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I.—LITERARY.

YOU SHOULD BE MISSIONARY.*

THOS. C. JOHNSON.

Brethren, do you understand the importance of missionary effort on the part of the church? Do you feel its importance? Do you feel that you are fully awake on this subject? Have you determined to be missionaries yourselves?

We ought all to be missionaries whatever be our local spheres of labor. Whether we are pastors, or evangelists, or professors, or editors. We ought to be missionary in heart, aiming to spend our lives as to spread the Gospel most rapidly and fully throughout the limits of the earth. Many of us, perhaps, ought to labor on the foreign field. "My brethren, I am ashamed that there are so many of us here in this christian land. We must go to the heathen," said Dr. Wm. Armstrong to the ministers and churches of Richmond, Va. in 1833. † And Dr. Armstrong was right. He was simply awake to a great and momentous reality. There are too many ministers at home in proportion to the number in mission fields.

When Gossner said, in Berlin, in 1844, to young men starting for India, "Up, up, my brethren! The Lord is coming and to every one he will say, 'Where hast thou left the souls of the heathen? With the devil?' Oh, swiftly seek those souls and enter not without them into the presence of the Lord," ‡ he was making an exhortation tame in comparison with the requirements of the case.

* A part of a lecture from the course in Missions, 1897.

† See Thompson: Foreign Missions, p. 7.

‡ Thompson: Foreign Missions, p. 6.

work of this department of our Magazine. Our reviewer has done nothing more than give his honest opinion of the books he has reviewed. Nor can we understand how his criticisms sound "oracular" in as much as he is careful to give reasons for the objections which he brings against any book. Let the intelligent reader take them for what they are worth. Let those who are disposed to criticise them show wherein they misrepresent the books under review. It is an indisputable fact that many of the book notices which appear in otherwise truthful periodicals do not fairly state the character of those books, and are therefore valueless. Although our reviewer is a "young brother" so far as age is concerned, we believe he is fully competent for his work and needs no one to suggest to him in a patronizing way what books he shall review and how he shall do his work. Those who know him best have great respect for his judgment as well as his conscientious devotion to truth, and therefore value his book reviews.

ABOUT BOOKS.

The Library of Union Seminary contains over fifteen thousand volumes. These books, for the most part, have been selected with the greatest care, and form one of the choicest Theological collections in the country. The best thoughts of the great religious teachers for twenty centuries are stored up here. The Divinity student can find almost anything he may wish from the works of the Ante-Nicene fathers to the latest refutation of the Kuenen-Wellhausen theory. What a rare opportunity he has of forming the acquaintance of books and authors! Yet how few seminary students avail themselves of this great opportunity. The slight acquaintance which the average student has with books is something amazing. The librarian is actually asked sometimes whether we keep any commentaries or church histories in the library. We admit that this is a rather unusual question, yet there are many questions asked which betray a similar lack of acquaintance with books and their contents. Nor does this knowledge about books seem to grow in many cases as the student goes out into the active ministry. For example, it is not infrequent that even a minister asks if Matthew Henry's commentary is not the most *scholarly* commentary that has ever been written.

(We mean no reflections upon that quaint commentary for perhaps it is the best devotional commentary ever written but certainly not the most scholarly). Just at present the librarian is receiving numerous letters making inquiry as to the best books on the Westminster Assembly. Examples might be multiplied but these are sufficient for our purpose. They indicate that the seminary student does not avail himself as he might, of this extraordinary opportunity of becoming acquainted with theological literature.

We do not mean that the student should *read* through every book in the library. That were impossible even were it desirable. But we do mean that he should take advantage of this opportunity of learning who are the great authorities on great subjects. When the student leaves seminary he certainly should know who have written the great treatises on Theology from the Calvinistic standpoint, and the comparative merits of each. He should know which are the best commentaries on the various books of the Bible, the best discussion of the parables, the best monographs on such great themes as the Person of Christ, the Atonement, Justification, Baptism, etc. In short, he should learn in what books to look for the best discussion of those great themes with which he will be occupied all the remainder of his life. To know where to look for knowledge is a great accomplishment. Horace Walpole called it the sixth sense and coined the clumsy and infelicitous word "serendipity" to describe it. The word never lived but his idea was a good one. It is to be regretted that so many of us are lacking in that sense. The man who has it to the most remarkable degree of any one living is Dr. Garnett, the present keeper of the printed books in the British Museum. It is said that at a half hour's notice he can refer to anything that any man ever knew. We may never hope to become such walking encyclopedias. We may, however, by a little painstaking, learn much of books while we are yet in the seminary.

The student would find it a very valuable exercise to take with him to each class a pencil and a small note book. Whenever the professor in charge refers to any book let the student make a note of it with any criticism which the professor may venture. That afternoon let him go to the library and form the personal acquaintance of the book to which the professor has given him a letter of introduction. To be sure he cannot learn

all about the book in the few minutes that he has at his disposal, but he has learned that there is such a book in existence, moreover, he has learned whether he wishes to cultivate the acquaintance any further. If he likes the book he may jot its name and the name of the publishers down in another note book, on the back of which is written some such title, "Books which I may wish to buy." He would also do well to read carefully the book reviews which fall under his notice from week to week and make a note of such books among them as he likes. The number of books learned by this method in one year would amaze the student himself. This knowledge will serve him a very valuable purpose when he wishes to add books to his own library. By reference to his note book he will know just what books he wishes to buy. As a result he will not fill up his shelves with useless material.

No sane man would think of choosing another person as his intimate friend without a previous acquaintance. Yet a man will choose books and give them a place in his study as his life-long companions and most intimate friends without any sort of previous acquaintance with them. The result is that in many cases he finds the friendship an uncongenial one. He and his friend are of incompatible tempers. The friend is relegated to the book shelf to collect any stray dust that may find its way into the minister's study. All this unpleasantness could have been avoided so easily had the minister, while a student in the seminary, made himself acquainted with these books, and learned whether he cared to form any closer relationship.

Every man must choose his own books, just as every man must choose his own friends. Others cannot choose for us. Never again will the student have such a rare opportunity of cultivating the acquaintance of books and of learning which he wishes to choose as his friends as he has while in the seminary. Shall we waste this opportunity?

W. L. L.

WHAT WILL THE KING SAY WHEN HE COMES AGAIN?

A King once went into a far country, leaving his servants to manage the affairs of his kingdom until the time of his return.

Now many who owed allegiance to the King were in rebellion