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I. LITERARY.

AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS.*

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It has long been matter of anxious thought to me whether in my lectures on Pastoral Theology, I might not do something to bring the subject of experimental religion under the notice of fourth year's students. It is certain that one of the most vital, delicate, and difficult of the duties which you may have by and by to perform, will be to guide the more earnest and spiritual of your people in the ways of holy living and dying; to encourage in them the habit of personal communion with God; to show them how such communion may be maintained, and how it may be lost; and to bring under their notice such books, ancient and modern, as are most useful for that end. The question has often presented itself to me, Ought not a course of Pastoral Theology to provide some guidance, or at least furnish some hints, on this vital subject? But I have usually dismissed the question with the thought, It is not a subject for lectures. Even if I were so familiar with it myself as to believe that I could teach it (of which I have great doubts), of what use would that be, seeing that if men do not learn it from their own experience, it is vain to dream of their learning it from the instructions of another? Nay, might it not be a snare to them, making them think they know the whole when they only know some of its signs or formula? Of all things to be deprecated, in connection with the pulpit, the worst is, preachers inculcating an experience which is not their own. Would not this be a probable, or at least a possible, result of a course of lectures on the life of the soul? But as often as the question has been dismissed in that form, it has come up in another. Without lecturing on it, might not one

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III. MISSIONARY DEPARTMENT.

NATIVE HELP IN CHINA.

THERE are so few, either in the great mission field of China, or at home, who deny the necessity of native help and the very important part that it plays and always must play in the evangelization of that empire, that we may safely assume that missionaries and those especially interested in Foreign Missionary work, unanimously admit this necessity. In fact, it may be said that every successful missionary society and missionary in China—I mean successful in the Scriptural sense, *i. e.*, of saving souls—is so, humanly speaking, because they judiciously develop and use native helpers in their work. The amount of such success is in proportion to the number and character of the native helpers used. Those who deny their importance must do so either from ignorance of the value of native help, or from prejudice against it. So we need not stop here to argue the necessity of native help in China.

There is, however, some difference of opinion as to how we are to get this help. Some say that we must “pick out” men from among our converts and train them by constant association with them, by teaching them Bible truth and by sending them out, or going with them in person, as the case may be, to preach the gospel to the heathen. It is urged that every missionary ought thus to have around him “an evangelistic household,” as had the apostle Paul. It is argued that in this way we combine theory and practice, and thus get the best, most efficient men.

Others say that we ought to have Christian training schools in which we may develop and train the youths and young men, either Christian or heathen, whom we may select, and that we must look mainly to these schools for our supply of native teachers and preachers. Where it is practicable, the students taken into such schools are already either inquirers or Christians, but where these are not to be had, as in newly-opened stations, heathen youths are selected. The students in such a school are taken through a regular course of study, under strictly Christian training and influence. Such in outline are

two main methods by which missionaries endeavor to supply the enormous demand for native help in China. It remains for us to show which is the best adapted to reach the end in view. To begin, we say, unhesitatingly, the latter; and we think it is not difficult to prove this assertion to any unprejudiced or well-informed mind.

1. The first method—that of “picking up” suitable Christian men as we may find them, makes the whole work of developing a native agency, merely *incidental* to our work as missionaries. It does not bring this feature of the work into sufficient prominence. Both the teaching and tenor of Scripture example, as well as the history of mission work in China, prove that the developing and using of native help is of *prime importance*, and that to neglect it is fatal to any really successful work. Now suppose it is left to each missionary, or to each station, first to gain converts by single-handed efforts, and from these to select suitable men to train for the work of preaching. In the majority of the cases this training will be neglected, even though there be converts from which to select. As a rule, one missionary cannot do more than one kind of work well, and to impose on him the work of training native preachers in addition to that of regular preaching, will generally result in his neglecting the training work very much, if not altogether. There is very little fascination connected with the hard drudgery of training natives, and preaching to the crowds in street chapels, on the streets and elsewhere, is far more attractive, especially to a young missionary, than the apparently slow work of teaching a few. Again, it might as well be argued that a missionary should be both physician and preacher, as that he should be both trainer and preacher. The fact is, that in a field like China, a preacher has too much to do in his own department to give much attention to either healing or teaching, and the same is true, *mutatis mutandis*, of a physician or a teacher. In any well-manned station, these three departments of labor must have at least one man to give his main attention to each department. If not, one or other of these parts of the work will be sure to suffer from neglect, and we can least of all afford to let the work of developing native help suffer.

2. This method is impracticable, and that too just when and where we most need native help—that is, in new fields and new stations. It presupposes the very thing for which we most ur-

gently need the helper—gaining converts. We must have converts, and a sufficient number of them, too, to select from among them men for preachers, and at the same time, we must have the helpers by means of whom to gain the converts. Missionaries who have worked on this method in new places, have often had to wait for years for their first converts, and very much longer before they had any that were judged suitable for training to preach.

3. The method of “picking up” men from the converts that we chance to have, proves itself utterly inadequate to needs of the work. It is “so far so good,” but it hopelessly fails to supply the enormous demand—a demand that can never be supplied by the mere increase of the foreign force. This plan has been tried in our own China mission for about eight years, and we have not in this way trained and put to work at the most more than three or four preachers. In our two newest stations we have had to depend altogether on other societies for native help, or do without entirely. Now, had we a good training school in each station, this would not in the least interfere with our picking up men from among the converts, when suitable ones are found, but we should in that case not have to depend entirely on the latter method, which has by actual and long trial shown itself so utterly inadequate. In fact it is very much as if the Church at home were to depend for its supply of ministers entirely on those that come in under the “extraordinary clause,” and were to have no Christian schools or colleges in which our young Christians trained and developed. The men who come in under the “extraordinary clause” are, or may be, just as efficient as those that come in through the regular channel, but the fatal trouble is that they are too few in number. Both the regular and irregular methods do not furnish a sufficient number of ministers at home, and yet we expected to furnish preachers in China only in the “extraordinary” way, where the need is a thousand times greater than it is at home.

4. All successful missionary societies in China, *i. e.*, successful in the Scriptural sense of winning souls, give much attention to the developing and judicious use of native help. This help has in almost, if not in every case, been developed in training schools. These schools contain not only Christian pupils, but in many places, heathen pupils as well. These heathen are generally converted under the Christian influence

and instruction of the schools, so that few leave school unbelievers. These schools have been the great instrumentality in the hands of the church in China for the raising up of a native ministry, and are still the great source from which native preachers, with the exception of a very small minority, come.

5. It is urged that the natives trained in schools are not as efficient as those picked out from the converts and trained in this more practical way. But we are of the opinion that experience and observation, as well as the actual facts, prove the contrary. The candidates trained in school are longer and more completely under the influence of Christian example and teaching, they are much more thoroughly instructed, they get freer from heathenism and become more thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the Gospel than others. Those that are picked out from such converts as may be under the missionary's care, are often men of adult or middle age, without mental culture and education—a qualification imperatively necessary in order to command respect among the Chinese—are thoroughly soaked with heathenism and superstition, in short, are not as good material in many respects as those Christians educated in schools. Those trained in schools are often described as "hothouse plants" who look forward to ministry as a means of livelihood. But the latter of these charges is much more applicable to men that have not had the advantage of school training. They are certainly more influenced by mercenary motives if indeed this charge can be justly lodged against any class of Chinese as distinguished from other Christians. The wages paid by missionaries to Chinese native helpers are generally too small to tempt an educated man, although they might be an inducement to an illiterate farmer or mechanic. But to prove once for all that missionaries do not overpay helpers who work under their direction, let me quote a short paragraph from the proceedings of the last meeting of the Shantung Presbytery in connection with the Northern Assembly in North China. "Five hundred dollars were contributed" (i. e. by native Christians) for the special support of native pastors. The nine elders, who were appointed to collect and control this special fund, recommend that during the coming year the salary of the native pastors should be \$8.00 per month and 50 cents per month extra for each child under 15 years of age. This report was adopted." Native helpers are generally paid

by missionaries from \$5.00 to \$8.00 per month, but here native Christians wish to pay their pastors from \$8.00 and upwards.

In conclusion, to free myself from any liability of becoming charged with casting reflection on any societies or missionaries, I will quote again from a recent published letter, written by a member of the China Inland Mission. This brother in his letter is reviewing the new book "Mackay of Uganda", and in his "notes" proceeds to say "Mackay assumes that the Arabs have been successful in Africa, and he considers their success has been due to their intrepidity, perseverance and determination. He assumes that the efforts of Europeans to improve Africa have failed, he then goes on to give the reasons for this failure, illustrates the subject and the plan he proposes by the science of engineering. This plan is the establishment of Normal Schools at convenient and healthy centres, to train carefully and thoroughly Africans (natives) to go forth as missionaries to their fellow countrymen. One is almost startled to find a man like Mackay pronouncing missions to Africa a failure, and it certainly behooves those who are responsible to examine and weigh the statements he makes. But I suppose the old system will be perpetuated, as it is much easier and more popular to appeal for aid and obtain foreign workers than to carefully and wisely train native ones. All the same, not only in Africa but in every mission field, experience is proving more strongly every year, that the careful training of native agents is essential to the establishment of self-supporting and fruitful churches." In a footnote connected with this passage the writer says: "I have noticed that some individuals who return to their native land because they are unable to master the language, forever after pose as returned missionaries, appealing fervently for volunteers to engage in a work they themselves abandoned."

POSSIBILITIES AND FACTS.

CAMERON JOHNSON.

How fond we are of criticising the meagreness of the work that this or that church is doing for this or that work of the church and all the while we cover with the broad mantle of charity our own failures in duty. "Therefore, thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou