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EDITORIAL

BOOK REVIEW

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# THE UNION SEMINARY MAGAZINE

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## PUBLIC WORSHIP.

BY PROF. CHAS. W. SOMMERVILLE, PH. D.; D. D.  
Clarksville, Tenn.

### I. *The Presbyterian Ritual.*

The Southern Presbyterian Church has a ritual in as true a sense as the Baptist churches have a creed. They disclaim the existence of a creed among them or say "Our creed is the Bible." In fact they have a creed and are remarkably loyal to it, much to their praise.

Our Church as truly has a ritual, though supposed to have none, and is not always loyal to it. To call attention to this and to recall our younger ministers to the ritual of their Church in the conduct of public worship is the object of these comments.

Ritual is defined as "the manner of performing divine service in a particular Church or communion"; also "a book containing the rites to be observed." Out of this latter meaning has grown the common idea of ritualism, "confidence in mere rites or external ceremonies," which our Church conspicuously and as a unit resists. In the first sense given above our Church has a ritual and a noble one, the chief characteristic of which is simplicity and such absence of form that one might be misled into the statement that we have no ritual, a supposition as far from reality as the assertion that our Baptist brethren have no creed.

# MISSIONARY

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## THE FOREIGN MISSIONARY SITUATION.

EGBERT W. SMITH.

During the five years preceding the last Assembly the Foreign Missions Committee sent out 130 new missionaries, nearly doubling the entire force. The usual procedure was as follows: A church which had been giving, say, \$300 per year to Foreign Missions, when visited by a Committee representative would raise its annual contribution to \$600, the amount of a missionary's personal salary. The new missionary would then be sent out and assigned to the church as its representative on the foreign field.

Hindsight having so much the advantage of foresight, it is easy now to see how this transaction ensured a deficit of \$700. It increased the Committee's income \$300, and its liabilities at least \$1,000, for it has long been known that the missionary's personal salary is scarcely half his annual necessary cost to the Committee.

The above method of procedure was probably the principal factor in the creation and steady piling up through five years of our Foreign Missionary debt. It was done away with by the last General Assembly which ordered that hereafter, when a new missionary is sent out, his total annual cost, that is \$1,000, must be provided for in advance, every cent of it to represent that much clear increase in the Committee's annual income. This is now the cordially accepted financial policy of the Foreign Missions Committee. It will be rigidly adhered to. It means that our work is on a sound financial basis, and that no such debt as the last five years have bequeathed us need be apprehended for the future.

Into the already difficult situation a new and uncertain ele-

ment is introduced by the adoption at this time of the new revenue system. We believe it is a good system, in the line of a progressive evolution, and if faithfully worked will eventually prove a blessing to all the causes. But there are certain misconceptions associated with it which have worked and are working immense damage to the Foreign Mission cause.

Many churches have used the new system as an excuse for cancelling their Forward Movement pledges, thus making serious inroads upon the regular support fund of our foreign work. The authors of the new system never contemplated such a backward step. The new plan was not meant to destroy what had been laboriously attained in behalf of any great church cause, but to build upon it as on a noble foundation already laid.

Many pastors and sessions are using the new system as a kind of providential bomb-proof behind which their congregations rest secure against all special financial appeals. Subscribe to the budget, and we promise your pocketbook immunity from further demands of Christ's Kingdom for twelve months. Subscribe to the budget, and you purchase thereby a quit-claim against all and sundry special calls of Christ upon your purse till next April first. Such an attitude usurps the crown rights of Christ. It degrades the whole subject of giving. Needless to say the General Assembly never intended the new system to be put to such a use.

As the missionary firing line has been pushed beyond the measure of the Church's giving, we must do one of two things, either withdraw some of our missionaries, or increase our giving. In presence of this alternative surely we cannot doubt which course our Lord would have us take. The missionaries whose outgoing built up the debt are preaching Christ today amid the darkness of heathenism. Who would recall them? Our people have money enough to pay the debt and to multiply the laborers in our mission fields that were never so white unto the harvest as they are today. Our people have the money. Their appointed leaders and teachers are the pastors. On the pastors therefore rests the chief responsibility.