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I.—LITERARY.

THE DEACON'S OFFICE AND WORK.

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It has been suggestively said by Prof. Witherow of Londonderry that, "all offices in the Christian church take origin from the Lord Jesus. He is Himself the author and embodiment of them all." Not only were they appointed by His authority; they were embodied in His person, and illustrated in His ministry. This follows as a corollary from the familiar New Testament doctrine that the church is the Body of Christ. The expression is not figurative, nor, as some would have it, anticipative; it is the statement of a real, present fact.

Two phrases occur in the New Testament which seem, at first sight, synonymous, but which are never used interchangeably. The one is the "Body of Jesus" or the "Lord's Body." This always has reference to that material body in which he tabernacled during his earthly ministry; which was nailed to the cross, laid in Joseph's tomb, raised from the dead and afterward received up into glory. The other is the "Body of Christ." This, if I mistake not, is always used to denote his Mystical Body, the church. The church is not simply likened to his body, but in a most real sense it is his body. It is the body of which he is the animating, guiding and ruling Head; in which he dwells by his Spirit; through which he perpetuates his presence among men, and carries on his work. In order that he might discharge his personal ministry as our

III.—MISSIONARY DEPARTMENT.

THE CHURCH REMISS—A SUGGESTED REMEDY.

An Extract from a paper prepared by Rev. James Edward Adams,
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In the fall of '94, the American Inter-Seminary Missionary Alliance undertook to gather precise statistics from theological seminaries of our country concerning specific, systematic instruction in them upon the evangelistic mission of the Church in the world. This investigation covered fifty-one of our leading schools. In as many cases as possible the data were collected not only from the authorities, but also from student sources, in order that the information might cover both points of view. Personal visits were made to eleven seminaries, and the subject studied in its local bearings. As a result, it was found that of the fifty-one seminaries, (1) none had individual chairs on missions; (2) six had the subject as an officially recognized integral part of a chair; (3) thirty-four reported the subject as unofficially included in the general instruction of some other chair, as of Church History, Practical Theology, etc.; and (4) out of thirty-four catalogues examined, eighteen made no mention of the subject in their printed course of study; one reported an optional course of several terms in the specific history of missions; and several had special endowed lecture courses for the occasional treatment of missionary themes. Under class (2), of the six, three either never have had, or have not now, the missionary part of the chair in actual operation; in the remaining three the average amount of time actually given to the subject is thirty-six hours for the seminary course. Under class (3), twelve state that they refer to what is given of the history of missions in the general instruction in Church History; nineteen reported as having it included in Practical Theology, and the average amount of time given to the subject was only eight lecture periods for the course. Out of the eleven institutions visited, in six where the instruction took this form, it was the

almost unanimous opinion among the students that as a disciplinary training concerning the missionary character and work of the Church, calculated to effect the student's future ministry, its value was very small. Men in the senior classes confidently affirmed that there had been nothing on the subject of missions in the course until their attention was called to what work was done in this department. The actual status of comprehensive, scientific discipline on the subject of missions is well illustrated by the following case. One of the large seminaries of the country is recognized as a strong missionary seminary in its church. The church is one which prides itself upon the thorough training of its ministry. Scarcely any place could be found more suited to a favorable test. In this seminary forty-eight of the senior class were canvassed upon the following questions :

"(1) In what foreign fields is our church at work ?"

"(2) Where did Robert Morrison work, and what was the character of his great work on the field ?"

"(3) Where did Alexander Duff work, and what was the character of his great work on the field ?"

"(4) Where did William Carey work, and what was his great work on the field ?"

Of the forty-eight, twenty-eight failed on all the four questions ; thirty-four failed on the fields of the church ; forty-five failed on Morrison ; forty-six failed on Duff ; and thirty-eight failed on Carey. One man who canvassed twenty-three of his classmates kept an account of separate parts of the same question. Of those twenty-three, twenty could not tell where Morrison labored ; nineteen could not tell where Duff labored ; and sixteen were unable to tell in what country Carey worked. No comment is necessary concerning the need of missionary instruction.

Not only has the specific discipline been of such a character as not to equip the pastor to train his church ; but that it has also failed to lead the students to face the questions of personal service in the mission field the following statistics amply prove : Forty-three of these seminaries in the last three years have graduated 4,452 students. Of these, 107, or slightly over two per cent., have gone to the foreign field. Investigation was made personally in eight of these institutions where 652 had been graduated, and forty-three had gone to the foreign field in the three years ; and it was found that thirty-two of

these had the purpose of becoming foreign missionaries before entering the seminary. Of the eleven who decided to become foreign missionaries after entering, nine were from a single seminary. In the other seven institutions, graduating in this time 488 students, but two arrived at their decision to be missionaries while in the seminary, or four-tenths of one per cent. of those who graduated.

It is only just to say that in most of these institutions the true place of missions is recognized. All the outside influences available are converged upon the students. Outside speakers, returned missionaries and Board Secretaries are brought in and heartily welcomed. Professors often turn aside from the regular instruction of their department to draw from it lessons in missionary service. Missionary movements among the students are indorsed and encouraged. Yet even this may have a vicious tendency, so far as solving the problem of the Church is concerned, when it is made the principal factor in the seminary's missionary training. From its character as an outside or incidental influence it consciously confirms the student in the thought that missions is no essential part of his ministerial training.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?—Grant that it is impossible to state fairly the actual condition of missionary instruction in the individual seminary in the form of bare statistics; grant that all such statistics must be taken with a measure of allowance; grant all that can reasonably be asked, and what do we still find? Simply this, that in the vast majority of the training schools of the ministry, there is in actual operation very little definite, systematic, comprehensive training concerning the essential missionary character and work of the church in the world; such specific training as shall be calculated to most certainly beget in the mass of the ministry the conviction and the equipment necessary to actualize this character in the Church's life.

It will be borne in mind that this investigation has been pursued in absolutely no spirit of antagonism to the training schools of the ministry. This is simply a problem which confronts the Church. It involves all equally as students of the things of Christ. It is not that the training of the schools is inefficient. They have been developed and are conducted by the best minds of the Church. It is that in this vital point their training is insufficient. It does not suffice as the actual

conditions in the Church and ministry, existing under the present training, demonstrate. The point of weakness has been this: we have recognized the giving of the Gospel to the world as the essential end of the Church; we have recognized the necessity of a ministry, with deep convictions on this subject, but we have expected these convictions to be begotten by outside and incidental influences. We have largely depended upon the student himself, inferentially, to collect from the various other departments of his instruction the material necessary to his equipment along this line. What would we have thought of a seminary which pursued this policy along other fundamental lines? In order certainly to have a ministry sound in the faith, and so a church strong in the Lord, we give the candidates three years of hard discipline in dogmatics. In order certainly to have a ministry able to defend the faith, and so a church able to render a reason for its hope, we train them in Apologetics. In order certainly to have a ministry able to sound the depths of Holy Writ, and so a church anchored in the Word, the students are drilled through the entire course in Hebrew and Greek. Is the certain accomplishment of the *essential end* for which the Church of Christ exists on earth of such minor importance that the training of her ministry *to that end* can be safely left to influences brought in from outside the seminary or to incidental inferences drawn from the instruction within?

Even as we recognize in other departments that convictions of such a character as to have abiding power in the life of the ministry, and to certainly work their way out through the relations of the ministry into the life of the Church, must be given a foundation of *systematized* knowlege, so must we also recognize it in this department. *Never will the purpose for which the Church was founded be realized in her life until her ministry is specifically trained to this end.*

WHAT IS SUFFICIENT AND PRACTICABLE?—Any fair consideration of what is sufficient and practicable must keep in view three postulates which relate to the practical conditions of seminary life: (1) The financial question is probably the most grave of any which the majority of seminaries have to meet. In many seminaries this would be felt to be the principle obstacle. (2) The amount of time at the command of the student is not unlimited. The average theological student is pressed for time. (3) The material for study upon which the

instruction in such a department should be based as in some important lines sadly deficient. Text-book literature upon the philosophy of missions is scarce.

Nevertheless, God does not put a primary obligation upon His Church and ministry and accompany it with impossible conditions. Freely granting the limiting conditions, it is quite possible to arrange a course calculated to accomplish the desired end. The following suggestions are offered as the result of this investigation :

1. *Objects of the instruction* : These are to instill into the student a deep, abiding conviction of the essential missionary character of the Church, and the purpose for which as a pastor he is to be placed in it; to equip him with the material, and suggest to him the best methods for working this out in the life of his church.

2. *Scope of the instruction* : The deepest and most abiding conviction is that which is based upon a systematized knowledge of underlying principles. A study of the philosophy of missions is primary and most essential. It is essential to secure the pastor's own steadfastness and for a successful work in his church. It is essential as a prerequisite to advantageous historical study. It might well include such themes as the nature and scope of Christ's kingdom; the office of the Church in redeeming the world; the vital connection of this work with its spiritual life; the obligations, motives and methods incumbent; the obstacles to be overcome; its varied fortunes and final triumph. Upon this foundation of the philosophy of missions naturally is built the study of its specific history and present condition, and as the practical application of the whole, a missionary pastoral theology on methods developing the missionary church life.

3. *Character of the instruction* : An occasional lectureship can not be depended upon to accomplish the end. It is a valuable subsidiary agency. It is the constantly recurring pressure of required study and class-room work which most certainly begets the life-molding conviction. Optional courses do not accomplish the end. For those who most need the discipline will be those who do not take it. Required text-book recitation or class-room lecture with parallel reading is best calculated to certainly and thoroughly secure the objects desired.

4. *Time necessary for the instruction* : One hour a week,

running through the three years of the course, or better still, two hours a week through the last two years would be amply sufficient. The founding of a separate chair would not be necessary, as it could be incorporated as an officially recognized department under some existing chair.

Christ has set His Church in the world to do a specific work. The ministry is the key to the Church. The theological seminary is the key to the ministry. As they who occupy a supremely strategic point of influence, upon those who shape the training in the theological seminaries rests the high privilege of determining the loyalty of the Church of Christ to our Lord's Great Commission. As stewards of Christ's heritage shall we not see to it that the agencies set here for this end are those calculated to most certainly accomplish it; and if at any time experience proves that they are not sufficient, modify and adapt until they shall be brought to the position of utmost efficiency? In this way shall the spirit of God not be hindered, but have opened channels and free course through His Church, to do that for which He was sent into the world. Likewise also shall we discharge our own stewardship, and be able in the last great day to meet our Lord, having always sought first to do those things which please Him.

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