graduate into the ministry. This again is sadly typical. Yet I dare say almost every one of us can think of splendid young Christian Chinese who, under proper influence, might have given their lives to the direct service of the Church. The remedy for this deplorable state of things is first and foremost for us every one to care more about it, to become alarmed about it if you will, to the point of praying and planning an individuals, for laborers able to enter this vast and whitening harvest.

(2) The second service we can all render is in the matter of funds. In many respects a radically different program will call for heavy outlay. But here again the war has its lessons. We all are staggered by the huge sums devoted to war expenditure. Where did the money come from? Why are all our people so willing for an apparently reckless and wasteful abandon of spending? The simple answer is in order to win the war. No airplanes or shells are too costly, however brief their time of use, no self-denials too hard, if these things contribute to victory. Our missionary finance is in constant danger of becoming conventionalized. We strain at relatively slight increase in the salary of Chinese preachers, while placidly swallowing the large items involved in retaining an old or calling for a new missionary. A certain society—not in the Yangtse Valley—recently let go several college graduates who had volunteered for the ministry because it lacked funds for their education. One wonders if it would not have been better to retire one missionary, which would probably have re-

leased enough money to educate the whole bunch. At any rate, there is a call to readjust our finances so that whatever other things that have seemed so essential are given up—our own work appropriations, better buildings, more reinforcements from home—we shall command enough money for securing and training and supporting properly every available consecrated and capable Chinese student. Perhaps we are all making personal sacrifice to the limit. This is a plea for sacrifice—more costly to every true worker—in the use of missionary funds. But the deeper lesson of the war is not in the matter of wise emphasis to secure the most effective results. Has it not challenged our faith as to the limitless resources available for a worth-while object? Every one of our nations is now doing the absolutely impossible in the money it handles. Believing in a God to whom nothing is impossible, shall we not dare anything essential to our victory? Nor is there anything for which our home churches would more cheerfully increase their gifts. The Mission Boards seem to find debts as normal to them as the average Chinese. Yet one of the secretaries of my own Board—one of the most heavily in debt—wrote me last week as follows: “We are all very confident that a year from now, when the church year closes, we will receive a very large increase in funds. If so, I hope that there will be funds sufficient for all your needs.” It is scarcely necessary to close this topic by assuring you that there has been no advocacy of excessively high salaries, or of financial inducements, but only of the unlimited use of money so far as it can be wisely and carefully employed and is necessary for the campaign forward.

(3) A third suggestion is in the direction of more calculating and comprehensive mission policy. It is very significant that the societies which have been the most successful in the problem under discussion and have the most definite plans for its solution are those with the most highly centralized control. Myself a Presbyterian, and an intense believer in democracy, I plead for some organized process, first, for studying our fields, and estimating our needs, and then for searching out

and dealing with the young men with whom to meet those needs. Now that the American republic is in earnest, it has organized itself, and clothed its organization with authority as powerful as any tyranny of past or present. It is worthy of comment that the mission which is at present reconstructing its policy most effectively in order to build up its Chinese ministry is Baptist, and therefore congregational in polity!

(4) A fourth phase of the matter in which all can exert an influence is in regard to the quality of teaching in theological colleges. This is in a sense a technical problem. So is the production of airplanes and of ships, or the retaining of an incompetent general, or the attempting of a too dangerous expedition. But in all such matters popular opinion has been exerting tremendous and beneficial influence. Our missionary body can demand that the seminaries somehow be made to measure up. They are perhaps doing their best as at present constituted. But if we are all in desperate earnestness about removing every hindrance in the way of attracting the finest spirits among Chinese students to the ministry, methods can be discovered. One of the earliest of missionary mottoes was, "We can do it if we will." We want now in China enough theological colleges with a course so complete and so well taught that graduates of arts colleges will be given a clear evidence of the superb possibilities of the ministry, made willing to study in China rather than try to go abroad, trained so as to be prepared for the complex duties and difficulties and dangers awaiting them at the front—in short, seminaries which can satisfy our ideals and meet our demands. This will not be easy. I could occupy twice my allotted time in reciting our troubles. For my own part, the solution seems to lie along the line of more concentration. The standard has been set in the admirable grouping of the *Sheng Kung Hwei*. The other commissions have made a great advance by demonstrating that local unions of churches often quite unlike are thoroughly feasible. All of the larger seminaries in China are now on a union basis. But can we not go further and have geographical co-ordination? For instance, take the specific ques-

tion of a course for college graduates, which at present implies teaching chiefly in English. Apart from the *Sheng Kung Hwei* which is already adequately provided, would not one, or at the most two, schools be sufficient just now for all China? Every institution is facing the demand for such a course. Every one is also finding it impossible to secure enough teachers. Why not so correlate our work that we can have one really first-class theological college? The expense in student travel and other incidental features would be trivial in comparison with the advantage. For the outstanding difficulty is in the faculty.

(5) A fifth point is to commend to your sympathy and prayer the Student Volunteer Movement for the ministry. This as an organization which has been trying to present the claims of the ministry to the students in our schools through its regular secretaries, such as Rev. Ting Li-mei, as well as through volunteer speakers at student conferences, etc.

Finally, I want to remind you that the whole question is a spiritual one. Much help can come to us, therefore, here as always, from our Lord's example. Perhaps we fail to realize how much engrossed he was with the question of training a native ministry, how completely he gave himself to this during the latter part of his public work. It was a program of preparedness, promptly and perfectly carried through. The first half of the Book of Acts proves the foresight and fruitfulness of the method. One service of superlative usefulness, in the attainment of which we all have a part, is that of furnishing Chinese preachers who will have a secular and religious training enabling them most fully to incarnate while proclaiming their message. For such embodying of the word appeals to no people more than to the Chinese. Their one great specialty is human nature. "Knowledge," said their sage, "is knowledge of men," and in this science they have become experts. "The only profession which consists in being something," President Wilson has said with fine insight, "is the ministry of our Lord and Saviour—and it does not consist of anything else. It is manifested in other things, but

it does not consist of anything else." And if in what I have said the thought of strategy may have seemed to predominate over that sacrifice, there is need for this, too. Here, too, we can follow in the Master's steps. For a young man who loved life, and nature, and friends, and work, to relinquish all these so soon, and entrust to others the fulfilment of his own mission, must have had painful significance. We also may be called upon to give up leadership, and to sacrifice, in securing this type of Chinese leaders. But by intensive attention to giving such men to China, the ultimate evangelization of the nation is assured, however we may ourselves forego in the process, the joy of doing the greater works which these whom we shall have given will thus be able to perform.