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FIFTY YEARS OF COVENANTER HISTORY.

AN HISTORICAL DISCOURSE ON THE OCCASION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RE-ORGANIZATION OF THE FIRST REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA, PA.*

BY THE PASTOR, REV. T. P. STEVENSON.

TEXT: "One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts."—Ps. cxlv. 4.

These words are not only a prediction, but a command. They declare God's will that each generation shall instruct the next concerning his being, his perfections and his works. This principle rules in many other departments of human life as well as in religion. About three times in a century the accumulated wealth of the world, its governments and all social institutions, its schools and literature, its stately edifices, its storied monuments, its cherished archives, are transferred to the care and possession of other hands. Every generation stands, therefore, as a mediator between the generation past and that which is to come, and its office is to receive, to improve, and to transmit to its successor, the accumulated results of all the past labors and achievements of the human race, like a well-tilled farm which descends from father to son, and increases in value and beauty through successive generations.

Among the treasures thus to be preserved and handed down, unspeakably the most important is the knowledge of the true religion. If no provision had been made for the transmission of this trust, the knowledge of God and of the way of life would die with those who possess it, and would require to be revealed anew to each generation. But God never repeats his revelations. Successive revelations, indeed, there have been, but each was the complement, not the repetition, of those which went before, and each one, once made, was to suffice forever. The law was given at Sinai for all humanity through all

*The Second and Third congregations, Philadelphia, united with the First in the services of this occasion.

half awake to the appalling sweep of this temporal and eternal ruin, We must anew lift up our prayer with strong crying and tears to the Divine Saviour that his Spirit may raise an effective standard against it. And the church, his representative and agent in moral and spiritual reformation, must cease to rest in admonitions and recommendations; and must absolutely prohibit in her members the use of all intoxicants. But before she can consistently and effectively do this, the intoxicating cup must be peremptorily banished from the table of the Lord which she spreads for his children. Not till then is she herself pure; and only thus can the accursed thing be wholly extirpated from our beloved land.



*FIFTY YEARS OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.**

BY THE REV. JAMES KENNEDY, NEW YORK.

While most heartily joining in the congratulations offered by the former speaker, we hope that in giving a place in your commemorative services to Foreign Missions, it is the power of the same Spirit working in you, that once made the devoted M'Cheyne exclaim, "Oh! I must get a missionary map to pray by!" and if anything I can say on this subject, in the short time at my disposal, should cultivate and strengthen such a feeling, the effort will not be in vain.

Under the general term, Foreign Missions, there are many delightful views of the work of God, as now prosecuted in the world, to which our attention might be profitably directed; as the philosophy, the history, and the statistics of modern missions.

In relation to the first, the philosophy of missions, it is, perhaps enough to say that in prosecuting such work the Church is only carrying out a necessary and universal law of life. All life in its active form consists of two things. First, a life force within; and secondly, that life force within acting aggressively on something without, so as to assimilate and incorporate it with itself. All life, vegetable and animal, commences with an initial cell, which cell has the mysterious power of assimilating and absorbing foreign matter, and of growing by adding cell to cell, each new cell adding to the power of the life force, till it reaches the limits of its being. This is the law of all life, and of every organism, whether in the vegetable and animal kingdoms, or in the domestic, social, national, and spiritual organisms, with which we are familiar. Among these the Church is a spiritual organism, and her initial cell is Christ—"in Him was life"—and to fulfill the conditions of her being, life in her must be an aggressive

*Abstract of an address delivered Nov. 20th, 1883, in the First Reformed Presbyterian Church, South 17th and Bainbridge Streets, Philadelphia, on the occasion of the Semi-Centennial Anniversary of its re-organization in Cherry Street, in 1833.

force, acting on that without, assimilating and incorporating what was once foreign, and thus attaining the limits divinely assigned. And so it ever has been since first she was organized in Eden. In the prophesying of Enoch, the preaching of Noah, the contact of the patriarchs with different nations and tribes, in the mission of Moses, the poetry of David, the wisdom of Solomon, and the predictions of the prophets, she has been an aggressive force in the world along the whole line of her history, although it is to be observed that the former dispensation was more of an introductory and preparatory character than that which we now enjoy.

When, however, she received the great commission, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," and when this was followed by the Pentecostal baptism of the promised Spirit, and she was "endued with power from on high," then the Church attained, in a greater measure than ever before, the life force that was to become aggressive and prove "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds," and to assimilate and incorporate with herself outside humanity, till she should attain all her predestined dimensions and glory. And how strong and successful, indeed irresistible, have been the operations of the power within her for good to those without, her whole history for many centuries attests.

But, alas, through the power of worldly circumstances and changes, which we wait not to describe, this life force in the early Church waxed feeble, and consequently her aggressions on the kingdom of Satan were little effective, nay, in many things she became his ally rather than his enemy. Desire for place and power, pride and worldly ambition, internal dissensions, and loss of spiritual character, all these, and many other things beside, wasted her energy and paralyzed her activity, till, for ages, she became as one dead as to all the great ends of her mission.

Then came the Reformation, four hundred years ago, which was a great awakening, a blessed revival, and another Pentecostal baptism of the Church with something of her old power. And from that dates the age of modern missions, every form of which is, in the true sense of the term, "foreign." It is true the term "Foreign Missions" is now understood to be descriptive of only one department of the Church's aggressive work in the world, but everything outside of herself, which she seeks to attack by her spiritual forces, and assimilate to herself, is really foreign. Whether therefore by personal effort, mission Sabbath-schools, city missions, the ordinary means of grace, or by laborers sent forth to heathen lands, she seeks to bring from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, her mission ary work is really foreign.

In tracing the history of missions from the Reformation till the present, it is most interesting to note with what accuracy the work of this whole period has been outlined in three prophetic emblems,

successively presented in one of those panoramic views, by which the operations of Christ by his Church during that era, are exhibited, and which have had a more realistic fulfillment during the last fifty years than ever before. These are, *first*, at the sounding of the trumpet, (Rev. xi. 15) which, it is now generally admitted, had its fulfillment in the Reformation period. It is said (Rev. xi. 19): "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament, and there were lightnings and voices, and thunderings and an earthquake, and great hail." Then, *secondly*, in the conflict that followed, as immediately foreshadowing the doom of Babylon, it is added (xiv. 6): "I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." And, *thirdly*, to sustain and assure of success, it is emphatically said (xiv. 13): "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors and their works do follow them."

The *first* of these, the opening of the temple, and the Ark of the Testament or Covenant of God, being seen, undoubtedly refers to the work of Luther and the Reformers in giving the Bible, and through it a knowledge of Christ and the way of salvation—God's Ark and mercy-seat—to the world again. In the dark ages a Jewish hierarchal system had taken the place of Gospel ordinances, and the veil was once more over the holy of holies and the mysteries of God; but now, as at the death of Christ, the veil was rent in twain from the top through-out. By the translation of the Scriptures into the language of every land into which the Reformation found its way, there was put within reach of all the means of knowing God and Christ, the way of salvation by grace, and justification by faith alone. The "lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and earthquake, and great hail"—those religious wars, revolutionary movements, and national convulsions which followed—were only the outcome of those lurid forces which are seen to play around the circumference and outskirts of all great cyclonic movements, whether in the natural or moral world, and only attracted men's minds more earnestly to that to which God was calling their attention. It was this that gave the Reformation a power and made it a success. As beautifully put by a speaker at a recent meeting in memory of Luther, it was at the Reformation, as lately happened to the excavators in the buried city of Herculaneum. A fountain which once had poured forth a copious stream, and had been for ages a blessing to many, was found so choked up with ashes and debris that its waters flowed no more. When, however, the explorers removed the ashes and debris, these waters, after being stopped for ages, flowed out once more, ready to bless men as of old. And thus the Reformers, like Isaac, dug again the wells which had been digged in the days of their fathers, and which the Philistines had estopped for

a time. And this work of theirs in giving the Bible and much valuable religious literature to the world, was what was meant by the dream ascribed to Frederic, Elector of Saxony, in which he thought he saw a monk write something on the doors of the church at Wittenberg, with a pen so long that the end of it passed over his shoulder, and reached away beyond Germany into Italy, where it tickled and annoyed a lion (Leo X) till in his excitement he roared so loud that all Europe heard, and all the other lions began roaring in concert. The same is also the true meaning of the story of Luther having thrown his ink-bottle at the head of Satan, when in conflict with the evil one in the Castle of Wartburg. It was in his numerous writings against error and superstition, and on behalf of Divine truth, that his ink-bottle was a most effective weapon against Satan and his kingdom. And what wonderful progress has been made in this blessed work, more particularly during the past half century, so that not into German, French, English, and the few languages of Europe only, but into almost all the languages of the world—more than 260 in all—the Scriptures have been translated, so that of all nationalities, every one may “hear in his own tongue, wherein he was born, the wonderful works of God.”

But, following this opening of the temple, there have been since, in many lands, important steps taken to increase its efficiency. We refer to the great work done by Bible societies. Soon after the Reformation, various measures were employed to put the Scriptures more extensively among the people, but the first regular association for this purpose was that founded by Baron Hildebrand von Canstein, in connection with others, at Halle, and which continued its operations till 1834, at which date it had put into circulation between two and three million copies of the Word of God. In England, a society was established in 1780 to circulate the Scriptures among sailors and soldiers, which still exists as the “Military Bible Society,” and has had extensive usefulness. In 1792 an association was formed in London and called the French Bible Society, which circulated the Scriptures in French to counteract in some measure the infidelity prevailing on the continent. The greatest of all such societies, however, and the parent since of many others, was that formed in England in 1802. The origin of this society, though well known, is so interesting that, for the sake of the young, it can bear to be told again. The Rev. Thomas Charles, pastor of a rural congregation at Bala, in Wales, meeting a little girl in the street of the village, asked her if she could repeat the text from which he had preached the previous Sabbath. Weeping, she replied that the weather had been so severe she had not been able to go, as usual, and read the text in the Bible. Upon inquiry he found that she was required to journey seven miles to have access to a Welsh Bible, from which she was in the habit of committing his texts to memory. On his first visit to London, Mr. Charles brought the want of Bibles in Wales before the

committee of the Religious Tract Society, and that led to the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society, to furnish Bibles to Wales, and to all, anywhere, who needed. It has printed the Scriptures in almost all the languages of the earth, and up to March, 1876, its issue of copies of the Word of God reached 76,432,723, and at the present date are perhaps not much less than 100,000,000. In America a Bible society was established in Philadelphia in 1808, and other two in the following year, one at Hartford and the other at Boston. In 1816 these had increased to sixty local societies, and in that year delegates from these met at New York and organized the American Bible Society, the local organizations continuing as auxiliaries, the number of which has increased so rapidly as now to amount to seven thousand. The American Bible Society had for its first place of business a little room seven feet by nine, and now occupies a whole block, prints the Scriptures in more than twenty languages, and its issues, in the decade ending 1876, were 11,340,000. Besides these, many Bible societies having the same aims and doing the same work, are to be found throughout all the nations of Christendom, and they present one delightful feature of both home and foreign missions, namely, they are strictly undenominational, and furnish to all believers, irrespective of church connection, a field in which they can lovingly and harmoniously work together. And considering the vast number of languages into which the Scriptures have been translated, and the unbounded supply of the Word of God, which innumerable Bible societies stand prepared to furnish wherever needed, it is not too much to say that the Church is better prepared to day to carry on an aggressive war, to bring the world into subjection to Christ, than she was at the Day of Pentecost, and that more has been done during the last fifty years to the world's final conversion, than in the fifty years after the resurrection of Christ, notwithstanding the advantages then enjoyed.

In the second prophetic emblem referred to, the "angel flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation and kindred, and tongue and people," we have another very distinctly marked feature of the past Reformation era. In the struggle for existence which the reformed churches had long to maintain, it is not wonderful that, for some time, they were not in circumstances to attempt much in the line of what all call "Foreign Missions." Still, as it is of the very nature and genius of Christianity to spread and propagate itself in every direction, it was not long till missionary work took shape and put forth a power. So early as 1555, Calvin sent forth fourteen missionaries from Geneva, to join a French protestant colony, about to settle in Brazil. The settlers in New England were, according to the language of their charter, "desirous, above all, of extending the Redeemer's kingdom in lands where Christ is not named." In the charter given by Charles I. to the Colony of Massachusetts, it is

declared "that to win the natives of that country to the knowledge and obedience of the only true God and Saviour of mankind, in our royal intention, and the adventurers profession, is the principal end of the plantation." Accordingly the seal of the colony had as its device the figure of an Indian with a label in his mouth, on which was the Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us." Passing over, however, many long sustained and successful labors toward the conversion of the Indians by such men as Elliot, Mayhew, Brainerd and many others, so early as 1705 we find a Danish mission to India on the coast of Coromandel, in which region and Ceylon the distinguished missionary Swartz, labored long and with much success. In 1708 the Danish mission to Greenland was established, in connection with which the remarkable work of Count Zinzendorf and the Moravian brethren is well known. In 1792 the society was formed which sent out Carey and Thomas to India, who, after many hardships and ill treatment at the hands of the East India Company, were wonderfully owned of God and prospered. In 1795 the London Missionary Society was formed. Its first field of operation was in the South Sea Islands, but for many years without apparent success, till in 1816 King Pomare II. embraced Christianity, since which period missionary work in numerous groups of islands in the south seas has had unparalleled success. In 1807 this Society sent out Dr. Morrison, who translated the New Testament into Chinese and afterwards, with the help of Dr. Milne, the Old. It also established missions in the Indian Archipelago, Mauritius and South Africa, where Moffat labored for fifty-two years, and was followed by Livingstone, whose career as a missionary explorer in Africa is unprecedented. The same Society sent missionaries to Madagascar in 1820, where, after many wonderful vicissitudes, Christianity has had a marvelous triumph. Indeed, so great has been the success, after years of waiting and often disappointment, of this Society, that in 1880 it had in its employ one hundred and thirty-six ordained European missionaries, three hundred and seventy-one ordained native ministers, 4,529 native preachers, 89,487 communicants, 339,898 native adherents, and 75,914 pupils in its schools, its sphere of operation being in China, India, Madagascar, Africa, West Indies and Polynesia.

The Wesleyan Missionary Society and the Church Missionary Society followed, and in 1824 the Church of Scotland took action by originating a society, which, in 1829, sent Dr. Duff to India, and afterwards Dr. Wilson, who will be long known by his book, "Lands of the Bible." It also sent out a commission to Palestine and the East, and established in different places a mission to the Jews. The American Board of Foreign Missions was organized in 1810, on the appeal of three young men, students in Williams' College, who for some time had been meeting in the woods for conversation about the condition of the heathen, and prayer on their behalf. Its first missionaries were

Newell, Judson, Hall, Nott and Rice, who, with the exception of Judson and Rice, who left the service of the Board to unite with the Baptists, all, after many difficulties, established missions at different places in India, and since the work has been greatly extended in Ceylon, Ahmednugger, Madras and Madura. The same Board has also been conducting very successful missions since 1817, among many tribes of the American Indians, and more recently, among the inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands. In 1820, it opened its mission in Turkey, when Parsons and Fisk settled at Smyrna, and in 1830 sent Jonas King as a missionary to Greece. Both of these missions, especially the former, have been greatly prospered and blessed. In 1835, it sent Justin Perkins and Dr Grant to labor among the Nestorians in Persia, who settled at Oroomiah, where Dr. Grant's medical skill was soon found so helpful in the work that a medical department is now thought necessary to every well organized mission. In the same year, it had similar success in the mission established in China by Elijah C. Bridgeman, who was joined by Dr. Parker, who established an eye infirmary, which soon brought the mission into extensive notice and repute. This mission has wonderfully developed since that time, and now is known by its two great centres, the Foo-Chow Mission, and the North China Mission. Since that time, separate missionary associations, in connection with all the evangelical churches, have been so numerous, and so active, that a passing reference to some of the more important is all that space will afford. The Baptist Missionary Union has been at work since 1814, and the Methodist Episcopal and Protestant Episcopal since 1819 and 1820. The larger Presbyterian bodies have been very active in missionary work since 1841, and the Evangelical Lutherans commenced operations about the same time. The Reformed Church and the United Presbyterian Churches of this country, both organized for foreign mission work in 1853, and both have been vouchsafed much favor and success. Our own foreign mission in Syria was commenced two years earlier, in 1856, with what success is well known, although, at first, many difficulties and discouragements sorely tried the faith and patience of those engaged in the work. Our mission in Syria, now strengthened by the co-operation of the missionaries sent to the same region by our churches in Scotland and Ireland, has had an experience wonderfully similar to the marked success realized by almost all the American Churches laboring in Bible lands, and which seems to be an almost literal fulfillment of the old prediction: "So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the West." The far West is now carrying back what it first got from the rising of the sun. To write the whole story, however, of modern foreign missions, would be to write a good part of the history of all the churches, both in this land and in Europe, especially of those of the English-speaking nationalities. Many that we could not even take time to glance at, such as missions to the Jews in many places, and to Roman Catholics,

and even to Mohammedans, are, perhaps, as interesting and important as those to which we have referred, and all taken together, make the prospect for the future wonderfully bright by the rays of the Sun of Righteousness, now rising on every land.

The third prophetic view of our era, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors and their works do follow them," has also had a verification in the missionary work of the churches during the last half century, both noteworthy and encouraging. It has been usual to quote this passage as if it did not belong to prophecy, but as simply descriptive of the blessedness of God's people after death, in the eternal rest into which they then enter. While in this sense it is true and full of consolation, yet that is evidently not the primary sense intended, as is obvious from the "henceforth" in the passage. Why say "henceforth"? Were not those dying in the Lord always blessed? Whereas "henceforth" gives a prophetic meaning to the assurance and connects it with an era, of which it shall be a characteristic feature. It is intended to assure us that in that era, those who are active in working for God, will be blessed by more immediate and visible fruits following their labors on earth, than those of former ages; and with increasing fullness and brightness we can see this realized, and never more so than in the last fifty years. A few features of this period in respect of foreign missions will exhibit this fact.

1. There are none now in the Church, nor indeed anywhere, who oppose foreign missions. Many in times past had doubts about the propriety of such missions, as they had about Sabbath-school work. When Carey urged it in 1789 on his brethren in England, an old minister said to him: "Sit down, young man, when God's time to convert the heathen comes, he will do it without either you or me." And it is well known with what blindness and persistence the East India Company opposed the work of missions as an evil.

2. There is now no difficulty in finding a foreign mission field. It was once not so. China had her wall, and most nations drew a cordon of restrictions around them that often made it very difficult to find a suitable field. But all that is changed. God has battered down these walls, and set before us an open door, so that the difficulty is not to find those who will receive the gospel, but to supply those who are entreating us to come to their help. Ethiopia is literally "stretching out her hands to God."

3. Success in mission work is generally far greater and more immediate than in former times. When we read the story of many pre-reformation workers, as Jerome, Huss, Wickliffe, Tyndale and Savonarola, one feels sad that much persevering toil and often devoted heroism in the cause of God had so little immediate success. And so of many of the first missionaries to the heathen after the Reformation, who had often to wait long before being blessed and gladdened by a

single convert. But now in a far greater measure and more immediately, is it given to such to realize that their "labor is not in vain in the Lord." When we read of blessed awakenings, and multitudes being turned from Satan unto God, and whole tribes renouncing idolatry, and burning their idols, we almost involuntarily exclaim: "Who are these that fly as a cloud and as doves to their windows?"

4. Missionary work has now taken hold, as it never did before, on the whole Church, in all the elements of her strength. The time was when this and other such work was left pretty much to ministers; but now, earnest men and women in every position in society, are becoming more and more alive to the fact that it is the work of the whole body; thus proving that it is the energy of spiritual life in all the members of the Church, which is the dynamics of mission work, and of everything good. Of this, we have illustrations in such facts as the universal observance of a week of prayer, the uniting of the medical element with the spiritual in modern missions, after the example of Christ and the apostles; in amazingly enlarged contributions of means to promote the work; and in the large place missions now fill in the deliberations and proceedings of synods and assemblies. Time was when such meetings spent a vast amount of time in wrangling and strife, but now there is no time for fighting. When the Home Mission, and the Colonial Mission, and the Jewish Mission, and the Foreign Mission, besides Temperance, Sabbath observance, and Sabbath-schools all get their place, things that used to get time, only to distract and disturb, are happily shut out. How different from what it was fifty years ago.

5. Mission work has been drawing the churches more closely together and demonstrating their real spiritual unity before the world. "That they all may be one, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." There is an outward oneness of organization, and an inward unity of the Spirit, which is far more comprehensive, and missionary work which makes us to hear and read with interest and delight, of the success granted to other churches, and quickens us to pray for them and their work, not only demonstrates how far this unity of the Spirit really prevails, but is surely developing a force that will ultimately bring all into one.

6. Mission work has been powerfully demonstrating that the gospel is the only power that can cure the evils in the nations of the world. "The leaves of the trees are for the healing of the nations," and if unjust wars, slavery, injustice, intemperance, ignorance, lust and oppression have crowded the world with untold suffering, the world is now discovering that the gospel alone can remedy such ills. The gospel has shown its power to change the cannibal into a loving disciple, the friend of God and man. It abolishes slavery, secures liberty, establishes the reign of righteousness, it promotes domestic happiness, the purity and rights of woman, and purifies society from

manifold ills, and is "full of mercy and good fruit," in every condition of life. In fact, the religion of Jesus is like Joseph, "a fruitful bough by a well whose branches run over the wall." It has no line fence, but drops its fruit on the world, and on every part of society, as well as on the precincts of the Church. And oh, that the world only knew this fact. What good in the world, in promoting the kingdom of Christ, and securing the true welfare of man would not a tithe of the money squandered on folly, or on war, accomplish. Oh, when shall men learn that nations need Christ, as much as individuals, "to save them from the consequences of sin, and that it only is when men shall be blessed in Him," in every relation, that they shall be blessed indeed, and "all nations shall call Him blessed."



COVENANTERS AND THE ANTI-SLAVERY STRUGGLE.*

BY THE REV. A. M. MILLIGAN, D.D., PITTSBURGH, PA.

Eighty years ago, a young Ayrshire Scotchman, seventeen years old, arrived in Western Pennsylvania. A companion of his, who was cook for his mess in the British army, had come one morning into the ranks with some meal on his coat, and, being sentenced to receive five hundred lashes, died under the infliction. This cruelty excited the spirit of liberty in the young Scotchman, and he vowed that he would never shoulder a musket for King George. Thus he came to America an ardent republican; but on his arrival in this land he found a class of people, who were kidnapped on the western coast of Africa, transported over the sea under the decks of slave-ships amid horrors indescribable, sold on the auction block, and driven on the plantations as brute beasts to unrequited toil for their cruel owners and masters, and every effort of theirs to secure their freedom met by the most cruel tortures. Shocked by such deeds of cruelty in a land of boasted liberty, he turned to the law which was the recognized authority, and to the Constitution which was acknowledged as supreme, and found that the slave-holder had therein four full guarantees for his accursed institution of human bondage: The first authorized him to import these persons from their native land, forbidding any law to the contrary. The second gave the slave-holder political power proportioned to the number of his slaves, five of whom being reckoned equal to three free men in apportioning representation. The third bound all the states to return the fugitive who might escape from his master. The

* Abstract of address delivered on the evening of November 21, 1883, at the Semi-Centennial celebration of the First Reformed Presbyterian congregation of Philadelphia.