

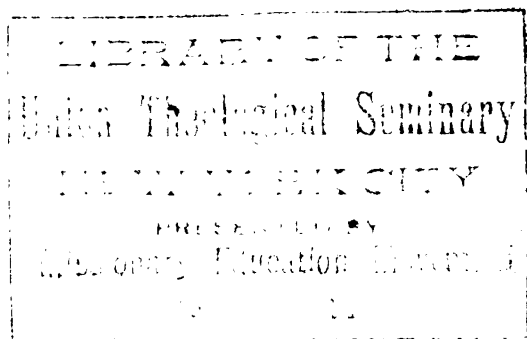
The World-Call to Men of To-day

**Addresses and Proceedings
of the Men's Missionary
Convention, held in Philadel-
phia, February 11-13, 1908**

Edited by
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**The Board of Foreign Missions of the
Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.**
156 Fifth Ave., New York



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THE PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION AND SABBATH-SCHOOL WORK
PHILADELPHIA

XII

THE PART WHICH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIANS
HAVE HAD IN FOREIGN MISSIONS IN THE PAST

BY REV. WM. H. ROBERTS, D. D., LL.D., MODERATOR

The Apostolic Church, whose zeal was kindled with fire from the sacrificial altar on Calvary, was a church aflame with missionary enthusiasm. The Protestant Reformation of the 16th century restored the Apostolic Church to Christendom and brought in a revival of the spirit of missions. It is suggestive in this connection that the first evangelical mission on the American continent was founded in Brazil, in 1555, by John Calvin.

In dealing with the subject, "The Part Which American Presbyterians Have Had in Foreign Missions in the Past," it is needful to bear in mind two things; that our American Christian denominations have their roots in transatlantic churches, and that the treatment of the subject is of necessity limited to the history of the Presbyterian Church, in the United States of America. The record of other Presbyterian churches in missionary endeavor is worthy of all praise, but its recital is not within the province of the speaker.

The modern revival of missions in Europe already referred to, began in Great Britain, with the Puritans, and the Indians inhabiting the English colonies in America, furnished the first field of operations. The earliest of the modern missionary societies, one still existing, and entitled "The President and Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England," was established in the year 1649, by the Long Parliament of England, the body which appointed the Westminster Assembly of Divines. The movement asking for the establishment of this society began in 1641, and the petition in its support was signed largely by English Presbyterians, and in addition by Alexander Henderson and other Presbyterian leaders in Scotland.

There is a natural relation between the Presbyterian churches and missionary effort. The church of the people must seek for

the salvation of all the people, and the church which acknowledges Christ as its only Head, cannot but render obedience to the command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation." It is therefore a reasonable development to find that the Westminster Confession and the earliest of British missionary societies originated in the same body of Christian believers.

The work of the "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel" was carried on chiefly by the famous New England missionary, John Eliot. Eliot was a Presbyterian by conviction, and the splendid service which he rendered from 1637 to 1690, in the conversion and education of the heathen on our shores, made him the forerunner, not only in the general work of American foreign missions, but also in the labors of the Presbyterian Church for the conversion of the heathen world. His was the first voice of an American Presbyterian crying in the wilderness, "Make ye ready the way of the Lord."

The Church of Scotland followed in the footsteps of the Westminster Calvinists by establishing in 1709 the "Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge." This organization provided the funds for the beginning of mission work among the Indians of Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey, the management of the undertaking being under the control of the General Synod of the Presbyterian Church. The first missionary was Azariah Horton, who began his labors in 1741, and he was followed by those remarkable brothers, David and John Brainerd. These men were true successors of John Eliot, and worthy predecessors of the many earnest and faithful missionaries who were to follow them in the pathway of the cross, and of ultimate world-victory. The work of the Presbyterian Church for the Indians was successfully carried on by Presbyterians in New England, New York, New Jersey and other regions during the 18th century, counting among its missionaries other than those already named, such men as Jonathan Edwards and the Indian minister, Samson Occum. The great philosopher was also a great preacher who brought many sinners to Christ, and the Christian Mohegan is still remembered by his hymn, beginning

"Awaked by Sinai's awful sound."

Both men were examples of how great native gifts can be combined with simplicity of faith and earnestness of life, for the salvation and regeneration of mankind.

THE BEGINNING OF AMERICAN FOREIGN MISSIONS

The subject of missions to the heathen outside of the territory of the American colonies was brought first to the attention of the General Synod of the church, in 1774, through a proposal by Rev. Ezra Stiles, "to concur with and assist in a mission to the African tribes." The war of the colonies for independence, however, interfered with the carrying out of the high-minded proposal.

The General Assembly from its first establishment, in 1789, gave prompt attention to missions, and on several occasions considered plans for enterprises outside of the United States. Presbyterian work in this line of service, however, was carried on for many years in connection with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, established in 1810, as a joint agency of the churches of our country, but now for many years connected solely with the Congregational body.

The man most noteworthy in relation to the history of the establishment of American organized foreign missionary work independent of European influence, was the Rev. Samuel John Mills, Jr. His service began with the famous Haystack Prayer Meeting, at Williams College, held by him and a number of his associates, locally known as the "Brethren." Out of it sprang, as from a fountain of divine life, the American Board, the United Foreign Missionary Society, and the American Bible Society. Mr. Mills was also influential in leading into the mission field Adoniram Judson, the founder of American Baptist missions. Ordained in 1815 as a Presbyterian clergyman, he seemed to have before him a notable career in Christ's cause, but having enlisted for service in Africa, he died at sea in 1818. Eminent will Mills always be as the young American Presbyterian who under God gave organic and efficient form to American foreign missions to the heathen. Dying at thirty-five years of age his memory will ever be young with an imperishable renown, and his achievements a stimulus to earnest service by young men of all conditions and nations.

The influence of Mills and his fellow-laborers so stimulated the Presbyterian Church that in 1831 the Western Foreign Missionary Society was organized by the Synod of Pittsburgh, the purpose being "to increase the amount of missionary feeling and effort in the Presbyterian Church." One of the chief leaders in the movement was the Rev. Elisha P. Swift, D. D., pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh. It is interesting to note that his mother was a direct descendent of John Eliot, and under her influence he early consecrated himself to the great cause of missions. Ordained as a foreign missionary in 1817, he was kept at home by God's providence, the divine purpose evidently being that he should impart to the Presbyterian Church the earnestness that ruled within his own heart. Entering upon his labors as secretary of the Western Foreign Missionary Society, March, 1833, he threw himself with all his energy into the advocacy of the missionary cause, and stimulated the Presbyterian Church to activity therein throughout the entire country. He continued his labors until 1836, when his successor, the Hon. Walter Lowrie, was appointed. Dr. Swift returned to the pastorate and became one of the foremost of those ardent servants of Christ in the ministry who have glorified the pastorate by their quenchless zeal for the salvation of the world for which Christ died.

The first mission of the Western Foreign Missionary Society was established among the Weas in the Indian Territory, under the management of the Rev. Joseph Kerr. It was among the Indians also that our brethren of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, now happily re-united with us after a long separation, began their similar work, the missionary being the Rev. Robert Fell, who labored in Mississippi, from 1820 to 1830; he deserves to be mentioned side by side with Eliot and the Brainards, men of whom it was true that they sought the welfare of the souls and not possession of the hunting ground of the aborigines.

THE FOUNDING OF THE PRESBYTERIAN BOARD

The cause of foreign missions under the advocacy of the men at the head of the Western Foreign Missionary Society, took so deep a hold upon the heart of the church that the inevitable result was the establishment of the Presbyterian Board of

Foreign Missions, in 1837. While this step resulted in a separation from the Congregational brethren, it brought about a greatly enlarged interest in foreign missions throughout the church. It is true that a serious division of the forces of the church occurred at the time of the establishment of the board, but so far as the mission cause is concerned, whatever evil there was in the separation, was overruled by God for good.

The church and the board were both greatly advantaged in the new work undertaken by the acceptance of the office of secretary by the Hon. Walter Lowrie. Born in Scotland, he came to this country at an early age and quickly became an American of the Americans. Entering secular life at first, he filled among other offices that of senator of the United States from Pennsylvania, and from 1824, for twelve years was secretary of the United States senate. God's call, however, came to him in 1836, when he was elected secretary of the Western Foreign Missionary Society. When the society was merged into the Board of Foreign Missions, he continued in the official discharge of the varied duties of the secretarial office, and laid down the arduous but congenial task in 1868, only when disabled by the infirmities of old age. The sort of man he was is shown by the fact that in order to further the work of missions in China, Mr. Lowrie pursued the study of the Chinese language, rising two hours earlier than usual in order to perfect himself therein. He then personally supervised all preparations in the United States, even to the oversight of the fonts of Chinese type, for the great mission press, which he established at Shanghai. While Dr. Swift stands as an example to pastors of what they may accomplish in the cause of foreign missions, Walter Lowrie is the example to laymen of the service which they can render to their fellow-men for Christ's dear sake. His life will always be a stimulus to the laymen of our church to render according to ability and opportunity, unstinted service to the great cause of missions.

The General Assembly of 1837 rendered a service to the church and to Christendom by a definite statement of denominational duty in the work of foreign missions. Each Christian denomination is under obligation to manifest in a way that is true to its own character, its interest in Christian world-con-

quest. In harmony with this position the Assembly declared that the "Presbyterian Church owed it as a duty to its glorified Head, to yield a far more exemplary obedience, and that in her distinctive character as a church, to the command which he gave at his ascension into heaven, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation.'"

Ten years later the Assembly conferred a lasting benefit upon the church by a clear definition of what the church is in itself, and in the following words:

"The Presbyterian Church is a missionary society, the object of which is to aid in the conversion of the world, and every member of this church is a member for life of said society, and bound to do all in his power for the accomplishment of this object."

This position of the Presbyterian Church is unmistakable, needs no apology, and is worthy in the present and the future of persistent and enthusiastic support. Loyalty to this position is loyalty to Jesus Christ.

The Presbyterian Church has believed not only in denominational missions, carried on in a catholic spirit, but also that the field of each Christian church is the world. Thus believing, according to opportunity and ability, it has gone forward through all the years, enlarging steadily its sphere of missionary work, until to-day it has belted the globe with a band of blue from the Saviour's robe. Naturally, because the negro was in the United States, Africa was one of the first mission fields, the work in it, as also in India, being established in 1833. Work in other lands was undertaken in successive years as God's providence opened the way, in Siam, in 1840; China, in 1843; Colombia, in 1853; Brazil, in 1859; Japan, in 1859; Mexico, in 1872; Central America, in 1882; and Korea, in 1884.

At the reunion of the Old and New School Presbyterian Churches in 1870, in view of the fact that the New School Churches had retained for a long period its connection with the American Board, three missions were transferred to the care of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions: Syria, established in 1821; Persia, in 1843; and Chile in 1861.

At the reunion of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church with the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., in 1906, there

were transferred to our Board of Foreign Missions, missions in Japan, in China, and in Mexico, the first established in 1872, and the latter in 1886. The Cumberland Church was engaged in mission work before the Civil War, coöperating at one time with the American Board, and it is to be noted that as early as 1818 a Women's Board was organized in its midst.

NOTABLE MISSIONARIES OF THE CHURCH

Those who have rendered service in the foreign missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., from the beginning are far too numerous for special mention of any one of them. The total number including medical missionaries is 2,435. In every land they have rendered great service to the cause of Christ. Filled with the spirit of self-sacrifice, they have never hesitated to go forward in the path of duty in obedience to their Lord's commands, whatever the circumstances which might surround them, or the obstacles confronting them. In the willing service of mankind for Jesus' sake, they braved the deadly climates of low-lying African and oriental lands, the bitter opposition alike of savage tribes and semi-civilized heathen nations, the fears engendered by the ever-present and threatening hostility of priesthood and caste and commerce, and dared all things inspired by the Saviour's cross. Their zeal has known no diminution from generation to generation, and in this present they are as active and ardent in the dissemination of the gospel through every instrument within their power as at any time in the past. Their record is a record of faithful service to the best interests of mankind, and twenty-one of them are to be counted in the ranks of the apostles and martyrs. India, China and Persia have all been glorified by the deaths of those who may be justly classed with the martyrs of apostolic days. The first and last martyrs suffered at the hands of the Chinese, but India and other lands, too, have illustrated the fact that the blood of the saints is the seed of the church. Here is the roll of these modern martyrs for the welfare of all mankind, who counted all things but loss for Christ's sake.

CHINA:

Rev. Walter Macon Lowrie, 1847.

Rev. W. McChesney, 1872.

George Yardley Taylor, M. D.
 Rev. Frank Edson Simcox.
 Mrs. Mary Gilson Simcox.
 Cortlandt Van Rensselaer Hodge, M. D.
 Mrs. Elsie Sinclair Hodge, all in 1900.
 Eleanor Chestnut, M. D.
 Mrs. Ella Wood Machle.
 Rev. John Rodgers Peale.
 Mrs. Rebecca Gillespie Peale, all in 1905.

INDIA :

Rev. John Edgar Freeman.
 Mrs. Elizabeth (Vredenburg) Freeman.
 Rev. Albert Osborne Johnson.
 Mrs. Amanda Joanne (Gill) Johnson.
 Rev. David Elliott Campbell.
 Mrs. Maria Irvine (Bingham) Campbell.
 Rev. Robert McMullin.
 Mrs. Sarah Colt (Pierson) McMullin, all in 1857.
 Rev. Levi Janvier, D.D., 1864.
 Rev. Isidor Lowenthal, 1864.

PERSIA :

Rev. Benjamin Woods Labaree, 1904.

A marked effect of the reunion of 1870 was the stimulus given to increased effort in missions throughout the church, one result of which was the organization of the Women's Foreign Missionary Society in 1870. Since that year the number of Women's Boards of General Societies has increased to seven.

PRESBYTERIAN GIFTS TO MISSIONS

The interest of the church in foreign missions has been shown, not only in the supreme gifts of its sons and daughters to the work, but also in the contributions made for mission support and maintenance. From 1833 to 1870 the total amount of the moneys received by the board was \$4,416,237. After the reunion of the Old and New School Churches in 1870 contributions steadily increased, rising from \$310,348 in 1870-71, to \$901,180 in 1888. Since 1902 the million dollar mark has been passed in each year, and for the year ending April 30th,

1907, the total contributions were \$1,276,747. During the 38 years from 1870 to 1907 the contributions to foreign missions amounted to \$29,413,677, and the total contributed since the establishment of the board is \$33,829,914. While this is a great sum of money, American Presbyterians are able to do more, and will so do, if rightly guided. We are familiar with world expansion in commerce, and are prepared to support large plans for intelligent and systematic Christian world-conquest.

The growth of the work of the Board of Foreign Missions has been steady, gradual and encouraging. The statistics show that in the year 1834 there were 3 missions with 2 out-stations, 4 American ministers and 2 male and 3 female American lay missionaries. The first report of communicants was in 1836, the number being 5. From this small beginning in two non-Christian lands has developed the work which to-day sustains 138 principal stations, with 2,062 out-stations, in charge of American missionaries to the number of 889, of whom 287 are ordained ministers, 22 are male lay missionaries, 489 female missionaries, with a medical force of 65 male and 26 female physicians. The native force connected with these stations consists of 228 ordained ministers, 696 licentiates, and 2,205 other helpers, a total of native workers of 3,129. The churches connected with the missions are 441, the communicants 73,447, the Sabbath school scholars 83,452, and the day school scholars 36,924. In connection with the medical missions there are 53 hospitals, 62 dispensaries, and the number of patients treated during the last year was 426,101. In addition, printing establishments are conducted by the board, which during the past year issued more than 132,000,000 pages of religious literature in the Chinese, Persian, Siamese, Laos and Arabic languages. And last, but not least, the educational work of the church is to the forefront in many lands, including day schools and Sabbath schools, academies, seminaries and great colleges, such as the Syrian College at Beirut, the Christian College at Canton, Forman College at Natrove, and the Christian College at Allahabad, India.

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CHURCH

One of the marked results of the work has been the organization of native, independent churches in certain lands. The

organization of such churches is always a desirable thing, for it brings to the support of the gospel influences of the human sort, which are more potent than any other in connection with its dissemination. Native, independent churches have been organized in Japan, Brazil, Mexico, Syria, China and India. These organizations furnish ground for large expectations in connection with the present work of the church, and are the proof that the constructive power which has been a feature of the life of the Presbyterian churches in the past still continues as a potent force, attesting their persistent vigor and undiminished energy.

Another of the notable achievements of Presbyterians has been that accomplished through the printing press. While the press is employed to a large extent in several missions, the largest and most efficient plants are at Shanghai, China, and Beirut, Syria. The first, the Christian Church owes to Walter Lowrie, and also to such practical printers as Messrs. Cole, Coulter, Gamble and J. L. Mateer. From the Shanghai press issue every year millions of pages of religious literature, (last year 132,051,647 pages),—one half of the issue being the Christian Scriptures. The press at Beirut was established by the American Board, was supported largely by the New School Presbyterian Church, and was transferred to the reunited church in 1871. Its principal work has been the translation and printing of the Arabic Bible, the two chief laborers being Drs. Eli Smith, and C. B. A. VanDyck. Arabic is the sacred language of 200,000,000 of the human race, extending from western Africa to the Philippines. Through these two great printing establishments Christian America, and in particular the Presbyterian Church, has given to the Chinese and the Mohammedans, nearly one half of the human race, the inestimable gift of God's Word in permanent form.

There has been further a marvelous reflex influence upon the home churches wrought by the work of missions, in the production of which the Presbyterian Church has been second to none other. Among the most catholic of churches, for it unchurches no other body of Christians, its missionaries have always acted in their relations to the brethren of other churches in the most fraternal manner. This fraternity of spirit has

been reciprocated by the missionaries of other denominations. As a consequence Christian unity is a real power on the mission field, and the results in the home churches have been notable. There has been manifest a greater devotion on the part of the membership of the church to the foreign mission idea. There has likewise been a marked increase in fervent and united prayer.

The Lodia Mission, in India, was the body which in 1858 issued the call for the annual week of prayer since observed both in Europe and America.

The influence of missions upon character in Christian lands has been notable. The Christ-like spirit of unselfish devotion to the best interests of humanity both for time and eternity, has been so fostered, that to-day no great human need, such as famine, in heathen nations, fails to rouse to action the generous instincts of Christian nations. Moreover, the mission churches have exerted a marked influence upon the relations of the Christian denominations in the home land one to another. Face to face with organized heathenism and Mohammedanism, especially amid the vast populations of Asia, Christian missionaries have been led to realize their unity of spirit and their common purpose in a manner unattained in Christian lands. Confronted by vast aggressive and hostile forces of evil, they apprehend with sharp definiteness the world's lost estate and its supreme need of salvation from sin. Comparatively few in numbers, they have felt forcibly their absolute dependence for progress and success upon him who has bidden his disciples teach all nations, and seeing Jesus only, have combined against the forces of wickedness opposing them, believing that in his strength they can do all things. The conditions which surround the missions compel unity in action.

THE SECRET OF SUCCESS

As a result of these considerations the opinion is well founded that we have in the Saviour's prayer the night before he went to Calvary, the secret of Christian world-conquest. The unity for which the Saviour then prayed had in view not one nation nor one race, but the world for which he died. He prayed that his disciples might be one in order that not one nation or one race, but the world might believe that the Father had sent him,

and the missions in heathen lands are teaching to-day all Christendom that not uniformity of organization, but unity in purpose and in work, is the power from the human side which can make full answer to the prayer, "That they may be one, even as we are." As a result not only in heathen lands but in all lands, especially in English-speaking lands, notably in these United States, the churches of Christ are acknowledging their unity in the Lord in a remarkable manner. No influence in this present time is so powerful in connection with Christian unity in Christian lands as that which emanates from the foreign mission fields. We can well believe that if every denomination were doing its best in foreign mission work, it would not be long before the differences which separate the home churches, one from another, would be everywhere seen to be non-essential, and would bring speedily to pass, full manifestation of the unity in Christ which now in part exists.

We can say but little in this address of what American Presbyterians have wrought through foreign missions in many lands by the general elevation of the standards of morality, by the sanctification of the family relation, and by the introduction of those principles of Christian civilization which are the sources of true progress for the entire world. We can only suggest that the past gives hope for the future. When we think of the high position to which Americans have been uplifted as a people through Christian influences, we may well gather large expectations for the time to come. Two thousand years ago our ancestors were either fur-clad savages in European forests or rude barbarians wresting a scant living from ill-tilled fields. To whichever class these forbears belonged, they were without exception subject to the deteriorating influences of bloody superstitions. What has made the difference between them and us, between the European and American of to-day, and the men of that distant past? It is the religion of the Christ, and we may rest assured that the power which has produced such vast and beneficent changes will be employed in the near future so as to secure on a world-wide scale the benefits which we now enjoy.

Presbyterian men, you are the heirs of Geneva, Westminster and Edinburgh. You are gathered in the city where in American colonial days the Presbyterian Church in America then an

undivided church, took organic denominational form. You are members of the church which God has so blessed that it is to-day the most powerful Presbyterian Church in Christendom, and of which Dwight L. Moody said that "it has the brains and wealth of America." Whatever may be thought of Moody's statement, the past of our church appeals to us with a power which cannot be gainsaid. The appeal comes urgent with the memories of an Eliot and the Brainerds, of a Mills and a Swift, and a Lowrie. It is earnest with the labors of courageous men and heroic women, with the trials of the saints and the blood of martyrs the world around. Above all it is eloquent with the potency of his death, resurrection and triumphant life, who spake the saying, "I, if I be lifted up . . . will draw all men unto myself." Let us respond to that appeal as one man. Let us bring to bear upon the church of our affection the obligations which bind her to labor yet more earnestly in the future for the salvation of a lost world. Let us send out from this convention influences which shall stimulate not only our own but all other Christian churches to yet fuller realizations of their unity in Christ, so that becoming one even as Christ and the Father are one, the world shall be led to believe in Jesus as its Saviour and Lord. The past and the present unite in this one appeal, "The world for Jesus Christ."