

# THE Union Seminary Magazine.

---

Vol. XIII.

OCTOBER—NOVEMBER, 1901.

No. 1.

---

## I. Literary.

---

### WILLIAM WALLACE SPENCE.

By PROF. W. W. MOORE, D. D., LL. D.

NOTWITHSTANDING all that has been said about our age as an era of young men, it is undeniable that much of the world's best work is still done by men who are well advanced in years. The adage, "Old men for counsel, young men for war," while true in general, cannot be taken literally, as many of our most useful men of action are old men. Longfellow, in his *Morituri Salutamur*, recognized this fact in his catalogue of literary achievements by the elderly:

"Cato learned Greek at eighty; Sophocles  
Wrote his grand *Œdipus*, and Simonides  
Bore off the prize of verse from his compeers,  
When each had numbered more than fourscore years,  
And Theophrastus, at fourscore and ten,  
Had but begun his *Characters of Men*;  
Chaucer, at Woodstock with the nightingales,  
At sixty wrote the *Canterbury Tales*;  
Goethe at Weimar, toiling to the last,  
Completed *Faust* when eighty years were past."

Von Moltke, Bismarck, Gladstone, Hannibal Hamlin, Justin Morrill, John Hall, Moses Hoge, William Henry Green, John I. Blair, of New Jersey, and Charles Reid, of Norfolk, are examples of immensely active old age from the recent past, while we still have with us such leaders in public life as Lord Salisbury, such preëminent soldiers as Lord Roberts, such teachers as Pro-

## II. Missionary Department.

---

### THE MODERN EMPHASIS OF THE GREAT COMMISSION.

BY REV. JAMES I. VANOZ. D. D.

It is a long time since Christ's words, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," first broke the silence of a world peopled by hermit nations, holding to hermit creeds, preaching hermit faiths, practicing hermit civilizations, and trying to perpetuate a hermit existence. Considered as an announcement Christ's words were startling. They proclaimed that man's highest claim is not creed nor nationality nor even need, but the fact that he is a human being. Every creature was to be given the glad tidings of salvation because every creature was marked with the lineaments and dowered with the possibilities of a common humanity.

Considered as a demand, Christ's words were not only startling, but revolutionary. They called for the obliteration of all racial and caste lines and the reconstruction of human society along the line of Christian fellowship. Every creature was to be sought and brought into the universal brotherhood of man under the conscious and common fatherhood of God.

Considered as a command, Christ's words were not only startling and revolutionary, but impossible. A little company of disciples, poorly equipped, with little experience, and without influence, were sent forth to change the religious belief and the religious practices of the world. The venture was colossal, the campaign world-wide, the crusade age-reaching.

The disciples listened and obeyed. They attempted the impossible and accomplished the incredible. One would think 1900 years quite long enough to change the great commission from announcement to reality; to answer demand with compliance, and command with obedience. It is time our interest in missions should be that which attaches to fulfilled prophecy and accomplished plan.

Nevertheless, so far from this being the case, the unevangelized world outnumbers the Christian two to one. It is a strange negligence of which the church stands self-convicted. Well may

the unchurched ask: "Does the Christian believe his creed? Is he convinced himself of that which he would fain convince us?"

If Christianity is to redeem itself, it must evangelize the world. The anti-missionary church brands itself as un-Christian. More disastrous than all the assaults of infidelity, more perilous than rationalism, and more to be deplored than worldliness is the apostasy of that church which discredits itself and discounts its cause by stolid indifference to the Lord's supreme command.

The great commission is not less binding than it was. It has never been revised. It is not possible to cancel it from the gospel without undermining the whole structure of Christianity. It is basal and fundamental.

The church is a missionary society. Its business is advertised in the simplicity of its organization, in its portability, in the conditions of its existence and the laws of its development, no less than in its explicit promises and unmistakable marching orders. The enterprise of the church is primarily neither educational nor social, neither doctrinal nor liturgical, but missionary. The church that is baptized with the missionary spirit will be found strong in doctrine, sane in spirituality, and safe in activities. It will be evangelical if it is evangelistic. It will be united and harmonious in its own organic life in proportion as it centres itself upon its supreme vocation, the enterprise of missions.

While the command to the modern church is the same as that to the apostolic, the task is immensely easier. The hermit world is now but a memory. In the stead of that small group of inexperienced disciples without influence, there is a matchless organization gathering to itself all the vast resources of earthly power and having within reach of its faith the same resistless resources of divine power. All that wealth can buy and numerical strength can represent and educated thought can control musters on the side of the church in the modern missionary campaign. If those early disciples could attempt a world campaign and enter upon an age of crusade, surely the Christian of to-day need not back down before the same obligation.

The necessity for Christian missions is more apparent than ever before. The sweep of gospel purpose broadens with every century. Its outlook is like that of a man ascending a mountain, only the broader view brings with it no loss of distinctness. The demarcation between the secular and the spiritual has been reduced to a shadow, and ere long will disappear entirely. Re-

ligion never had so wide a field as it has now. Mr. Fiske says that "all future progress for man must be not biological but psychological, organic evolution gives way to civilization." In another place he declares it to be his conviction that "one of the strongest implications of the doctrine of evolution is the everlasting reality of religion." There is no evidence that man is making a better hand or a quicker eye or a keener ear. There is nothing to show that he is growing a superior brain or increasing his average capacity for thought. If he is to be more than he is, he must make his progress in the realm of religion. The missionary enterprise holds the key to all future and further development of the human race. If so, the great commission is thundering its appeal into the ears of the church with an earnestness that should be recognized and an emphasis that cannot be mistaken. The Christianity that has no missionary pulse is comatose. The church that is indifferent to missions discredits its own existence, denies the gospel it professes to believe and pretends to preach, allows its superlative powers to atrophy, and becomes inconsequential before a chance as sublime as high heaven and as far-reaching as eternity.

The command that backs Christian missions was never so tremendous a liability, and never such an immense asset. It is the method of past attainment and the means of future growth.

The missionary's task is nothing short of world-building. His edifice is the new heavens and the new earth. The gospel above can regenerate the world and reconstruct society.

To live in such a time as ours, in the centre of its marvelous achievements, in the thick of its unsurpassed opportunities, and proclaim the everlasting gospel of the happy God, whose potential spell is to conquer sin and redeem the race, is to confront a chance sublime enough to tempt the angels. It is the golden age for world-building. Never was man more evidently a co-worker with God. With an eloquence which must thrill faith and inspire hope the King is saying: "Go ye into the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

It is enough to stir the pulses in the veins of death, and tongue the dumb with apostolic fire.

Here in the prophetic dawn of a matchless century, whose vesper hymn may be the annunciation anthem of the new heavens and the new earth, the matin prayer of Christ's Church should be, "Here am I, O Lord, send me."