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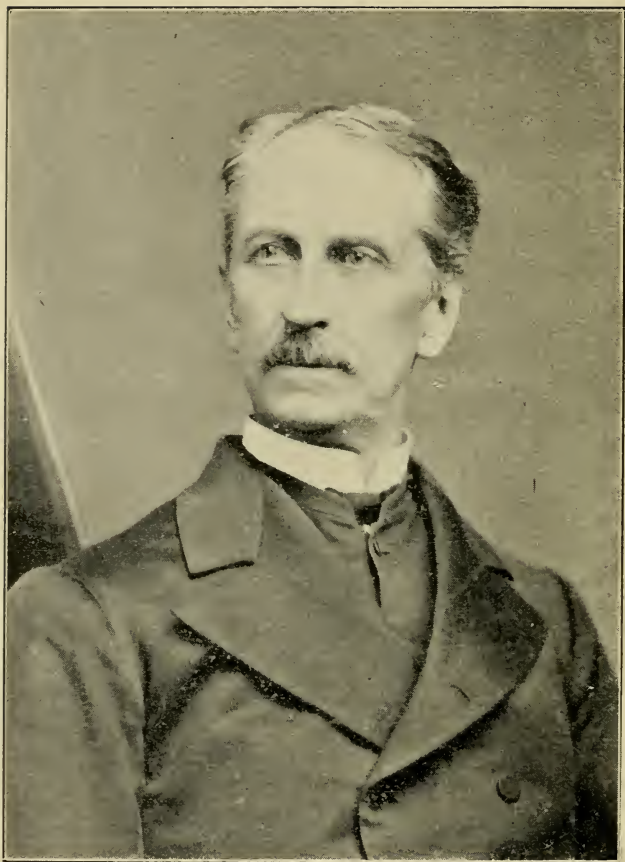
THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH
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OF THE WESTMINSTER STANDARDS.

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VIII.

RELATION OF THE WESTMINSTER STANDARDS
TO FOREIGN MISSIONS.

BY

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ANALYSIS.

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VIII.

RELATION OF THE WESTMINSTER STANDARDS TO FOREIGN MISSIONS.

PROBABLY no event has occurred within the memory of any one in this audience so calculated to awaken the attention of our Presbyterian people to the value of the Westminster Standards in giving direction and development to the social, national, and ecclesiastical life of the world as the commemoration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of their formation.

It is in compliance with the recommendation of our General Assembly that we are engaged in this celebration. Some of our presbyteries have anticipated us, and great audiences have been gathered to listen to the stirring addresses of speakers appointed for the purpose of discussing the characteristic truths of our Confessions and the wide influence they have exerted for two hundred and fifty years. Our religious papers and even the secular press has caught the tune of the time, and in numberless editorials and communications have called public attention to what the Presbyterians are doing.

Our Northern brethren in their General Assembly, now in session, will take up the theme and make arrangements for a commemoration, possibly on a greater scale, though not with greater enthusiasm than our own. Throughout the vast domain in which their churches are thickly planted, eloquent voices will rehearse the history of the Westminster Assembly and recount to listening thousands the great principles, proclaimed by

an assembly of divines such as England never before and never since could gather for the consideration of themes of such sacred and surpassing interest.

Nor will these commemorations be confined to our own continent. They will be repeated among the English-speaking populations of many lands, and thus by all the diversified agencies I have enumerated the story of the Westminster Assembly will become familiar to eager hearers, whose number cannot be calculated.

I was greatly moved by the address of my distinguished brother from Louisville, and especially by his graphic description of the most historic edifice in the world—Westminster Abbey—and his portrayal of the scenes which had been witnessed in the Jerusalem Chamber. I can only compare his address to the picture he gave us in his peroration of the scenery on the Scottish coast, where the waves of ocean had carved the cliffs in shapes of rugged grandeur, and yet in the crevices of the cliffs grew the clambering vines and the fragrant flowers which gave color, tenderness, and softness to the rocky ramparts.

It so happens that I have spent more time in the city of London than any other city in the world except Richmond and Baltimore. There is in London no public edifice, secular or sacred, which I have entered so frequently as Westminster Abbey. During Dean Stanley's visit to Richmond something happened which disposed him to do me some favor. I had just returned from England, and he said: "The next time you visit London I will do for you what no one else can probably do better. I will show you Westminster Abbey." He knew that I was already familiar with the building, and I knew what he meant by the offer. There was, indeed, no one else who could discant so eloquently on every

chapel, shrine, and monument. It so happened that I returned to London the next summer. One evening I visited the Abbey. No tourists were there. I had the stately, solemn pile all to myself for a brief, impressive season. You may imagine how startled I was as I slowly made my way down the aisle when I was suddenly confronted with the marble on which was inscribed *Arthur Penrhyn Stanley*, and standing there remembered that he who less than a twelvemonth before had so kindly promised to be my guide was now lying in the dark crypt beneath.

One of the most interesting apartments of the Abbey is the Jerusalem Chamber. Of this I need not speak. The address just referred to has described the place so graphically, and has so impressed the associations connected with it, that you feel as if you had personally seen what has been so clearly depicted. It is what transpired in that chamber two and a half centuries ago that so deeply interests us now.

In such commemorations there is a great moral element. Sometimes it is good to get free from the narrow environments of the immediate present and ascend some eminence which commands a view of ways long since trodden, and then, from what is taught in the review, learn to forecast the ever-widening way of the future. It is only by such studies that we catch the spirit of the great historic eras which have been potent in shaping the institutions of our own times. It is only when we can transport ourselves to the distant past and evoke from its obscurity the forms of its heroic men; it is only when we acquaint ourselves with the errors they combated, the difficulties they surmounted, the hardships they endured, that we can fully comprehend the character of the men who thus toiled and suffered, or appreciate the value of

their lives, or trace the influence of their examples and principles upon succeeding generations. Thus placing ourselves among them, we take a new interest in the men themselves and in the work they achieved, and while we embalm their memories in grateful recollection, we catch the fire which yet lives in their ashes, and we feel the inspiration which their great examples of devotion to duty enkindles in our hearts.

It was my office to make an address on "The Educational Influence of Presbyterianism on National Life" at our council in Glasgow last summer. On another memorable occasion I discussed "The Influence of the Westminster Standards on the Religious Thought of After Times." The connection between the principles embodied in these Standards and the development of a noble national life is obvious. So, too, is their potency in shaping the religious opinions of those who come in contact with them. But the relation between our Standards and foreign missions is not at once apparent. It is difficult to trace, historically, with satisfactory clearness, any such immediate influence as would place Presbyterians in advance of other Protestant denominations either as to priority in time or successful activity in missionary work.

It is one of the happy facts in the history of missions that God has been pleased to bless with increase and progress all branches of the Christian church which hold by common agreement to the fundamental truths of salvation. We are often reminded that each branch of the church propagating truth in its own way is like one of the primary colors, each beautiful in its own hue, while it is the blended light of all these varied tints that constitutes the pure, white light of day. It requires the whole brotherhood of the redeemed to reflect the beauty and glory of the altogether lovely.

In listening to the addresses which have made this session of our General Assembly so memorable, I have observed no disposition to arrogate to Presbyterian doctrine and church government any such preëminence as would be offensive to brethren of other denominations or displeasing to One to whom assumptions of superiority and self-glorification may be regarded as injustice to other members of his family equally dear to him.

We may be grateful for the possession of such a clear, concise, symmetrical system of truth as that contained in our Confessions, and for a form of government so simple and so easily adapted to all the exigencies of church life and to all the varied conditions of humanity arising from culture, social position, and distinctive characteristics of race, and at the same time we may be conscious that we have often been slow to take advantage of our endowments and opportunities. If we have been remiss or tardy in illustrating our own principles in their power to inspire the most practical activity, we ought not to complain if others have applied these principles more readily and vigorously than ourselves.

We can see that our Standards *ought* to have kindled the missionary spirit as it did the spirit of civil and religious liberty. It *did* kindle the latter transcendently, triumphantly, whenever tyranny in the state and despotism in the church attempted to nullify the rights of citizens or to invade the sacred domain of conscience. But we are sadly familiar with the story of the early efforts made to suppress any organized movement for the evangelization of the heathen world, not only in other churches, but in our own. Who has not remembered with grieved surprise the ruling of the senior member of an Association when a young man, who subsequently became one of the most eminent of missionaries, proposed for the con-

sideration of the body the duty of sending the gospel to the heathen, was peremptorily ordered to sit down, the command being accompanied by an assertion of the venerable father, "When it pleases God to convert the heathen he will do it without your aid or mine." It was not, however, in an Association but in a Presbyterian General Assembly that a similar proposition to send the gospel to the heathen was treated not only as an unnatural, but also as a revolutionary design. This was in 1796, but even as late as the year 1824, when a few of the students of St. Andrews formed themselves into a missionary society, the authorities of the university would not assign them a room for their meetings, and one of the students in after years published the statement that during the whole course of his theological training not a single reference was ever made to the subject of the world's evangelization, as if the function of the church was to conserve all the blessings of the covenant of grace for the benefit of those who had already received them.

When Dr. Duff returned to Scotland to recruit after the failure of his health in India, and to awaken the missionary zeal of his countrymen, he found them so absorbed in certain political questions, very important in themselves, no doubt, especially those which affected their ecclesiastical interests, that it was difficult at first to obtain a hearing, and when he proposed to visit the presbyteries that he might portray what he had seen and heard of the wants and woes of the populous East, and to enkindle the enthusiasm of his people in reference to the illimitable field white for the harvest, his proposition was received with doubts and fears by some, and with blank amazement by others.

It is true that he finally gained the ear and heart of

the church, and the discouragement he suffered at first only made his ultimate success more conspicuous by the contrast. These grave doubts, and the graver opposition encountered by the friends of foreign missions long after the work of the Westminster Assembly had been completed, now excite our wonder and grief, especially when we remember that the great principles which give divine sanction and encouragement to the duty of attempting the evangelization of all nations were all embodied in those Standards.

As a summary of the cardinal doctrines of the word of God; as a code of Christian ethics; as a concise statement of the government, discipline and worship of the church as taught in the Holy Scriptures, they stand unrivalled among all human expositions of sacred truth. We have the demonstration of this fact in the admirable volume recently issued by our Committee of Publication, entitled *The Presbyterian Standards*, composed by a professor in one of our theological seminaries—a work characterized by the judicial fairness of its statements, the clearness of its analysis, the simplicity of its style, and the reverential loyalty and love for the church and its divine head which suffuses it, in which the author makes it plain that the duty of the church in reference to the conversion of the world is everywhere implied in these Standards, and may be logically inferred from their teachings, inasmuch as the whole theory and trend of the Calvinistic system makes the evangelization of the nations the chief enterprise of the church. “God, through Christ, by the Spirit, has given the message of life to the church, and the church in turn is to give this saving message to the whole world.” Such is the teaching of the Westminster Standards. But if it be asked why did not the churches into whose possession they came imme-

diately recognize their obligation, it might also be asked why did not the churches which succeeded the apostolic era of missionary enterprise continue to prosecute the work which made that era the golden age in missionary annals? Why came the ages denominated "dark," whose darkness was made all the more visible by the few illuminated points where apostolic fervor still survived amidst the general gloom? Why, with equal emphasis it might be asked, was not the Reformation of the sixteenth century immediately followed by a great missionary revival? We might take it for granted that such a reformation could not have been an accomplished fact without kindling in the souls of those who had been irradiated by its light an inextinguishable desire to send the gospel to the benighted portions of the earth which had never been touched by its beams. Here and there, indeed, this desire had found practical expression in the isolated efforts to send missionaries into fields never trodden by the messengers of peace. But even the great leaders of the Reformation do not seem to have had a clear conception of the all-comprehending purpose of their Lord in the universal extension of his kingdom or of the corresponding obligations of his people. "All the world" was a field so vast that the Reformed churches just emerging from the ignorance and superstition which had so long enthralled them, and struggling to maintain their own existence amidst surrounding foes so formidable and aggressive, found enough to tax their energies to the utmost in guarding what they had won. The evangelization even of the contiguous nations, bitterly hostile to the new faith, was an undertaking too great for their resources. Even Luther at times despaired of the universal triumph of the gospel. The gentle Melancthon left on record no statement of his anticipations.

of the day when the kingdoms of the world would become the kingdoms of their Lord. Erasmus alone, whose birth twenty-three years before that of Luther, placed him, as it were, on the boundary line of the Reformation era, and who was so often irresolute when decision was demanded and ready to compromise when truth was at stake, was in advance of his co-temporaries in his clear conception of the duty of the church to evangelize the heathen world, and seemed to catch more of the spirit of the glowing verse of David and Isaiah when, with the light of the coming morning in their eyes, they hailed the day when the Gentile world would rejoice in the beams of the Sun of Righteousness. His sweetest song was his last, when in his celebrated missionary treatise, published the year before his death, he rebuked Christian nations for making war upon the heathen instead of striving to woo and win them to Christ, and so taught the men of his generation that it was not the mailed hand of the warrior but the ministering hand of the servants of the Prince of Peace that would ultimately rule the world! Had this been the spirit of his co-temporaries, the melancholy admission made by one of our standard writers on missions might not have been put on record, in which it is asserted that, "from the (Lutheran) awakening down to the work of Carey in Serampore, during three centuries the Reformed churches were asleep as to missions, spending their time in internal dissensions"; nor the admission of another historian who declares that "as to Protestant foreign missions the Reformation had only indirect or long-delayed results."

When after the dissolution of the Long Parliament and the restoration of Charles II., the "Act of Uniformity" was passed, and when the memorable day in 1662 came,

on which more than two thousand of the most learned and godly ministers in England were ejected from their charges (six hundred of their brethren in Scotland also abandoning their livings), and when their congregations were compelled to meet by stealth, if they met at all, in desolate fields or on the lonely mountain-side, surprise has been expressed that when prohibited from preaching the gospel at home they did not fly to foreign lands and there find the opportunity denied them in their own land. But those who reason thus forget the insurmountable obstacles arising from the impossibility of co-operation, or from ignorance of openings for missionary service in foreign lands, and the want of any base of supply and support at home. We see the providential compensation for this hindrance in the fact that when the tongue was silent the pen was never more active or more efficiently employed, for that was the period when those massive volumes of practical and polemic theology were composed, learned, logical, scriptural, and all suffused with the very sweetness of the gospel, constituting the noblest religious literature that has made any age of the world illustrious. Among those silenced by the Act of Uniformity were Flavel, Baxter, Owen, Charnock, Bates, Alleine, and Howe. None of them had been members of the Westminster Assembly, but their writings were the noblest commentaries on the Confessions and Catechisms of that Assembly, and saturated with their spirit. This was England's golden age of theology, and the men who made it illustrious doubtless rendered a more enduring service to evangelical religion than they could have done, at that perturbed period, in the missionary field.

We should not expect too much in the way of direct and immediate stimulation to foreign missions from our

Westminster Standards for another reason. These Standards, instead of being an original fountain, formed a *reservoir* into which the healthful waters from many an ancient river emptied themselves.

We find a parallel to this in the Constitution of our country, defining the form of government and providing for the security of the institutions under which we have made such progress in prosperity and power. But if it should be asked, What were the influences which gave birth to these institutions which constitute such a precious heritage, it would not be a satisfactory answer to say that they were the creations of the patriots and sages who framed our Constitution and declarations of right, for the question would recur, From what sources did they derive the principles embodied in these Codes and Constitutions?

Did the masterly state papers, filled with philosophic inductions and with lucid expression of the profoundest maxims of political wisdom and unanswerable demonstrations of popular right, such as commanded the admiration of the wisest statesmen in the old world, spring spontaneously from the soil like the giant trees of the Western forests?

We give all honor to patriot statesmen who built up the visible structure of our government, but the noble Constitution which they framed was not their invention. Their task was to formulate and put down upon parchment the clearest statement of the principles which had been throbbing in the bosoms of patriots and struggling for expression through generations of conflict for the right. "It was," as has well been said, "not the fountain out of which the streams of liberty flowed, but the reservoir into which a thousand little rills had been running until finally it overflowed with waters to refresh a continent."

So we may say of the great compendium of truth formulated by the Westminster divines. Its tributaries from apostolic times, through all subsequent ages, though sometimes small and often intermittent, never ceased to flow. For purity of doctrine, conservation of what is fittest to survive, and antagonism to all that is fittest to perish; for condensation of great truths expressed in the fewest words, these Standards, by the admission of those who have no sympathy with Presbyterianism, are unrivalled among all uninspired writings. They gather up the cardinal truths enunciated through all the ages and present them in the most concise form. Their superiority consists not in the originality of the truths themselves, but in condensing what was best in all the theological systems of the past, and presenting them in the tersest and most intelligible form. We may say of the Westminster Standards what was said of the proverbial philosophy of many generations:

“The truth, though old and oft expressed,
Is his at last who says it best.”

Such a distillation from the divine word, like that word itself, is the leaven which slowly, certainly, must pervade the whole mass until all is assimilated. “If the vision tarry, we must wait for it,” remembering that—

“Time’s noblest offspring is the last.”

The progress of the gospel is not always like the march of a well-disciplined army of invasion, gaining victories in every conflict, holding fast the strategic points it has captured, one by one, until the whole territory is occupied. It is rather like an oriental river issuing from perennial fountains and flowing on with a deepening and widening current until it encounters the desert sands into which it sinks and becomes apparently

a lost river, but only after awhile to reappear again and resume its onward flow.

Such a temporary arrest was seen when the era characterized by heroic men loyal to the truth, resolute in defending it, not counting their possessions or even their lives dear to them if secured by the sacrifice of principle, was followed by another, and, perhaps, the most spiritless, colorless, and unattractive era in British annals.

When we are enumerating the hindrances which retarded the influence of the Westminster Standards in awakening a spirit of universal and earnest evangelism, we must not forget to mention the almost mortal chill which came to the church from the rise of what was called the Moderate Party. It was a party destitute not only of heroic enterprise, but of the strong convictions which make heroic enterprise possible. Fifty years before Great Britain was in the noontide of intellectual and spiritual achievement. It was an era made luminous by a constellation of illustrious statesmen, jurists and divines—the era of Milton and Hampden and Bunyan, of *Paradise Lost* and the *Pilgrim's Progress* and the *Saints' Everlasting Rest*; the era of consecrated soldiers of the country and of the cross, who marched to battle keeping step to the music of Psalms; when mighty theologians built up those massive systems of truth which no adversary could shake; when the gospel was preached with apostolic fervor, and the church, loyal to its King, stood like a palace built for God.

Then came the sad decline. There were, indeed, many sincere and devout men still surviving, but the majority of the divines of the day spent their lives, as we are told, in writing apologies for Christianity, in rhetorical tilts with infidels and papists, or in delivering moral lectures such as Seneca might have inspired, and

sermons which were feeble dilutions of Plato with the text from St. Paul.

But God had not forgotten to be gracious; the sand-sunken river was not a lost river. Like a breath from the everlasting hills came the evangelical revival of which Whitfield was the outstanding representative—at once the flower and crown, and with that time of refreshing came a return to the first love and to the first works inspired by that love, so that the wilderness and the solitary place were made glad again, and the desert rejoiced and blossomed as the rose.

I will not dwell on the early tentative missionary enterprises, whether undertaken by Protestant Hollanders or German Lutheran Pietists or zealous evangelists of Denmark, Sweden or the British Isles. Some of these well-meant endeavors were marred by misconceptions of the true theory of missions; some of them were migratory rather than missionary, emigrations to escape persecution, or colonial, to found new states where the hope of commercial advantages was the chief incentive, or where the religious instruction was superficial and vitiated by compromises with heathen rites and ceremonies, or where mercenary motives were the inducements to profess Christianity. And yet during all that era of imperfect comprehension of the true methods of mission work there were a few devout souls, far in advance of their time, who were filled with an unutterable longing to speed the cause of evangelization in ways which modern experience has proved to be the right ways of the Lord.

They failed because the age was not ready for them. There is something pathetic in such failures. They remind us of the strong swimmer unable to resist the multitudinous waves of the sea, and so, unheeded and unappreciated, they went down with their sublimest as-

pirations unfulfilled. That day, thank God, has passed. The man who has something to say and something generous to propose will get hearers and helpers, too, and will reap the reward of an influence multiplied by the co-operation of sympathetic co-workers, with a whole brotherhood about him, all swayed by one motive, all moving compactly to one end, like David's men keeping step with unbroken ranks in the march to conflict and victory. It is this which makes the present the most auspicious period of the world in which to live; it is this which makes each individual life worth more to its possessor and to the public than ever before. It is something to thank God for when one lives at a time when the church regards itself a divinely organized missionary society, whose chief aspiration is the conversion of the world.

The true theory of missions is one that clearly recognizes the fact that the great head of the church has not only committed to it the truths necessary to salvation, but has provided it with the government, the laws, the offices, and the equipment for building up the kingdom of God and extending its conquests through the world. This is in accordance with the spirit and teaching of the Westminster Standards, in proof of which we need only quote their noble testimony: "Unto this catholic, visible church Christ has given the ministry, the oracles and ordinances of God for the gathering and perfecting of the saints in this life and to the end of the world; and this he doth by his own presence and Spirit, according to his promise, made effectual thereto." Thus are the scattered sheep "gathered" from the North and the South, the East and the West, into the safe and happy fold of the Good Shepherd.

By its divine constitution the church is, therefore,

qualified to secure all the spiritual ends for which it was instituted, and is in itself a missionary society of which every communicant is a member; and as each one has a recognized place in it because of its representative form of government, this very fact is calculated to enlist the sympathies, to deepen the sense of responsibility, and to stimulate to the most earnest, practical activity on the part of every member of the great household of faith.

The coronation of the true missionary method came when the great principle, so long latent in the Westminster Standards, or finding only partial recognition, received its noblest expression when the Church of Scotland because the first church after the Reformation to send forth missionaries under its own immediate appointment, thus setting its solemn seal to the truth that the church, by its constitution and divinely-ordained purpose, was a society for the maintenance and extension of the kingdom of God throughout the whole world.

The second church, in its organized, ecclesiastical capacity, to recognize this obligation was the Presbyterian Church of the United States.

The Rev. Dr. John H. Rice, professor in the Union Theological Seminary, Virginia, near the close of his life dictated an overture to be sent to the General Assembly of 1831, with a preamble, asserting that it was the primary and chief object of the institution of the church to communicate the blessings of the gospel to the world with the efficiency of united effort, and this was followed by a series of resolutions, the first of which was, "That *the Presbyterian Church in the United States is a missionary society*, and every member of the church is a life member of the same, and bound in maintenance of his Christian character to do all in his power for the accomplishment of that object." Another resolution enjoined

upon church sessions in admitting new members to state distinctly to the candidates that they were joining a community the object of which was the conversion of the heathen world, and to impress on their minds a deep sense of their obligation, as redeemed sinners, to cooperate in the accomplishment of the great object of Christ's own mission to mankind.

Wonderful has been the change in the aspect of the foreign mission field since the adoption of that principle. A new hope, like a star, has risen on the vision of the church, and the splendid result has been the planting of the cross among the kindreds and tongues of every continent of the globe, and in numberless islands of the sea. The glowing anticipations of Isaiah are finding their historic fulfilment, as the spiritual deserts of the earth blossom as the rose, and the solitary places, so long silent, rejoice with joy and singing in the light and warmth of the coming kingdom.

At the meeting of our alliance last summer in Glasgow, Professor Lindsay said it would be well if that Council could give to all the various churches represented in it an account of the great work that Presbyterians, as a corporate body, were doing for the heathen nations, and among other things informed them that the Presbyterian churches do more than a fourth of the whole mission work among the heathen that is done by all the Protestant churches together. He also mentions by name, though not invidiously, three great denominations, and asserts that the Presbyterian Church is doing more in the foreign field than all of them combined.

It is well, also, to keep our people informed of the fact that after the Reformation of the sixteenth century all the Reformed churches of the world, with the exception of the Anglican and Lutheran, adopted the Presbyterian

system of doctrine and form of church government, and now those who hold that faith and form throughout Europe, America and the Orient, constitute the largest Protestant denomination on the globe. It surprises many of our own people to be told this because they are accustomed to measure the numerical strength of Presbyterianism everywhere by what they know to be true in our own country, where at least two denominations greatly outnumber our own; and because many large organizations, both in Europe and America, while not *called* Presbyterian are strictly so. They may be known by different names; they may be called Waldensian, or Bohemian, or Dutch, or they may bear, as many of them do, nothing more than the title, "Reformed," but they all are as truly Presbyterian as those which are known by that name, and when the members and adherents of these different branches of the one family are enumerated it is ascertained that the Presbyterian is the largest Protestant church in christendom. It is true mere numbers do not prove orthodoxy, but they become an important factor in determining the progress of a denomination and its hold on the public conscience as well as in forecasting its advancement and widening influence in the future. It is deeply gratifying to note the approval which other denominations give to the distinctive characteristics of Presbyterianism. This approval may not be expressed in words, but it is tacitly given, and is an endorsement as far as it goes. The Baptists agree with us in our views of ministerial parity. Episcopalians and Methodists are in accord with us as to the subjects and mode of baptism. The Baptist Church is, in the main, a Calvinist church, and so is the Episcopal if the Thirty-nine Articles express its doctrinal belief. And what concerns us more just now is the virtual testimony of other de-

nominations to the value of an officer like the ruling elder in the missionary field. The Presbyterian Church is the only one that recognizes and makes constant and efficient use of that officer both in home and foreign enterprises. When its ministers are driven away by persecution or removed by death, the work need not cease while ordained elders are there to gather the converts, and read and expound to them the truths of God's word and to exhort them to be steadfast in the faith of the chief Shepherd and Bishop of souls, and to pray and hope for the time when under-shepherds may be restored to guide and nurture the flock.

In all Protestant non-Presbyterian denominations there is an ever-growing tendency towards a representative church government in which the lay element is a factor; and in the foreign field among such churches there is a conscious want of such an agency as that which the eldership of the Presbyterian Church supplies, as is demonstrated by the fact that substitutes for such offices are called into service to give new stability and efficiency to missionary work.

Thus in our Standards there are, doubtless, other latent principles, unappreciated because unrecognized, until in the providence of God new conditions and new exigencies arise which compel attention to their value among all Christian men who are ready to welcome and make practical use of any methods, no matter from what source they come, by which their work is accelerated and crowned with greater success. Not only are these principles potent in aggressive work, but they anticipate and antagonize errors which at the time of the Westminster Assembly had no existence. Among these may be mentioned the modern theory of "the larger hope," or "second probation" for the heathen in the world to

come—a theory calculated to weaken the conviction of the need of missions among the heathen, and thus to abate the efforts of the church to maintain them. Our Standards give no intimation of another opportunity to hear the gospel between death and the resurrection. In the case of the righteous they assert that their souls are made perfect at death and do immediately pass into glory. In the case of the wicked they pass into the abode of the lost, where they remain reserved to the judgment of the great day, “when they shall have the fearful but just sentence of condemnation pronounced against them.” As surely as sentence is pronounced it will be executed, and as the result the wicked “shall be cast out from the favorable presence of God and forever separated from the fellowship and glory of Christ and of his saints and of the holy angels.”

Among the missionary enterprises of the eighteenth century the most interesting, to us at least, are those which contemplated the evangelization of the aborigines of our own continent.

These efforts possess a pathetic and almost tragic interest because undertaken in behalf of a people who were once the sole owners of the vast domain now occupied by the imperial States of the American Union—a domain of which they were dispossessed partly by aggressive wars and partly by the vices of civilization grafted upon the depravity of savage life; and because whole tribes of the people so despoiled have become extinct, while the remnants, still surviving, are steadily diminishing notwithstanding the philanthropic efforts made to arrest that decline.

The translation of the Bible into the language of one of the Indian tribes by Eliot demands our attention, because it was accomplished under embarrassments greater

than existed in the case of any other translator who ever rendered the Holy Scriptures into the vernacular of any people. There is not a vestige of that tribe now on earth. There is not a human being who can now read Eliot's Bible; and yet its translation was not love's labor lost. That Bible has no readers, but the very language in which its blessed truths were expressed is remembered among the redeemed and glorified who here on earth learned to chant its Psalms and adore the Saviour it revealed. The book is silent evermore, but its story of redemption is still celebrated in immortal songs.

The late Dr. William Graham, professor in the Presbyterian College of London, during a visit to this country, made a tour through the New England States and took Northampton in his way that he might see the place so tenderly associated with the last hours of David Brainerd. Dr. Graham published a sketch of that wonderful man, one of the best of the many that have appeared. Few have seen the periodical in which it was published. Dr. Graham says: "Three things have made the name of Brainerd memorable—his biography by Jonathan Edwards, his eulogy by Robert Hall, and his influence on Henry Martyn, to whom he was a Protestant patron saint." The missionary annals of the world furnish us with few accounts of such privations as are recorded of him—thorns exceedingly sharp, but blossoming into flowers of saintly purity and sweetness. Renouncing positions where he might have found congenial companionship and comfort as well as usefulness, he chose the solitary, self-denying life of a missionary among the Indian savages; a lonely, consumptive man, living in a wigwam, sleeping on a bed of straw, eating mouldy bread or sour cakes prepared by his own hand. His experience of the most effectual way to reach the heart even of savage hearers is instruc-

tive. He found that the terrors of the law did not alarm them. They were men accustomed to brave all dangers without a tremor, but floods of tears flowed from their eyes at the recital of the love of him who came down to earth to seek the lost, and then went up to heaven to intercede for them. It must delight the brother who gave us that admirable address on the Catechisms of the church to be reminded that Brainerd, as his biographer tells us, lodged the Shorter Catechism in the minds of these wild men of the woods, knowing that solid piles of doctrine must be driven into the swampy soil of the Indian mind before any firm foundation could be secured for the erection of a permanent superstructure.

Worn out with toil, he went to Northampton, the home of Jonathan Edwards, to die in the twenty-ninth year of his age. During the closing days of that life of privation he was tenderly ministered to by the daughter of the great theologian to whom he had been betrothed, and still more tenderly ministered to by One who, above all others, had loved him and above all others was beloved in return by the dying saint, until he passed away *in pace* and *in pacem*. Two graves, moss-grown and fir-shaded, more than any others around them, touched the heart of the English pilgrim with the pathos both of human and divine love, and these were the graves of Brainerd and that of the girl he loved, but did not live to marry.

Having endeavored to delineate the relation of the Westminster Standards to Foreign Missions, more especially in their influence in developing the great principles which in our day and in our own church have made the work of universal evangelization at once conservative and aggressive, and successful, too, just in proportion to their conformity with apostolic models and methods, I conclude the discourse with a brief portraiture of

two typical men, in whom the principles discussed found their illustration and embodiment.

The first missionary since the Reformation sent forth by any church in its corporate capacity and ordained to labor in the foreign field was Alexander Duff, whose name stands as a synonym of whatever is heroic, self-sacrificing and saintly in missionary character and achievement. His personal history has all the charm of romance, heightened by the additional charm of being not only a hal-
lowed, but a veritable, history.

Born in a valley overlooked by the peaks of Beni-vrac-
kie, hard by the battle-field where the crafty and cruel Claverhouse fell mortally wounded, his imagination in early youth touched by the weird, wild songs of Dugald Buchanan—the Ossian of the highlands—and his heart filled with the deeper emotions enkindled by the visions of the Apocalypse and the triumphant songs of the innumerable multitude, he himself in later life ascribed to these influences the impressions which gave color, tone and direction to much that was characteristic of him in after years.

Of the effective use he made of these early associations we have an illustration in the memorable address he made before the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland in 1850, twenty-one years after his ordination as a missionary to India, when he told his audience of the emotion with which he had listened in his boyhood to Jacobite songs, and his romantic devotion to “Prince Charlie,” and then vividly picturing the enthusiasm with which youthful warriors from “bracken, bush and glen” rallied to their standards and of how the gory beds and cold, grassy winding sheets of Culloden Muir bore testimony to the intensity of their loyalty to an earthly prince, he appealed to Highland fathers and

mothers to show a deeper, diviner loyalty in joyously consecrating their sons to the service of the King of kings.

Of course, I cannot present even an outline of Dr. Duff's splendid career in India; but as an orator, most impassioned and inspired when his theme was the greatness and the glory of the missionary enterprise, he has had no superior among all who have consecrated their lives to that supreme interest of the church. The enthusiasm aroused by his eloquent appeals to his countrymen after his return from India would seem to be exaggerations were they not attested by those who witnessed what has been reported. Probably great audiences have never been more thoroughly entranced by human speech since the days so graphically described by Macaulay, when in "the great hall of William Rufus which had resounded with acclamations at the inaugurations of thirty kings" Burke made the opening address "with an exuberance of thought and a splendor of diction," mingled with a pathos which stirred the deepest emotions of men of judicial gravity and sternest, stoical self-control, and the more impressible portion of his hearers to an excitation of feeling which there was no attempt to restrain.

So when Duff ended one of his impassioned appeals and the audience broke out into a tempest of enthusiastic applause, it was sometimes necessary to chasten and temper the high-wrought emotion by the voice of prayer by some venerable father called upon to lead the devotions of the Assembly.

The testimony of one competent to form such a judgment was that though it had been his privilege to hear Fox and Pitt speak in the House of Commons in the very zenith of their glory as statesmen and orators, he had never heard from either a speech surpassing one Dr. Duff had just delivered for loftiness of tone, for ar-

gumentative force, transcendent eloquence and overpowering impressiveness.

It was the happy privilege of Dr. Duff to come nearer to the solution of the controverted question than any one else who ever attempted it, with regard to the use of secular literature and science in the training of Hindoo young men in his schools in Calcutta. He learned how successfully to attack Hindoo superstitions by an English education in true science, every fact of such science being antagonistic to and subversive of some article in the Hindoo religion. But this was only preparing the way of the Lord. He well knew that every item of belief in a false religion might be annihilated, and then leave the student nothing more than a cultivated skeptic. His great reliance, therefore, after removing the rubbish and stumbling-blocks out of the way, was the preaching of Christ crucified, the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Such was the work of this master-builder—a work solid in its foundation, safe in its superstructure, and certain to become demonstrably scriptural by the test of time. It was also the high distinction of Dr. Duff to be successful in a double vocation, that of being one of the wisest and most efficient of all workers in the foreign field, and also the instrument of arousing an intelligent and abiding enthusiasm among his countrymen at home. No returned missionary ever wrought such a revolution in public opinion, and no one ever sent back so many volunteers into the foreign field.

This gives him a unique place in missionary biography. Around his bier Christians of all confessions met. "For the first time in Scottish ecclesiastical history, the members of three kirks and their moderators, in person or through their representatives, trod the one funeral march," and throughout the world where the tidings of his de-

parture came, tears of sorrow at such a loss were mingled with thanksgivings that God had given to men such a missionary of the cross.

The Rev. Dr. Hampden C. Dubose has rendered a service for which the gratitude of the Christian public is due for publishing a memoir of Dr. John Leighton Wilson, "for eighteen years a missionary on the Western coast of Africa, and for thirty-three years secretary of foreign missions in his own country." Dr. Dubose, who has spent a large portion of his own life in the foreign field, was well qualified by experience and by the strong and tender affection he cherished for the subject of his memoir to compose a biography as deeply interesting as it is instructive and inspiring. The author had the advantage of much valuable information furnished him by some of the most intimate friends and ardent admirers of Dr. Wilson. Among these he makes special mention of two contributions received from Drs. Adger and Dabney, and he awakens our sympathy for both in a single sentence full of pathos, in which he tell us that each of these communications was dictated to an amenuensis, inasmuch as both of the venerable contributors were afflicted with the loss of sight.

One of these now sits on this platform in view of this great audience, unseen by him; my class-mate and lifelong friend. I am comforted by the assurance that the darkness which envelops him is but the shadow of God's wing, beneath which he is all the nearer to his Father's side and heart; and he may say in words ascribed to another:

"Dear Lord, upon my bended knee,
I recognize thy purpose clearly shown;
My vision thou hast dimmed
That I might see
Thyself, thyself alone."

The biographer of Dr. Wilson tells us that in the year 1734 there came to America a colony of Presbyterians who settled in Williamsburg county, South Carolina, a godly community, with piety in the home, piety in the school, and spiritual worship in the church—a community of Christian households, in which daughters were trained to industry and virtue, and sons taught to speak the truth, to fear the face of no man, and to do that which was right in the sight of the Lord.

The father of Leighton Wilson was a planter, whose home was the abode of plenty, contentment, and social enjoyment; ordinarily filled with guests attracted by the generous hospitality for which men of his class were famed. There the boy was early developed in physical health and vigor by the free, out-door life he lived—fishing, hunting, riding, and engaging in all the athletic sports in which the sons of planters in easy circumstances in that day delighted, whether in forest, field, or stream. It was by manly pastimes like these, in a climate that invited to out-door life all the year round, that he gained the great stature to which he attained; the deep, broad chest, and the physical vigor which never failed him either on the African coast or in the close confinement of the mission rooms.

In the history of Dr. Duff we saw how the environments of his youth had much to do in giving tone and color to his character and in shaping the course of his subsequent life. In his boyhood the influence of picturesque scenery; the harmonies of nature heard in winds and waterfalls and the songs of birds; the weird traditions of primitive times; the wild minstrelsy of native bards; the haunted glen; the ivy-mantled ruin—all these touched his fancy and charmed the inward eye with the visions of romance.

The surroundings of Wilson in his boyhood were very different, but none the less potent. The songs most familiar to his ear were plantation songs in the happy harvest time, and still oftener the melodious and mighty chorus of voices of the negro worshippers in the crowded church or in the ample grove, lit up at night by flaming pine torches. One of the uncles of Leighton Wilson was a man whose counsels in church courts and whose instructive sermons, full of heavenly unction, gave him a wide influence. He was especially happy in his discourses to the colored people, in whose spiritual welfare he took the liveliest interest. In return, their affection for him was most fervent. They flocked to him from neighboring plantations on communion Sabbaths, and when the services were over they crowded around him to grasp his hand, and lingered long after the benediction. Now we see the formative and directive influence of early associations. It was the profound interest in the colored people of this uncle, under whose roof young Wilson once spent a winter, that his own missionary enthusiasm was kindled for the natives of the dark continent. Familiar as he was with the habits and peculiarities of the negro race, among whom he was born and with whom he found his first playmates, he was thus, in the providence of God, trained for the splendid service to which he devoted the prime of his life on the western coast of Africa. There is no time now to speak of his labors there as a teacher, translator, naturalist, and linguist; of his perils by fever, flood and cannibals; of his loneliness and depression of spirits from the death of colleagues; but in this connection it may be well to say something with regard to one of his memorable achievements. The English, French, Portuguese, Spaniards and Americans were all at one time actively engaged in

the slave trade. Almost at the end of the seventeenth century the number exported from the coast during the year 1798 was not less than one hundred thousand. When public opinion was aroused in Great Britain and the United States, and a effort made to suppress the nefarious traffic, a British squadron was placed on the coast of Africa, but those interested in the continuance of the trade made strenuous opposition to the retention of the fleet on the coast, the argument being that it was inefficient and had failed to guard the coast or capture the slave-trading vessels. It was at this juncture that Dr. Wilson's intervention became effectual. His biographer states that Dr. Wilson prepared a paper demonstrating the efficiency of the blockade, and sent it to a wealthy merchant in Bristol, who placed it in the hands of Lord Palmerston. The premier directed that an edition of ten thousand copies should be printed and widely distributed in prominent circles. "The monogram proved that the squadron had accomplished a great deal, and urged that only the fastest ships should be stationed on the coast. Lord Palmerston informed Dr. Wilson that after the publication of his article all opposition in England to the retention of the African squadron ceased. And thus the long night of woe to the unhappy sons of Darkest Africa ended, and the dawn of a brighter day was ushered in. For this consummation Dr. Wilson toiled, and prayed, and then rejoiced."

Dr. Wilson had little of the sentiment, the romance, the brilliancy or the magnetic power so conspicuous in Dr. Duff, but his characteristics were these: simplicity, humility, transparency, candor, courage, decision, consecration and heavenly-mindedness. Those who knew him most intimately will testify that every one of these traits were well-defined in him and so blended as to form

a combination of beautiful and attractive symmetry. It may be said of him as of the prophet Elisha, "a man of God," "a holy man of God."

Dr. Dubose closes his charming memoir by saying: "During the last months of his life his experience was not that of the valley and shadow of which the Psalmist spake, but it was rather that of the prophet who had led his people out of Egyptian bondage, and who, standing on Pisgah's summit, looked across the plains of Canaan to Mount Zion and to the General Assembly of the first born."

One of the most pleasing incidents in the history of our late council in the city of Glasgow was an address from the eastern section of the Executive Commission of the Ecumenical Methodist Conference, so cordial in its tone, so appreciative of our principles and their influence in the work of the world's evangelization, that I cannot refrain from referring to a portion of it:

"It is with especial gratification that we recall in the presence of so many of its distinguished representatives our manifold debts to the historic Presbyterian Church, it being preëminently Protestant. Your great church has been of necessity a witnessing church, and has gained one of its chief distinctions in going forth 'unto Jesus without the camp, bearing his reproach.' It has been given to you 'not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for his sake.' Your church has furnished the memorable and inspiring spectacle, not simply of a solitary heroic soul here and there, but of generations of faithful souls ready, for the sake of Christ and his truth, to go cheerfully to prison and to death. This rare honor you rightly esteem as the most precious part of your priceless heritage.

"And we further glory in the thought that the great

Presbyterian Church can never cease to be evangelical, since it has become so intensely evangelistic. Taking the world over, Presbyterianism in the future must be looked to as one of the very greatest and most beneficent forces for the Christian conversion and evangelization of the generations of mankind on every continent. We do unfeignedly rejoice as we behold your goodly array of churches giving the noblest of their sons, and consecrating their vast resources of learning and wealth to the greatest, the mightiest of all enterprises, the conversion of the world to Christ, assured that he shall yet 'reign from the river to the ends of the earth.'"

"We close," says the address, "as we began, by praying that the Master's presence may be in all your assemblies; that he may prosper all your undertakings; that he may make 'all grace to abound toward you,' until your cherished ideal of 'a free church in a free state' shall in every nation under heaven be an accomplished fact, and every citizen be taught that the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever."