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Foreign Missions—Mission Presses.

These silent messengers of the Gospel, in China, Korea, Mexico, Persia, Siam, Laos and Syria, preached the Word in over 75,000,000 separate pages of religious matter during the year ending May 1, 1902.

The Mission Press, Beirut, Syria.

By Mr. E. G. Freyer.

Christ's parable of the mustard seed, which though the least of all seed becometh a tree so that the birds of the air lodge in the branches thereof, finds an illustration in the history of the Press.

Could the years speak, what a tale they might tell of hopes and disappointment, efforts and triumphs, joys and sorrows! Yet through it all the Lord has sustained His children and his work goes on and prospers.

The present year brings us to the eightieth anniversary of the Press, for we are told that Mr. Temple and his wife embarked at Boston on the second of January, 1822, and that he took with him a printing press designed for the mission at Malta.

As the early history of the Press is but little known to most readers of the ASSEMBLY HERALD, a few quotations from existing records may serve to introduce the subject.

The location of the Press at Malta was not the result of design but because printing could not be done safely, if at all, either at Smyrna or at Beirut. Its operations were begun under the impression that there was a more extended

taste for reading and reflection in the several communities of the Levant than really existed; and it is doubtful whether the larger part of the earlier publications were well suited to the Oriental mind.

However this may be, in the year 1829 it was decided to make it a leading object for a time, to furnish books for elementary schools, making them, as far as possible, the vehicle of moral and religious truth. The wisdom of this course was seen among the Greeks. A first book for schools called the Alphabetarion went into extensive use—27,000 copies were called for in Greece before the year 1831.

There had been more or less printing since 1822, but it was not until the close of 1826 that the arrival of Mr. Homan Hallock furnished a regular and competent printer. The establishment consisted of three small machines with fonts of type in English, Italian, Modern Greek, Greco-Turkish, Armenian, Armeneo-Turkish and Arabic; but the greater part of the printing was in Italian, Modern Greek and Armeneo-Turkish. The most important work was the translation of the New

Ministerial Relief.

By B. L. Agnew, D.D.

Thankoffering for Endowment.

One of the venerable men on the Honorably Retired Roll of the Board of Relief has given the Board one-half of his annuity as the first actual payment of a contribution to the New Million Dollar Endowment for the Board, although a lady had previously promised a large sum to this fund, which has not yet been covered into the treasury of the Board.

Let Christians learn more and more to think what a faithful ministry has been to their deathless souls and make thankofferings to this sacred cause.

President McKinley, it is said, nearly always wore a carnation in the buttonhole of his coat. One was always laid by his frock-coat in the morning and another by his dress-coat for dinner, and when he was traveling in the cars his secretary always kept him supplied with this lovely little flower. When a train would stop the President would alight from his private coach and walk forward to the engine, take the carnation from the button-hole of his coat, and place it in the grimy hand of the faithful engineer, and say kindly, "I sincerely thank you for your skill and my safety."

How much, O, how much do we thank the men who have been our pastors for their skill and for our safety? Are our gifts to aged ministers commensurate with the acknowledged debt we owe them for what they have been to us in days that are gone?

Consider the worth of the Christian ministry from the inspiration they have been to us in fighting the fierce and fateful battles of life, and will not the people of our churches show their gratitude to the ministry of the church in the time when they so sorely need their material help?

A great merchant in Paris, Julian Legrand, belonged to a firm that needed \$100,000 to tide them over a fearful crisis. A gentleman heard of the firm's misfortune, and went to Mr. Legrand, and said, in a kindly, business-like manner, "I hear, Mr. Legrand, that you are in need of money," and the embarrassed merchant replied, "We certainly are." "How much do you need?" "Not less than \$100,000." The stranger then said to him, "Draw me your note for that

amount, without interest for one year, and I will give you my check for it. And the surprised merchant scanned him closely and said, "But, pray, why do you come to our relief?" Then the stranger told him the story of his life and his gratitude. He said when he was a poor, small boy at school, with the children of wealthy parents, Mr. Legrand, who was a School Commissioner, visited the school on the day of examination, that so sorely tries most young souls, and he put his hand on his head after he had passed a rather poor examination, and told him that he could do better than he had done that day, and that if he was only resolute and would push on, the way of honor was open to all alike. "That," he said, "was the turning point in my life," and he said, "From that hour my soul has aspired, and I have never reached a good result without blessing you in my heart. I have prospered, and I am wealthy, and I now offer you but a poor return for the soul-wealth you gave me in that by-gone time."

Think, men of wealth, O think how the teachers of our holy religion have awakened in your souls new thoughts, have inspired you to do your best in life, have encouraged you in days of temptation and trial, have brightened your hearts and homes with the arousement and golden cheer of the Gospel of Christ, and have enthused and energized you for nobler, grander work than even making honest money. You have been endowing schools and colleges, homes and hospitals and is it not now high time that, in appreciation of the soul-wealth you have received from the old ministers of our church, you should endow the Board of Relief, and show your heartfelt gratitude for what you have received through the instrumentality of the ministers of God? Nothing you can do with your accumulated millions will ever bring you a greater revenue from the beneficiaries of your beneficent bounty. Superannuated men whose heads are covered with a crown of glory will praise God for the relief you afford them in the time of need; widows will call you blessed and pray for heaven's mercies to rest upon you; orphans will love your name and revere your memory; and toiling servants of the Lord, in the vigor and strength of their

manhood, will labor more hopefully as they think of the dependent loved ones in their humble homes, and know assuredly that through your generous provision they will never come to want. And the man who gives a million to the Board of Relief will be more talked about and more highly honored, and more fervently remembered at a throne of grace than any man that ever endowed any institution of any kind in all our land.

THE GOOD WORK DONE.

The Board wishes to be spared the painful necessity of ever having to withhold until the close of the year any part of the appropriations made to the worthy families on its roll. These people ought not to be expected to remain in doubt about what they are to receive. It was a day of Thanksgiving when, at the close of the last year, the money came into the treasury in large and unexpected quantities, and we were able to pay all appropriations in full.

The Board did not withhold the fifth from those on the H. R. roll, because the General Assembly has directed the Board to pay them the full \$300 a year, if they ask that much.

Here is a letter from a man not yet on the Honorably Retired Roll, because he is not yet quite 70 years of age:

"Dear Brother: Your check for \$50 was received this morning. It is in answer to prayer. I have been asking the Lord all winter that He would bless the Board, that He would raise up friends for it, that He would have mercy upon us. And now thanksgiving goes up to God for this timely relief. Truly this house is to-day a house of praise. May God bless our benefactors is my continued prayer."

Here is another letter from a man not yet on the Honorably Retired Roll:

"The check received this morning results to me in a day of sincere thanksgiving and praise. It was hard to endure the trial, and difficult to adequately convey in words the feeling of gratitude to God for the blessed relief, and thanks to the Board for the kindness received."

When these venerable men are 70 years old and have been in active service in the Presbyterian Church for thirty years, it is a great relief to them to be placed on the H. R. Roll, and to be entitled to receive \$300 a year as long as they need that amount. It is lifting a helpless man into a carriage and taking him safely home.

One man, in applying to be placed on the H. R. Roll, a few days ago wrote as follows: "The H. R., in my interpretation of it, signifies the high road which conducts its travelers above and beyond the lowlands and murky atmosphere of the earth to the lofty, sunshiny land beyond the river. So may it be for my precious wife, and for your grateful friend and brother."

Pastors who have lived on small salaries can teach the people how difficult it is to live on the small amount each one receives, and how utterly impossible it is to provide for the time of old age, and can forecast the future and tell them how hard it is for a minister's family to live on the small provision made for retired ministers by the church.

Here is a sample. A minister's wife wrote me this letter a short time ago: "We are truly thankful for the \$80 just received from our dear Presbyterian Board of Relief. On account of sickness and extra expenses, we still owe bills, the very thought of which makes me shudder! I am at a loss to know how to manage, for the burden falls on me. I dare not worry my poor, sick husband with our distressing circumstances."

This is not an isolated case. It is the common experience of hundreds of our families.

It is more and more our deep conviction that our people generally do not fully realize the soul-cheering and heart-comforting work of the Board of Relief to the families that have given literally their lives and their all to the church and are left without an income in their old days.

One of our ministers, still in active service, has placed several thousand dollars in our hands, on which we are to pay annuities to him during his lifetime and to aged relatives for whom he is caring, and who is continually sending the Board contributions for its work, sent us a check a short time ago, and said, "I now expect to send on still another gift in March. The more I think over the good work the Board is doing, the more I love it."

A business man in Chicago recently wrote a letter to us enclosing a check, and said: "I wish this might be doubled many times, as I consider it so deserving that really I feel like placing it at the head of all the Boards; to say the least, my sympathy for the recipients of your Board is very close to my heart."

Then should not the Board be more liberally endowed, and receive larger church collections than in years gone by?