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THE ASSEMBLY HERALD

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WHO is going to tell the American people the gifts our immigrants bring? Who is going to tell these people what gifts we have for them? Who is going to bring them the gospel as we understand it?

—Edward A. Steiner

THE ASSEMBLY HERALD

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY ORDER OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
A. W. HALSEY, D. D., JOHN DIXON, D. D., WILLIAM H. SCOTT, Committee.

CONTENTS FOR JANUARY, 1908

The Board of Foreign Missions—January Topic: General Survey	1
The Foreign Mission Outlook	1
Presbyterian Men's Foreign Missionary Convention. <i>By David McConaughy</i>	6
The Central District Synods and Foreign Missions. <i>By Charles Edwin Bradt</i>	8
There Is Something Doing in the Southern District. <i>By J. M. Patterson</i>	9
Advertisement: Missionary Capsules. <i>By Dr. T. H. P. Sailer</i>	10
Missions in the Sunday School. <i>By Rev. George H. Trull</i>	11
New Leaflets, Monthly Concert Topic	11
Tabulated Summary of Seventy-four Years of Foreign Missionary Work	12
Obituary—Mrs. Amelia P. Lowrie, Miss Grace D. Lynch	12
The Board of Home Missions—January Topic: "Our Foreigners"	13
A Million a Year. <i>By Charles L. Thompson, D.D.</i>	13
Our Foreigners. <i>By the Rev. Ferdinand von Krug</i>	17
Over Against Your Own House. <i>By Ozora S. Davis, D.D.</i>	20
The New Ellis Island. <i>By Arthur Huntington Gleason</i>	23
Face to Face	25
Immigration Notes. <i>By Robert Watchorn</i>	28
Among the Hungarians Near Buffalo. <i>By the Rev. Bel a Basso</i>	29
Our Church and the Foreigners. <i>By John Dixon, D.D.</i>	30
Christianity's Storm Centre. <i>By Rev. Charles Stelzle</i>	31
Young People's Department. <i>By Von Ogden Vogt</i>	32
Bibliography of February Topic, the Indians	33
Topic Literature, Treasurer's Statement	34
The College Board—James Stuart Dickson, D.D., Secretary	35
The Board of Church Erection—Erskine N. White, D.D., Secretary	38
The Board of Education—Joseph Wilson Cochran, D.D., Secretary	40
The Board for Freedmen—Edward P. Cowan, D.D., Secretary	42
The Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work—Alexander Henry, D.D. 44	
The Board of Ministerial Relief—B. L. Agnew, D.D., LL.D., Cor. Secretary ..	46
The Permanent Committee on Temperance—John F. Hill, D.D., Chairman ..	48
Officers of the Boards of the Church	52

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The Foreign Mission Outlook

The year 1908 bids fair to be one of the great years in the annals of Foreign Missions. All signs point to a deepening and increasing interest in this world-wide enterprise.

The last Annual Report of the Board will repay the careful and thoughtful study of every Presbyterian interested in the work of extending the Kingdom of God. Take the single statement regarding the contributions from churches: In 1899 the receipts from churches were \$313,552.22; in 1907, \$495,776.16. It is true that the Church has grown largely in these years, and there should have been an increased offering due to numerical growth, but these figures indicate a very decided increase in interest on the part of God's people in this work. The total contributions from all sources in the same period is equally significant. In 1899 the receipts were \$921,093.82; in 1907, \$1,276,747.85. The congregational offerings of the home churches for Foreign Missions are now about equal to their combined offerings for all the other seven Boards of the Church.

The undoubted evidence of a more intelligent interest in missions is indicated in the growth of the Laymen's Movement. For many years the women of the Church have been most aggressive and progressive in the cause of world-wide missions. It is only within recent years that any considerable number of laymen have recognized their responsibility for the sending of the Gospel to foreign lands. The Laymen's Movement during the past twelve months has assumed large proportions. At the celebration in connection with the Haystack Centennial the laymen became so deeply interested that a committee was appointed to visit the various mission fields of the world. Many Christian men going out at their own charges have visited

a large number of mission stations, have made personal examination of every phase of work, and have brought back to the home land full and accurate reports. It is needless to say that these reports have been of the most encouraging character, and have stimulated mission interest in many churches.

The men's meetings held during the year in various large cities, under the auspices of the Laymen's Movement, have proved most stimulating. Thousands of men have pledged their support to Foreign Missions who never before manifested any interest in this great work. The increasing knowledge of the work has been followed by an ever deepening interest. Everywhere among the churches strong business men are showing new respect for missions, and in many places they are organizing for more effective support of the cause. The great Men's Convention in Omaha, February, 1907, was a memorable illustration of this. Over one thousand Presbyterian laymen came together for the sole purpose of considering the foreign mission obligation of the Church. A similar convention is to be held in Philadelphia, February 11-13 of this year. Elaborate preparations are being made (see article by Mr. McConaughy in this number of THE HERALD), and we hope that it will bring together a large body of consecrated men and exert a far-reaching influence.

The interest among the young people is growing as never before. The First International Missionary Convention under the direction of the Young People's Missionary Movement will be held in Pittsburgh, Pa., March 10, 11, 12, 1908. The foremost speakers on missionary topics, and leading missionaries and influential native Christians will appear on the program. The Young People's Missionary

The Need of Christian Education for the Colored People.

By Rev. S. J. Fisher, D.D.

If our Church is to do its proper work among the colored people it must give a thorough Christian education. Those who are unfamiliar with the South cannot easily understand how necessary this is. First, because the great mass of those people are as yet the slaves of superstition and false religion. They are naturally religious. An atheistic or infidel negro is a rarity. They believe in God, in a future life, in future punishment, and in the reality of Jesus. But there is too often a divorce between religion and morality in their minds, a reliance upon mere emotions, upon excited feelings as a test of being saved. It is to those blinded by a false Christianity, to those who can see in a preacher who leaps up on the pulpit and squats there, the evidence of the Spirit's power and a holy frenzy. This is an actual fact recently occurring in the State of North Carolina. Such people can never be reached except by a Christian education, which will open their eyes to the truth as it is in Jesus, and educate the conscience to desire holiness.

Second. There is a need of pure homes, of pure wives and mothers. We cannot expect to reach the children and gather congregations of those who truly wait on God unless we are making clean, true-hearted, faithful women at home. As the boys and youth attain manhood, their homes and households will never rise above the level of the wife and mother. No one can realize, unless they have moved among these people, how low has been and still is their standard of personal purity, of the upright life, or how easily vice is condoned. As a Southern merchant said to the writer: "There must be created a higher standard of judgment and life among these people. They must be taught a higher accountability. For none of us has any extra goodness, and the force of public and social opinion is a necessity for us all." Out from our boarding schools have gone and are going girls and boys with this higher standard of morals, to live self-respecting lives, to exhibit a true marriage, to show a Christian home, and through their children to create a larger Christian society.

This difficulty of rearing a Christian family among immoral neighbors is not easily real-

ized by many of us. We can easily choose our social relations. But in a little Southern town a Christian colored man and his wife were so perplexed to find proper associates for their children, so troubled over the immorality of their neighbors, that for a time they decided to move to a larger place, where such conditions might be avoided, and it was only when the plea of their own responsibility toward that place was put to them that they decided to remain.

Third. Proper elders and workers in our churches are possible largely through Christian education. Our Presbyterian system requires elders, and Sabbath-school teachers are also needed. Worthy elders are not easily made or found. Frequently churches are injured and pastors are hindered by weak, and ignorant and untrained elders. Education does not make a truly consecrated and useful elder, and there are, at times, illiterate men who are exceedingly useful and faithful; but it goes without saying that our churches are more likely to have proper sessions when men of piety and education abound. In our churches there are also the graduates of our schools who furnish the music, are energetic in every good work, and stimulate a noble ambition in the boys and girls.

Fourth. A Christian education makes these boys and girls self-respecting, cleanly and industrious. While there are, of course, failures, they are the exception. A proper education gives these young people a better idea of life, creates better ideals, fosters ambitions and makes industry a necessity. The idle class who live from hand to mouth, and who work two days to loaf a week, are not the educated ones. It is their lack of a true education that makes them so easily contented. A white banker in South Carolina remarked that it was "not true that education spoiled the negro youth. It was the envy and jealousy of the poor whites that made such statements." If a man, white or black, has no better desires, no ambitions, nothing to live or struggle for, he will work no more than necessity compels. But our Christian education is not only teaching these colored youth larger desires for themselves, but, also, the sense of responsibility for the uplift and civilization of others. What their white teachers and brethren are doing for them is making them try to do for their own degraded people.