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I.—LITERARY.

A MODEL MISSIONARY—THE APOSTLE PAUL.

W. S. CURRELL.

[Address before the Society of Missionary Inquiry Union Theological Seminary.]

It is with no little trepidation that I, a layman, venture to speak to theological students upon a subject intimately associated with their daily toil. And in the Seminary Chapel, too! A place, the very atmosphere of which reeks with the forensic tortures of many a trial sermon. I remember distinctly some years ago I posed by request as critic of a seminarian who was striving manfully to marry a text to a sermon, when the two seemed to the critic's eye to be divorced forever by nature and by grace. I remember, too, how sedulously I avoided him for days afterwards in the vain hope that I should escape the disagreeable duty of giving him an unwelcome opinion of his heroic effort. The conditions are reversed to-night, but the speaker on this occasion craves indulgence rather than criticism, and would appeal to the heart rather than to the head.

The Bible is an amazing book. It is like a jewel with many facets polished with all the exquisite skill of the lapidary. A child can take up this jewel, turn one of its angles towards the Sun of Righteousness and reveal new spiritual beauties to the Sage. A savant of the schools can take this same jewel, place himself between it and the same Sun, or hold it up before the day-light of his intellect, and we see only him and his intellectual subtlety. I would approach my theme to-night in the attitude of a self-forgetful little child. I would hold up before you an old truth ably handled by many a great

edge of the language can be acquired. Portuguese cannot be learned without diligent and continued application ; but being a Latin tongue, and somewhat akin to English, it is much more readily acquired than the languages of the orient that belong to an entirely different family. The average man will generally be able to get regularly into the work within a year. Some have begun work in much less time.

All things considered, it may be safely affirmed that the Southern Church has not to-day a more *needy* or a more *attractive* mission field than Southern Brazil. To demonstrate this has been the writer's aim in this article, and if he succeeds in calling some of the Lord's laborer's into this Brazilian Macedonia, and enlisting the interest, sympathy and prayers of the readers of *The Seminary Magazine* he will consider his time well spent, will be deeply grateful, and abundantly satisfied.

SAM. R. GAMMON.

Lavras, Brazil.

HOME MISSIONS IN ALABAMA.

By REV. JOHN BARBOUR, D. D.

Recent years have witnessed a decided revival in the work of Home Missions in the Presbyterian church of this country, both North and South. This has followed naturally and logically. The controversies which have stated her faith, and the experience which has perfected her superb organism for work, secure upon her confessional foundations, and assured of her scriptural polity her heart now turns to the fields in our midst white to the harvest.

It is a matter of increasing pride to our own church, that in her very first Assembly, in all the appeal to her faith, and all the strain upon her resources she dedicated herself to Foreign Missions. And, considering all the circumstances, she has maintained a place second to no other church in this great enterprise. It is now her no less worthy ambition to give the gospel to the needy thousands about us.

A like unanimity has characterized the plan of evangelization adopted throughout the various branches of Presbyterianism. The great synods of New York, Ohio and Indiana as well as our own synods of Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina and others, have

adopted the "Synodical" plan. This was in process of coming about even before the demands of the General Assembly's Missions in Texas, Arkansas, the Indian Territory and Florida, had necessitated the remitting to the older states of their own Home Mission work. Forced thus to contemplate the needs of our respective states there was aroused at once a feeling of state pride, and a sense of state responsibility.

With this have come other advantages. The Synod has been reconstituted in its proper place. It has been perplexing, and even painful at times to hear from some of our most distinguished doctors slighting comments upon the function of this, one of the integral courts of our system. Under this treatment, as a consequence, the Synod has been poorly attended, and in fact has been discarded by some of the best men in the state.

The synodical plan of Home Missions reserves to the Synod its definite and distinctive work. It assembles brethren of the various presbyteries in the state in fellowship and labor, and it thus brings about a partnership by which a weaker presbytery may be helped by the more developed presbyteries. It has made of the Synod a great missionary body—the most delightful and effective gathering in which God's people ever came together.

These results have all come about in my own state of Alabama. The movement began in the Synod of 1891, meeting at Marion. And, surely, the need was great. In 10 counties of the state there was not one Presbyterian church. In several others a mere entry had been made. In some no effective work had been done by any branch of the christian church. This does not lose sight of the fact that under former methods much faithful work had been done by skillful and devoted men. Indeed, if one were writing a history of the heroism of missions, and computing results achieved in proportion to means, these Presbyterian movements would doubtless hold the palm. The destruction of property by the war, the depleting effect of the Reconstruction measures, and the depression and loss incident to the panic tested, as never before, the pluck, the spirit and the faith of a people. On the other hand, the revival of business growing out of the great mineral developments in Alabama really intensified, for a time, the difficulty. In the northern portion of the state, with which the writer is better acquainted, the opening of mining camps and the projecting of new town sites led to something of a "boom" in church building, with the reaction that usually follows enterprises started under those illusory conditions. Within

5 years, next previous to 1892, 35 churches were organized in the Synod. The subsidence of the wave of business adventure has left many of these entirely stranded; some without buildings at all, others with a debt plastered on them, and the most prosperous churches in the larger towns have been unable to come to the rescue of these imperilled enterprises. In Birmingham, Selma, Anniston, Montgomery and other places, the building of new churches and manses have absorbed their surplus, and in some cases has left embarrassing debts. The brave efforts of our missionaries and pastors in the smaller fields to bear up and advance under those conditions can never be duly appreciated, because never fully known, until the day of final account and award.

In these circumstances the temptation has been great to abandon the Synodical plan and revert to the Presbyterian, with its recognized advantages in certain particulars. The Synodical plan is admittedly not the best unless it be completed in the putting in the field of a staff of Presbyterian evangelists supplementing the Synodical agencies.

At one or two Synods it has seemed that the compact of the Presbyteries would be set aside, but at the last Synod the desire for co-operation again prevailed, and it is now hoped with returning business prosperity, and the better ability of our larger churches to help the work through the discharge of their own obligations now rapidly proceeding, that the Synodical plan is in the way of full establishment as the missionary method of the Alabama Presbyteries.

The plan of administration finally fallen upon is a very simple one. All the churches of the State remit to the treasurer of the Synod's committee. Out of this the committee employ and pay the expenses of a Synodical Evangelist, dividing the remainder from time to time equally among the three Presbyteries. The Presbyterian committees out of this supplement the support of their own missionary pastors, or if possible employ a Presbyterian Evangelist under their exclusive control. It is, of course, arranged that the Synodical Evangelist shall give his personal presence to each Presbytery a proportionate part of the year. This has been found to be the simplest, the most equitable, and the most satisfactory arrangement in this State.

The work has had from the beginning the service of some of the very best men in the Southern church. Men exceptionally gifted for such work—Guerrant, McIlwaine, Evans, Robertson, Morton, Bedinger—have been employed by the general committee besides

others, including some busy pastors, who have done good work under the direction of the Presbyterian committees.

The Central committee has been composed of some of our most capable pastors and elders, and these brethren have met stately, according to a manual prescribed by Synod to overlook the work, besides often supplementing by their own labor the work in their own localities. Rev. Russell Cecil, D. D., one of the wisest and most adaptable men in the States, was chairman until recently, and now Rev. E. P. Davis, of Montgomery, is directing the work to the general satisfaction. The present Synodical Evangelist is Rev. B. F. Bedinger, a man to the manner born. Coming of missionary stock, he has won his promotion by his own missionary service in Kentucky and Alabama. Few men unite so well, the missionary spirit with the sagacity, endurance and tact needed for the work. His last report shows good advance in the work of this year. The total number of services held, 479; churches organized six, with 73 members; 120 members received into other churches, mostly on profession of faith; 84 baptisms (45 infants and 39 adults); nine elders and seven deacons ordained and installed; over 1,200 pastoral visits made; over 300 letters written directly bearing upon the church work; \$190.93 collected for Synod's work; other collections having been sent directly to the treasurer; 9,250 miles travelled; beside subscriptions raised for pastors' salaries and for new churches.

A comparative statement of the finances of the committee for the five years preceding the last Synod shows the following:

	RECEIPTS.	DISBURSEMENTS.
Year ending Nov. 15, 1892.....	\$3,736.38	\$2,381.53
“ “ 1893.....	5,874.74	6,656.99
“ “ 1894.....	4,341.16	4,871.10
“ “ 1895.....	3,414.72	3,172.90
“ “ 1896.....	4,082.73	3,887.73

I venture to add to this statement of our work, asked by the Missionary editor, a few closing suggestions, the product of some experience in missionary administration in four States of the Union.

1. We need, to begin with, a thorough correction of the idea that has crept into many minds that the Presbyterian church is not fitted for pioneer work in our smaller fields. The very reverse of this is true. Presbyterianism is we doubt not in her doctrine and polity the most faithful embodiment and conveyance of the grace of God to a lost world. Following Paul most closely in her theology, she becomes also a follower in his missionary endeavor. Moreover,

there is no church better calculated to become, in the best sense, the people's church. It invites the masses into their God-given heritage in the government of the church. It more naturally commends itself to our American people, for all other things being equal, the church most germane in its organization to our social and political institutions will have a distinct advantage. And this too makes for character. The little churches in missionary fields organized by the apostle Paul were left by him to their own self-government through "elders ordained in every church." This has proven to be the finest institute for the development of strong and healthy Christian character. We may appeal to the history of the matter. The early annals of Presbyterianism in our own country furnished some of the greatest pioneer missionaries. In Kentucky, for example, the Presbyterians led many other church. It was "Father Price," a Presbyterian divine, who sounded the first note in the wilderness, in his sermon on the text, "The people that sat in darkness have seen a great light." Afterwards, the cultivated young ministers from "the Valley of Virginia" did a marvellous and most successful missionary work. The same results have followed the awakening of missionary enterprise in recent years. The records of other Synods would tell a similar story. There is evidence too of a popular turning to Presbyterianism wherever it has entered the Home mission field with its old-time fervor and perseverance. There are indications in this State that certain forms of Christianity hitherto most successful with the masses are losing their hold in the country districts. The people are yearning for a more instructed ministry. Every Presbyterian minister who has gone to a field hitherto unworked by his church, can testify to the hearty welcome which has ensued upon the first impression of curiosity manifested at the sight of a Presbyterian minister. The people love our truth; they love it in the simple direct way that an educated ministry can best give it to them. With this, the writer does not hesitate to class the successes of modern evangelism holding forth the distinctive teachings of Presbyterianism on regeneration, and perseverance, and the plenary inspiration of the word of God. Shall we ourselves lose faith in a system which has everywhere proven so powerful with the multitudes?"

2. The Home Mission cause shall be given the right of way in our synodical meetings. Not even so holy a cause as the orphan's support should be allowed, as I believe is the case in this state, to usurp the popular attention, due principally to the work of state evangelization. The work of our churches and missionaries is fundamental

to all benevolencies. We will have no orphan's homes, nor other philanthropies if the churches are not maintained in every position of our territory.

3. Ministers and Elders should be asked to pledge their churches at each annual meeting for an amount which they will try to raise for Home Missions. To be sure, we Presbyterians do not "pledge" nor "levy" on the churches. Yet we can fairly apportion the amount needed at such times, and can undertake with and promise each other our fair share of what is required. Voluntary giving does not set aside system. We will give more and will enjoy it more where the matter is taken hold of in a business way. The Synodical and Presbyterial committees should have a definite idea not only of what is needed, but what may fairly be relied upon.

4. Grants should be made to CHURCHES, and they should be trained and required to make application, upon a blank furnished them, giving the latest information from their fields with the effort they are willing to make to raise their part of the pastor's salary. The same application should recite a promise on their part to take at least one collection for the general cause. It is useless, it is unbrotherly, it is unchristian to ask our ministers to take the field on the poor attainments made except on a distinct business engagement, and all deficits not paid during the year should be sacredly reserved for them and paid in due time to them. How else can the business credit, and the courage of our advancing line be maintained? We are confident that the very best men in the church will volunteer for this work if they are properly sustained. There is a deep and well-grounded sense of unfairness in the way the mass of our ministry are being treated. We have no right to expect all the sacrifices to be made by the ministry, and no church exacting it can rightly expect the blessing of God upon it.

5. We should take the field with every form of ministration possible under our system. Where pastorates cannot be established or supplies employed independantly by a church, let us group several under a pastor-at-large, appointed by the Presbytery as it designates Evangelists for a field. Let us occupy the territory with colporteurs, and Sunday School Missionaries who will establish schools, and give simple gospel addresses to the people.

It should be made more and more honorable to give the earlier years of the ministry to such work. WHEN WILL OUR YOUNG MEN BELIEVE THAT A FEW YEARS SPENT IN THIS WAY MAY FURNISH THE FINEST MATERIALS FOR SERMONS AND THE MOST VALUABLE PREPA-

RATION FOR THE MORE COVETED PASTORATES? The writer, also, believes that our young men receiving aid from the church might properly be asked to give their first years to this work.

The Home Mission work will never be done. "The poor ye always have with you." In the suburbs of the larger cities, in sites deserted by the shifting of population, and in the gathering of new populations about factories, mines and other business ventures there will be a constant call for this service. From the situation of many of our southern communities, in agricultural and exposed districts, our people will be the prey of ignorant and designing men. A Mormon elder assured to the writer that his church had 450 missionaries in the South alone, about 50 in the state of Alabama. Thus error and diabolism in all its forms is doing desperate mission work. Ought it not to be entering the minds of more of our youth as Major Joseph Hardie has so cogently urged in two or three of our Seminaries, that the time has come to take up this Home Mission work as men give themselves to our Foreign fields? We believe this should be urged upon the young men as a privilege, and we believe that when the church is as faithful in sustaining them as she is towards her Foreign workers the same consecration will be forthcoming.

In all this wide domain there is no more attractive field than Alabama, from every point of view. In many sections the destitution is great, and they must remain long dependent on missionary aid; in many others there needs but resolute and devoted men to lay foundations on which there will arise strong and useful churches.

To set down the simple truth about the material wealth and prosperity of Alabama would read like a page from some glowing advertisement of the state. West Alabama is to be the iron and steel empire of the world; our northern section is to show a marvellous mineral development; in our middle portion there is as fine an agricultural belt as the sun shines on. Mobile is to be one of the great ports of the country, and the contiguous region with its riches of forest and field holds a glorious harvest in store for the gospel laborer. Young men! Come over and help us!