

# THE BULLETIN

—OF THE—

## Western Theological Seminary

A Review Devoted to the Interests of  
Theological Education

Published quarterly in January, April, July, and October, by the Trustees of the Western Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

Edited by the President with the co-operation of the Faculty.

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75 cents a year.

Single Number 25 cents.

Each author is solely responsible for the views expressed in his article.

# The Bulletin

of the

## WESTERN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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VOL. XXIII

OCTOBER, 1930.

No. 1

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### **A Brief History of the Western Foreign Missionary Society**

**Organized in 1831 by the Synod of Pittsburgh**

*By Thomas C. Pears, Jr., Secretary of Centennial Committee*

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#### FOREWORD

“‘Always the most forward and active Synod of the Presbyterian Church in missionary enterprise and effort,’ the Synod of Pittsburgh kept alive and cherished the missionary spirit until it diffused its power into an organization embracing the whole Presbyterian Church, and having for its object the conversion of the world. And, under this new form of organization—which may properly be said to have had its commencement in the Synod of Pittsburgh in 1831, when the Western Foreign Missionary Society was constituted—in the persons of her heroic sons, educated within the walls of her own institutions, she promptly led the way, in preaching the Gospel to the crowded millions of Northern India, China (and Africa), and the scattered tribes of the aboriginal inhabitants of our own continent. Nor has she been lacking since in furnishing her proportion of missionary laborers.’”

Elliott, ‘Life of Macurdy.’

## Introduction

### *West to the Setting Sun*

In the year 1781, on Wednesday, the 19th day of September, one month before the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, six men, three ministers and three laymen, met by appointment at Pigeon Creek in what is now the County of Washington, and constituted themselves the Presbytery of Redstone, the first Presbytery west of the Allegheny Mountains, the modest bounds of which were the formidable barrier of the mountains themselves on the east, Lake Erie on the north, Virginia on the south, and on the west the setting sun.

### *Ubi Post Preces Sederunt*

The simple record of that meeting is as follows:—  
“Ubi post preces sederunt, the Rev. Messrs. John McMillan, James Power, and Thaddeus Dod. Elders—John Neil, Demas Lindley, and Patrick Scott. Absent—the Rev. Joseph Smith.” To be sure, it does not sound very exciting; but let us read between the lines. It was just twenty-three years earlier (1758), that the Rev. Charles Beatty, a Presbyterian clergyman and chaplain of Colonel Clapham’s Pennsylvania Regiment, had preached the first Protestant sermon west of the mountains, on the occasion of General Forbes’ occupation of Fort Duquesne. In the meantime, Beatty and Duffield, like the scouts who had been sent into the land of Canaan, had explored the “western country,” and had reported to the Synod of Philadelphia, upon their return, “that they found on the frontiers numbers of people earnestly desirous of forming themselves into congregations, and declaring their willingness to exert their utmost in order to have the gospel among them; but that their circumstances were exceedingly distressing and necessitous.” That was in the year 1766.

In the year 1776, the Rev. James Power, accompanied by his wife and four little daughters, crossed the

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mountains on horseback, and entered this region to remain as the first settled pastor. He was followed soon after by Dr. McMillan, and shortly afterwards by the Rev. Thaddeus Dod and the Rev. Joseph Smith. And now *here* at Pigeon Creek we find them met to effect the ecclesiastical organization of that mighty force which the Presbyterians of Western Pennsylvania were destined to exert not only throughout their own immediate bounds, but throughout the whole Church and the world.

Such was the coming of our Apostles! And whosoever desires to become better acquainted with the lives and labors of these our Presbyterian fathers in the faith, and the founders of our "Western Zion,"—as they themselves loved to call it—is referred to the pages of "Old Redstone," that fascinating volume wherein is recorded the history of their thrilling adventures and heroic achievements.

## *The Church a Missionary Society*

Twenty-one years after that meeting at Pigeon Creek, on Wednesday, the 29th day of September, 1802, the Synod of Pittsburgh—the first Synod west of the Alleghenies—was organized in the First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh. It was composed of the Presbyteries of Redstone, Ohio, and Erie, into which the old Presbytery of Redstone had been subdivided; and included among its members two of the original four who constituted that first Presbytery—Drs. McMillan and Power—the other two having gone to their reward.

No sooner had the newly erected Synod completed their organization and provided rules for their government, than they resolved themselves into the Western Missionary Society, the object of which was "to diffuse the knowledge of the gospel among the inhabitants of the new settlements, the Indian tribes, and if need be, among the interior inhabitants, where they were not able to support the gospel." This is the first clear acknowledgment that the Church itself is a Missionary Society, a prin-

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ciple which was to be definitely acknowledged later on by the entire Church, through the deliverances of the General Assemblies of 1847 and 1867. But before that point could be reached, much water was to flow under the bridge.

### *The Gateway of the West*

As we view their labors in retrospect, the text that seems to have animated the members of the Synod of Pittsburgh from the first, was evidently Rev. 3:8—"Behold, I have set before thee a door opened which none can shut." For that Gateway of the West, at the forks of the Ohio, the strategic situation of which had been so clearly discerned by Washington a half century before, became the open gateway through which the gospel was carried into the "western country;" and from that time on, its messengers played no small part in the great drama that was just beginning—the "Winning of the West," and the extension of that mighty empire of the American Republic, the bounds of which were not to be set, until they had crossed the barricade of the Rocky Mountains, only to be stopped by the blue waters of the Pacific Ocean, upon which the eyes of the old Spanish conquistadors had first looked "with wild surmise, silent, upon a peak in Darien."

### *Men of Vision*

Neither were these early fathers of the Church unaware of what they were attempting; for they were men of vision, as was proved once more when, some years later, they pressed upon the General Assembly the need for the establishment of a Theological Seminary in the West. And this was their argument:—"The great valley of the Mississippi, and its tributary streams, where we live, spreads over a surface containing more than 1,800,000 square miles. Here there is, at the present time, (c.1827), a scattered population, rapidly increasing, amounting to more than four millions. What



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is to be the moral and religious condition of this great multitude, is a consideration well deserving the serious attention of the friends of religion and human happiness in every part of the world. Firmly persuaded that where there is no vision the people perish, the friends of the Redeemer in this Western region, are making an effort to erect and endow a Theological Seminary for the education of pious young men, on such a plan and to such an extent, that a competent supply of well educated ministers may be prepared to go forth and labor in this great, but as yet little cultivated vineyard of the Son of God. We are urged to this undertaking by the fact that more than four-fifths of the inhabitants of this western world are living without the benefits of a regular ministry; and, at the present time, there are more than a thousand organized churches here, which have no stated ministry, and a much larger number could be formed, had we men of competent education, and right missionary spirit to send forth."

There were giants in those days; and as these men generally "got what they went after," they "got" their Seminary, which was organized in the year 1827 under the significant name of "Western." Later on we shall see what Dr. Speer meant when he said,—“It was natural and right that first it was the Seminary that came out of the missionary spirit, and then the missionary spirit that came pouring forth in augmented volume out of the Seminary.”

### *Too Light a Thing*

But the vision of the fathers was not of the West alone, or of their own land alone. From the very beginning, they thought of their Western Zion in terms of the center of a great spiritual empire, which should extend its sway throughout the entire world. To them, as to Isaiah, it seemed "too light a thing that they should be God's servants to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel;" and they remembered

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the words,—“I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.” It was this vision that led the same Synod of Pittsburgh, in the year 1831, to organize the Western Foreign Missionary Society, the centennial of which we are to celebrate this present year.

This was their crowning achievement, and this is by far the greatest single contribution that Western Pennsylvania has been privileged, under the Providence of God, to make to the cause of Christ and the extension of His Kingdom. For not only was this Society “the germ of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church,”\* as it has been called,—it *was* the Board of Foreign Missions before the organization of that Board six years later by the General Assembly in 1837. This brings us to the real subject of this paper,—the story of the founding of the Western Foreign Missionary Society, and a brief review of its history during the years that it carried on single-handed the missionary enterprise of the whole Church, until its identity was lost—as its resources were merged—in the present Board of Foreign Missions; which has caught its vision—as well as inherited its property—and has carried on its program without any vital change until the present day.

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### I—THE CHURCH AND FOREIGN MISSIONS

#### *The Fullness of the Time*

In order to comprehend the full significance of the organization of the Western Foreign Missionary Society by the Synod of Pittsburgh in 1831, we must recall the situation with regard to the foreign missionary enterprise as it existed at the opening of the 19th century. It is difficult for us to realize to-day that only a little over a century and a quarter ago, foreign missions, in the modern sense of the phrase, were non-existent through-

\*Rankin, ‘Handbook,’ p. 5.

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out the churches of the Anglo-Saxon world. We are reminded, however, that Victor Hugo has said,—“Nothing is so powerful as an idea whose time has come.” And nothing is more apparent than that “at the dawn of the 19th century the time had fully come for a truer appreciation of the foreign missionary idea.”

Modern missions began with the sailing of Carey for India, in 1793, “to attempt great things for God in the expectation of great things from God.” Thirteen years later, in 1806, the hay-stack prayer meeting proved to be the beginning of the American Foreign Missionary enterprise; and led to the organization, in 1810, of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, of the Congregational Church. From that time onward, the air seemed to be electric with missionary enthusiasm, as if the Spirit, working when and where and how He pleases, had appointed that generation to the particular task of carrying out the terms of the Great Commission. Doubtless each age has its own special contribution to make; and none can doubt, who is familiar with the history, that this was the particular contribution of the first third of the 19th century.

### *Voluntary Agency vs. Ecclesiastical Responsibility*

It is a gratifying spectacle to witness how all the churches rallied to the call to take seriously the terms of the Great Commission, which had been so long neglected; but we must confine ourselves to tracing as briefly as possible the relation of the Presbyterian Church to the common task. With this newly awakened interest in the air, and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions already in the field, it was but natural that individuals and churches should make their contributions through this convenient and voluntary agency. Indeed the General Assembly of 1812, had declined the suggestion of the American Board, that the Presbyterian Church should form “an institution



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similar to theirs, between which and them may be such a co-operation as shall promote the great object of missions," declaring that such an undertaking would be "extremely inconvenient at this time," and contenting itself with commending that Board to the churches under its care.

This approval, however, did not carry with it any definite commitment of the Church to share in the responsibility of the support of the work; and as time went on, there grew up two opposing schools of thought on the question of the relation of the Church to the whole problem of Foreign Missions. There were those who strongly advocated the employment of such voluntary agencies as the American Board; while another group was becoming increasingly convinced that the Church should not delegate such an important function to societies that had no official standing in the Church; but that *the Church itself as a Church*, should assume full responsibility for the discharge of an obligation of such fundamental importance.

In 1817, the United Foreign Missionary Society had been formed by representatives of the Presbyterian, Reformed, and Dutch and Associate Reformed Churches, for the purpose of extending the gospel among the American Indians; and upon the amalgamation of that Society with the American Board, an attempt was made to induce the General Assembly to recognize the latter as a "national institution," which would have made it in effect the official agent of the Presbyterian Church in its foreign mission activity. The General Assembly of 1826, however, refused to take this step, once more contenting itself with "recommending the Board to the favorable notice and Christian support of the Church and people under their care." The form of this resolution, as well as the debate which preceded its adoption in this form, is an indication of the strong feeling that even then existed, that the work of Foreign Missions was an obligation of the Church itself *in its distinctive*

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*character as a Church*, and that the Assembly should organize its own Board of Foreign Missions.

When, therefore, an overture was presented to the Assembly of 1831, to appoint a committee to confer with the American Board with a view to seeking a basis for a still closer relationship, that would virtually commit the Presbyterian Church to the policy of making that Board its instrument in the carrying out of its Foreign Missionary program,—the Synod of Pittsburgh, realizing that the Assembly was not yet ready to recognize the principle that the Church itself, in its distinctive character as a Church, *is a Missionary Society*,—organized the Western Foreign Missionary Society under its own definite ecclesiastical sanction, and appealed to the whole Church to make use of its facilities and to aid in the support of its work.

To fully comprehend the significance of their action, and the epoch-making character of this new undertaking, I know of no better approach than to quote somewhat at length from the address—“The Western on the Mission Field”—delivered by Dr. Robert E. Speer at the Centennial of the Western Theological Seminary, in 1927.

### *A Great Principle*

“Back of the organization of the Western Foreign Missionary Society,” he said, “lay a great principle and a great personality. The principle was that the work of Foreign Missions is not an optional interest to be left by the Church to individuals and voluntary associations. Our fathers here (in Pittsburgh) conceived instead that the missionary obligation is the obligation of the Church in her essential character and that every member of the Church is committed to this obligation. Let me read one of the first utterances of the new Society: They believed that ‘the Presbyterian Church owes it as a sacred duty to her glorified Head to yield a far more exemplary obedience, and that in her distinctive character as a

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Church, to the command which He gave at His ascension—Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. It is believed to be among the causes of the frowns of the great Head of the Church, which are now resting upon our beloved Zion, in the declension of vital piety and the disorders and divisions that distract us, that we have done so little—comparatively nothing—in our distinctive character as a Church of Christ, to send the Gospel to the heathen, the Jews, and the Mohammedans.’

“And let me supplement this deliverance of the Society with the characteristically burning words of the great personality to whom I have referred. ‘On what appointment,’ he bursts forth, ‘do pastors and elders sit in the house of God and hold the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, but that which commissions them to go and disciple all nations? If, at the bar of such courts, by the very fact of their lawful existence, the perishing heathen have no right to sue out the payment of a Redeemer’s mercy, then the most material object of their sitting is cancelled; and that neglected, starving portion of mankind, who enter with a specific claim, are turned out to find relief by an appeal to the sympathy of particular disciples. Will the Head of all principality and power stay in judicatories where the laws of His kingdom are so expounded? Until something more is done for the conversion of the nations, what article on the docket of business can be relevant at any meeting, if this is not? Shall a worthless, unsound delinquent be told that, according to the Word of God, and the constitution of the Church, he has a right to come and consume hours of time in trifling litigation; and shall a world of benighted men, who have received as yet no hearing, and no mercy, and no information that Jesus has left a deposit for them also, be turned over to the slow and uncertain compassion of individuals?’

“It was the principle embodied in these utterances that made the fathers in this old Synod of Pittsburgh

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restive under the idea that the Presbyterian churches should conduct their missionary work through the American Board. They had great respect and even greater reverence for the American Board, and wished it well, but they could not accept the principle on which they believed it rested, and they were unwilling to abide by a method of missionary work which did not commit the Church as such and all its courts and organizations and its fundamental constitution to the missionary obligation. It was this divergence of view, as truly as any doctrinal division, which led to the separation into the Old and New School. And the re-union of the two Schools carried with it the acceptance by the re-united Church of the principle which our fathers here held vital.

### *A Great Personality*

“Side by side with this principle, and ever incarnating and expressing it, was the great personality whose glowing words I have just quoted, Elisha P. Swift, the first teacher of this Seminary, and the first secretary of this missionary society. Elisha Swift was born in Williamstown, Mass., in 1792, and received his education at Williams College under the powerful missionary influences which flowed from the hay-stack prayer meeting in 1806, and the consecration to foreign missionary work of the hay-stack band and the consequent organization of the American Board in 1810. While still a boy, Swift consecrated himself to foreign missions and was accepted for missionary appointment by the American Board and ordained by a Congregational Council in the Park Street Church in Boston, on the third day of September, 1817. For reasons which I do not know, however, he was prevented from going to the foreign field, and supplied the Presbyterian Church in Dover, Del., for one year. Then he came to Pittsburgh in 1819, and was installed as pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church. \* \* \* It was he who \* \* \* conceived



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the idea of a new society, secured its organization by the Synod, wrote its preamble and became its flaming prophet among the churches. He was one of the humblest and most self-forgetful of men, desirous of no praise, but with a keenness of discernment of fundamental principles which no confusion of debate or controversy could ever blur, and with a spirit that knew absolutely no fear of men or of difficulties. It was said of him that he was unsurpassed as an advocate of every good cause, but that at the very mention of foreign missions he was as a war horse catching the sound of battle. Those who heard him speak remembered ever after 'his great eye all aglow with the fire of genius, his heart heaving with emotion, and his majestic form raised to its full height, as he preached the Gospel or as he proclaimed the glorious missionary character of the Church.' \* \* \* Very inadequately through the years have we recognized our obligation to the great dead. Here to-day in reverence and love I would pay this tribute to one of the noblest spirits whom God ever gave to our Church, and would utter our deep and eternal gratitude to the Giver and the gift.'\*\*

*The Founder of the Board*

That Dr. Speer's estimate of the character and service of Dr. Swift is not exaggerated, is fully attested by the judgment of other competent authorities. Dr. S. J. Wilson in his address at the funeral of Dr. Swift, said: "He had no desire to have his name trumpeted through the world, yet the Church to which he belonged will always cherish his name as the founder of her Board of Foreign Missions." Dr. William D. Howard, one of his successors in the pastorate of the Second Church of

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\*Dr. Speer:—"In 1837, the Old School General Assembly established a Board of Foreign Missions for the whole Church and the Western Foreign Missionary Society passed over to it, transferring its organization and its ideal, and ever since our Church has borne the stamp of Elisha Swift's personality and has held fast to his great convictions."



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Pittsburgh, said: "This great and good man may be regarded as the founder of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions." While Dr. C. C. Beatty, descended from the man who had preached that first sermon at Fort Duquesne, wrote: "I consider Rev. Elisha P. Swift, D.D., to have been really the father and founder of our Presbyterian Foreign Mission work; and I think he should be prominently presented as bringing forward and greatly furthering this work in its inception, as distinctively under Church organization." The final testimony is that of the Rev. James Allison, D.D., in his notice of Dr. Swift's death in the 'Presbyterian Banner':—"While the Presbyterian Church lasts—as long as a history of Missions remains, the name of Elisha P. Swift will be remembered."

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### II—LIFTING UP THE BANNER

On Monday, the 24th day of October, 1831, the Synod of Pittsburgh, meeting in the old Second Church, down on what was then known as Diamond Alley, adopted the Resolution which brought the Western Foreign Missionary Society into being. It seems fitting at this point to reprint the Preamble, recognizing its importance as an historical document, and in the conviction that the fathers themselves are far better qualified than any of their successors, to express the principles upon which their action was predicated.

#### *The Preamble\**

"It is a fact which the members of the Presbyterian Church, in common with some other branches of Christ's visible empire, recognize with joy and gratitude to God, that the indications of prophecy and the signs of the times, call upon all who love our Lord Jesus Christ, in sincerity, of every denomination, and of every clime, to

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\*'Minutes of the Synod of Pittsburgh,' p. 348 f.

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employ redoubled exertions, to extend the glorious gospel in the earth, and especially to those, who are enveloped in pagan and anti-Christian darkness. The time appears to have come, when Zion should awake and put on her strength, and not only plead before the throne, with increasing importunity, for the fulfilment of the blessed promise made to the Mediator, that all nations should flow unto Him and be saved, that the mountain of the Lord's house may be established; but by their actual, untiring and liberal exertions, to convey to a dying world, the precious blessings contemplated in these glorious engagements of the covenant of redemption. The Church and the world, wait to see such a degree of ardor and enterprise, on this great subject, as the love of Christ, and the wants of men, demand of His own blood-bought family; living as it does, in comfort and affluence, and possessing the rich favors of a munificent Providence.

“In saying this, however, there is no wish to depreciate the exertions of the children of Zion, either in Europe, or in this country, in behalf of the Pagan world. To say nothing of the Eastern continent, much has been done in these United States, in years past, and the memory of many precious servants of Christ, whose mortal bodies now moulder in distant climes, and the record of many missionary stations, now existing in various places, and under different directions, attest the truth of this cheering declaration. Especially is it with great pleasure, that this Synod recur to, and acknowledge the laudable and persevering, and truly splendid operations of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, in the cause of the heathen world; and they cherish towards that Society and its varied and animating movements, none but unmingled feelings of respect and affection. In years past, many of them have esteemed it a privilege to pray for its success, and contribute to its funds; and they hope to have opportunities, in years to come, to express in similar ways their love for it. Nor

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do the Synod regard it as improper to recur with grateful sentiments, to those humbler efforts, which they were enabled, in departed years, to put forth through the Western Missionary Society, in this great and good cause.

Still, however, much remains to be done. The resources of large districts of the Presbyterian Church, are slumbering in inaction, and experience for a few years past, has demonstrated the fact, that they cannot be fully drawn, by a society so remote as the American Board, or by any that does not involve an ecclesiastical organization comporting with the honest predilections of many of our people. No judicatory of the Presbyterian Church, it is believed, can act at this time on this subject, with as much propriety and prospect of unanimity as this; and from various considerations, which it is unnecessary to specify, it is also believed that no position on the continent is so favorable as this, for undertaking the institution of a society, which shall bring up the forces of the Presbyterian Church, in the Middle and Western States, to this great and blessed work.

“Without any feeling of unkindness to any existing Board, *here* in these western regions, of this large and opulent republic, the friends of the perishing heathen, can *lift up a banner* intended for other benefactors, and other ardent aspirants after missionary toils and labors, than any institution has yet numbered, and from hence a stream of benevolence can roll, which shall meet and commingle with those of distant places, and the friends of God, even here, supply its demands without coming in unhappy conflict, with any other society whatever. Disclaiming all party feelings, therefore, and listening to that voice from the Mediatorial throne, which seems to say, ‘Arise and be doing—collect my scattered soldiers, *and display my banner*, for the day of Salvation is opening on the world!’ This Synod, trusting in the aid and guidance of the God of Missions:

“Resolved, 1st. That it is expedient forthwith to establish a Society or Board of Foreign Missions, on such

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a plan as will admit of the co-operation of such parts of the Presbyterian Church as may think proper to unite with it, in this great and important concern.”

*Forthwith*

There is one word in the above Resolution that gives the key to the character of these men, and which I would see inscribed at the head of the record of the Church to-day. It is the word FORTHWITH. Presently we shall see what it was that they *forthwith* proceeded to do in the carrying of their Resolution into effect; but at the moment I am reminded of the words with which Dr. Speer concluded his great address at the Assembly of 1927. For the real purpose of the Centennial celebration is to make us realize that there is the same urgency now that there was a century ago:

“We face across the world to-day new needs, colossal needs which speak to us with the sanction of both a human and a divine demand. A world that does not have to wait to be lost but that has utterly lost itself already, needs a Savior, the only Savior, the One Name given under heaven among men. And will not His Church follow Him, to bring into the one fold the sheep who are scattered abroad in every land and of every race? Beyond all other calls, let us be still and hear again the old, ever new call of Christ. And to-day, may it be with us, as of old it was with those men who first heard that call by the waters of Galilee, and who *straightway, straightway* rose up and left all and followed Him.”

*The First Board*

Fortunately for us, our fathers realized that salvation is not by Resolution, although they were likewise aware that there can be no salvation without resolution. And so straightway they set themselves to the task of surveying the field, formulating their plans, setting up the machinery, and of appealing to the Churches for the money, and to the Seminaries for the men, with which to

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inaugurate the work. We shall not attempt to describe all the preliminary steps that had to be taken before the first missionaries could be sent forth; but will confine ourselves to three things: (1) the organization of the first Board; (2) the comprehensiveness of their program; and (3) their official organ, the "Foreign Missionary Chronicle."

The first step was, of course, the organization of a Board of Directors, which, it was determined, should consist of six ministers and six elders chosen by the Synod, of persons residing in Pittsburgh or its vicinity, to which were to be added one minister and one elder chosen from and by each of the eight Presbyteries in the Synod. As many of these honored names are still familiar to us, we herewith present the personnel of that first Board:

### **FOR PITTSBURGH AND VICINITY**

Rev. E. P. Swift.....	Mr. Harmar Denny
Rev. A. D. Campbell.....	Mr. Samuel Thompson
Rev. Francis Herron.....	Mr. John Hannen
Rev. Luther Halsey.....	Mr. James Wilson
Rev. Robt. Patterson.....	Mr. Benj. Williams
Rev. Thos. D. Baird.....	Mr. Francis G. Bailey

### **FOR PRESBYTERIES**

Redstone.....	Rev. A. O. Patterson..	Mr. A. Johnston
Ohio.....	Rev. Matthew Brown..	Mr. J. Herriot
Erie.....	Rev. Samuel Tait.....	Mr. J. Reynolds
Washington.....	Rev. David Elliott.....	Mr. J. McFarren
Hartford.....	Rev. William McLean..	Mr. J. Clark
Steubenville.....	Rev. Chas. C. Beatty..	Mr. D. Hoge
Allegheny.....	Rev. J. Coulter.....	Mr. B. Gardiner
Blairsville.....	Rev. S. McFarren.....	Mr. T. Pollock

For a number of years the organization of this Board was as follows: Hon. Harmar Denny, President; Rev. Thos. D. Baird, Vice-President; Rev. A. D. Campbell, Rev. Chas. C. Beatty and Rev. George Marshall filled, in succession, the office of Recording Secretary; Rev. Elisha



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P. Swift, Corresponding Secretary; Rev. Elisha Macurdy, Treasurer; Mr. Samuel Thompson, Assistant Treasurer.

*The Vision Is for Many Days to Come*

In an address delivered before the Missionary Convention, held in Pittsburgh in 1872, Dr. William D. Howard, Pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, thus speaks of the astonishing broad-mindedness of the old Society:—"The founders of the Western Foreign Missionary Society laid broad and deep the foundations of this great enterprise. We are reaping the valuable results of their silent labor to-day. They seem to have grasped all the essential features of the missionary work. The breadth and comprehensiveness of their views fills me with surprise. They contemplated reaching not only the whole heathen world, but the Moslem and Papist populations, including those in Mexico and South America, which countries have loomed up in later days as among the most important missionary fields in the world. They displayed pre-eminent wisdom in selecting their fields of labors—Africa, which has since grown in importance, and India, where an influence has been exerted by our own and other missionaries, which promises to make a country containing 200,000,000 of people virtually Christian, within the life-time of some now living. And they not only selected Africa, and India, but their eye was upon China, Japan, Persia, Asia Minor, South America, and other localities, which in the forty years which have elapsed (1872), have been proven to be missionary fields of unsurpassed promise. In a word, nothing has been done by their successors that evinces more true wisdom in relation to the great work of Missions, than was done by these founders of our Board. They seem to have surveyed the whole ground, and to have suggested every important plan that has been acted upon since."

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### *The Foreign Missionary Chronicle*

In April, 1833, the Society began the publication of the "Foreign Missionary Chronicle." It was issued monthly, and its files are the chief sources upon which all subsequent historians have drawn. It is a perfect gold mine of information with regard to missions during the formative period of modern missions, and is rich in material that deserves a better fate than to rest forgotten upon the shelves of the few libraries that are fortunate enough to be its possessor. In 1850, this publication was merged into "The Home and Foreign Record," which was succeeded in 1886 by "The Church at Home and Abroad;" and that, in turn, by "The Assembly Herald," in 1898, "The New Era Magazine," in 1919, and the present "Presbyterian Magazine," in 1922.

In the pages of the old "Foreign Missionary Chronicle," are recorded the triumphs and defeats, the sorrows and the rejoicings, the heroic achievements and victorious martyrdoms of those epic years. Open it almost at random, and your heart will be thrilled, your sympathies enlisted, or your enthusiasm fired; but above all you will come away with the conviction of the reality of the faith of these men and women, who followed their Lord to the ends of the earth; and of the power of the Gospel which constrained them not to count their lives as dear to themselves, but to do all and dare all for the sake of Him whose they were, and whom they counted it their high privilege to serve.

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### III—THE OPENING OFFENSIVE

#### *God Give Us Men*

The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors, in a Circular Letter issued soon after their organization, laid the matter of securing recruits before the Societies

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of Inquiry on Missions of the Princeton and Western Theological Seminaries; and soon thereafter received communications from Mr. John B. Pinney of Princeton, and Messrs. John C. Lowrie and William Reed of Western, offering to place themselves under the care and direction of the Committee as missionaries to the heathen. And so the first volunteers were secured.

*Africa Their First Love*

In the report published in March, 1833, it is stated that,—“To Western and eventually Central Africa, this Society has from the beginning looked, as one of the principle fields of its intended operations. To that benighted land it consecrated its first efforts: and all the information which has been since received, has but tended to increase its desire to draw, in a special manner, the attention of American Christians, and of young men devoted to the cause of missions, to that long neglected and interesting part of the globe.”

John B. Pinney and Joseph W. Barr, both of Princeton, were the first missionaries designated to this field; but shortly before the date of sailing, the latter died. After waiting three months “without anyone offering to accompany him, and all his arrangements for his departure being made, his zeal in the cause in which he was engaged determined Pinney to embrace an opportunity which offered, and to sail for Liberia, in the hope that his unaided efforts might prove an encouragement and prepare the way for others to follow him.” And so he sailed alone, in January, 1833, and after a prosperous voyage, arrived at Monrovia on the 16th of February.

Pinney remained in Africa about four months, making an exploring excursion into the interior; but “at the commencement of the rainy season, finding that his necessary inactivity would be more expensive than a voyage home, where he might be active in preaching, and enlisting others, “he again embarked, arriving in

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Philadelphia in July. Here he found that John Cloud and Matthew Laird, the former a Western man and the latter of Princeton, had been designated as reinforcements to the African Mission. But before following their fortunes farther, chronological considerations direct our attention to the Mission to India.

### *Lowrie Is Off for India*

John C. Lowrie was a member of the third class to be graduated from the Western Theological Seminary, and as we have seen, he was one of the first to offer himself for missionary service. The year following his graduation, having already received his commission to India, he spent at Princeton, doing post graduate work, and with the purpose, "if possible, to enlist others in the cause which he had espoused." The following episode is related by Dr. Rankin in his "Missionary Memorials:"—"In the early Spring of 1833, when Samuel Irenæus Prime, a member of Princeton Theological Seminary, was lying sick in his room and as it was feared nigh unto death, he was aroused one day by a shout near the entrance of the hall below, and on enquiring its meaning was answered 'Lowrie is off for India!' The sick man arose from his bed, moved to the window overlooking the crowd of students and joined his feeble voice to theirs."

We will quote at this point from the Second Annual Report of the Society, adopted May 6th, 1834, as abbreviated in Green's "Presbyterian Missions," which, in passing we might say, is the official history of the Western Foreign Missionary Society. It was published originally in 1838 by the order of the Board of Foreign Missions, and reprinted by the Board in 1893, but is now unfortunately out of print.\* The present writer would

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\*Almost all sources from which we have drawn for this sketch are out of print. How shall the present generation come to know the work of the fathers, if all the records are inaccessible? We have a heritage in some of these documents, not only worthy of preservation, but of perpetuation.



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recommend a new edition of this authoritative historical record, to the benevolence of some wealthy layman, as a timely gift, and as a valuable contribution to the cause of Missions.

“The last Annual Report stated that the Rev. Messrs. William Reed and John C. Lowrie with their wives, were expected to leave this country in a few weeks afterwards, to commence their contemplated mission to Hindustan. Arrangements were made for their embarkation in the ship *Star*, of the port of Philadelphia, in May last. Never, it is believed, was the mind of the Christian public in that city more deeply interested in the foreign missionary enterprise, than during the presence of the Mission there, and the religious exercises which were connected with their final departure from it. The closing meeting will long be remembered by many.

“This little band finally bid adieu to their native land, and the ship *Star* put to sea on the 30th of May, 1833, and arrived at Madeira on the 24th of June following. The temporary abode of the missionaries at that fertile and lovely spot in the ocean, tended not only to mitigate the fatigues of a long sea voyage, but somewhat to recruit the strength of Mrs. Lowrie, whose health had begun to be so far impaired, during the last few weeks of her residence in this country, as to threaten a confirmed pulmonary affection. The voyage was resumed on the 15th of July, and the *Star* arrived at the port of Calcutta on the 15th of October (1833). The change of air incident to her passage into the southern hemisphere, and severe gales in doubling the Cape of Good Hope, appeared, the Committee regret to state, to confirm all the fears which had been entertained as to the character of Mrs. Lowrie’s illness, and from that period she began gradually to become so feeble, that before the arrival of the *Star*, in port, all hopes of her recovery were at an end.”



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### *A Christian Iphigenia*

The report then relates the sad news of her death, on November 21st, a little over a month after their arrival. This first casualty was to be soon followed by a further trial. After a few months of labor, Mr. Reed was seized by an illness so severe as to necessitate his return to America, for which he embarked with his wife, on July 23, 1834; and died on shipboard August 12th, thus leaving John C. Lowrie all alone to open up the work in India.

Before proceeding with our narrative, however, I want to tell you of a little volume to be found on the shelves of the Library of the Western Theological Seminary. It is entitled "Memoirs of Louisa A. Lowrie." It was printed in Pittsburgh by the Western Foreign Missionary Society, in 1836, being edited by Dr. Swift; and a notice on the fly leaf states that the proceeds of its sale were to be "devoted to the support of Foreign Missions." The frontispiece is a steel engraving of the sweet-faced bride of twenty-four, who had laid her life upon the altar, the first missionary of our Church to die on foreign soil. It is a precious little volume, and as we read it to-day, we are aware that "through it she being dead yet speaketh."\* It is, indeed, a voice from out the past. Aye, how many of these voices do we hear, "crying from behind the curtain, Onward! Brethren, Onward! with the work of the Lord!"—to quote the words of Dr. Swift himself, spoken upon another occasion.

Mrs. Lowrie was buried in Calcutta, "there to proclaim as she sleeps on India's distant shores," so the Report of the Society affirms, "the compassion of American Christians for its millions of degraded idolators; and to invite others from her native land to come and prosecute the noble undertaking in which she fell."† Surely

\*In 1872, the Women's Missionary Societies within the Presbyteries of Pittsburgh and Allegheny named the house they were building at Mynpurie, India, "The Louisa Lowrie Home."

†*India Missions*, Allahabad Press, 1844. "And so the first possession of the Missions was a grave, lighted by a blessed hope."

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it does not seem too far-fetched to compare her with Iphigenia, whose sacrifice was the price of the sailing of the Greek fleet for Troy. Or, perhaps, an even closer parallel would be to call her the Missionary Protesilaus, who, in Wordsworth's poem, was said to be resolved that, "if no worthier led the way," his should be,—

"The foremost prow in pressing to the strand;  
His the first blood that tinged the Trojan sand."

*Ave et Vale*

And now let us return to the fortunes of the African Mission. We will resume the narrative where we left off—Pinney returned to America in July of 1833, to enlist recruits, only to find reinforcements ready to return with him in the persons of Matthew Laird and his wife, and John Cloud. Turning to the pages of the "Foreign Missionary Chronicle," we will "listen-in," to use our modern phrase, on that memorable Farewell Service held in the 10th Presbyterian Church in the City of Philadelphia, on the 18th of October, 1833.

The service opened with the singing of the 306th hymn of the General Assembly's book, "which was read" by Professor J. C. Kennedy of Jefferson College:

"Behold th' expected time draw near,  
The shades disperse, the dawn appear.

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"The untaught heathen waits to know  
The joy the gospel will bestow;  
The exiled captive, to receive  
The freedom Jesus has to give."—etc.

Dr. Matthew Brown, President of Jefferson College, then led in prayer, after which Dr. Swift made an address. Mr. Pinney having been prevented by sickness from being present at the meeting, Mr. Cloud followed, remarking that "if the persons constituting the present assembly felt as did the Lord Jesus Christ when he gave the command to His Church to go into all the world and

preach the Gospel to every creature, the conversion of Africa would not be an end so distant as we are accustomed to consider it." He concluded by observing that "himself and his brethren regarded it as a privilege that they might go to the heathen on a mission of mercy, and they only solicited of those who would remain at home, that they would sustain by their prayers their missionaries when in the dark parts of the earth;" and expressed in glowing terms "his anticipation of the interest which, when far away from their kindred and friends and all the delights of Christian society, they would still have in the remembrance of Christians, in their private supplications, as also specially at the monthly concert of prayer." Then after singing two verses—the last two, by the way—of Bishop Heber's famous hymn, Mr. Laird made a brief address, which was followed by a prayer by Dr. Luther Halsey of the Western Theological Seminary, some "pertinent remarks" by the pastor of the Church, and another prayer by the Rev. Dr. Wisner, Corresponding Secretary of the American Board.

The congregation then sang to the tune of *Tamworth*, a hymn written for the occasion by "Welwood," entitled "Africa's Hope:"

"Go, ye brethren, heav'n appointed,  
Tell of Christ in Africa,  
Mercy sent thro' God's Anointed,  
Ethiopia's Gospel day;  
Star of Mercy,—  
Christ will chase the gloom away.

"Tell the tidings of salvation  
Where the Nile and Niger flow;  
Precious seed in ev'ry nation  
In the name of Jesus sow;  
Grace descending,—  
Show'rs of grace will make it grow."—etc.

Brothers Cloud and Laird now stood up in their turn, and sang the "Missionary's Farewell," written by the Rev. S. F. Smith of Boston—the author of "My Country, 'Tis of Thee:"—

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"Yes, my native land, I love thee,\*  
All thy scenes, I love them well,  
Friends, connections, happy country,  
Can I bid you all farewell?  
Can I leave you—  
Far in heathen lands to dwell?  
\* \* \* \* \*

"Yes! I hasten from you gladly,  
From the scenes I love so well!  
Far away, ye billows, bear me:  
Lovely native land, farewell!  
Pleased, I leave thee—  
Far in heathen lands to dwell."—etc.

The Rev. Dr. Brown then pronounced the benediction, "which at fifteen minutes past nine o'clock, closed a meeting, the record of which will doubtless long remain unimpaired in many a Christian's heart."

I make no apology in reporting this meeting at such length, because it gives us an insight, as nothing else can, into the spirit of those early days. And it likewise gives us an opportunity to rejoice in their rejoicing, as we shall so soon have occasion to weep with them as they weep.

*The Graves of Desire*

They sailed from Norfolk on the 6th of November, on the ship *Jupiter*, Pinney sending a farewell message to the Society, in which he said,—“We covet nothing on earth, but the honor and privilege of spending our ‘little span’ in the service of Jesus, if we are only doorkeepers in the Sanctuary. Our daily prayer is, that many others may press with us into the same work.” After a passage of fifty-six days, they arrived at Monrovia on the 31st of December (1833). Soon after their arrival, all of the members of the mission experienced, in succession, the attack of the African fever. Cloud, a man of ardent temperament, against the counsels of his colleagues, undertook for missionary exploration a journey of one hun-

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\*This hymn was also sung by the Reeds and Lowries at their Farewell Service.

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dred and fifty miles on foot before he had fully recovered from sickness. The unavoidable exposure and fatigue of the journey prostrated his strength, and brought on an attack of dysentery under which he rapidly sank, dying in the latter part of April, 1834, soon after his return to the Mission. Troubles now came thick and fast. Mr. and Mrs. Laird, who had "nursed him tenderly," were attacked by the same malady. Mrs. Laird died on the third of May, and her husband the following day—leaving Pinney again alone.

Let us now return to the pages of the "Chronicle." In a Circular Letter, addressed to the churches, Dr. Swift recounts these sad events, and then adds: "Thus, dear Brethren, has death blotted from our lists, in the short space of ten or fifteen days, three valued names; and thus, the grave has swallowed up a large amount of our best hopes as a Missionary Society." It was, indeed, a stunning blow! Only Pinney left in Africa, and John C. Lowrie in India alone! Although the full extent of the loss to the latter Mission was yet unknown. I wish I might tell you at length how the Society met this emergency, how they never lost their faith in God, or in the success of their enterprise, and how they appealed for reinforcements to take the place of those who had fallen; but I must confine myself to a paragraph from the pen of Dr. Swift, and to a brief account of the answer to his appeal.

### *Whom Shall We Send?*

"At this affecting crisis," wrote Dr. Swift, in a communication addressed to the Churches and the Seminaries, "when, by the strokes of death, additional streams of Christian compassion are likely to be arrested for the want of missionaries for the foreign field, the inquiry returns to us with ten-fold emphasis 'Whom shall we send' to fill the broken ranks of the missionary corps? And the Committee would affectionately say that, if there are among the ministers, licentiates, or candidates of our



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Church, any who, in this hour of darkness and affliction, are ready to respond to this momentous inquiry, we would gladly assign them, in some portion of the great field of missions, *the standards which have fallen* from the hands of these departed brothers.”

A few days after this, a meeting of the Society of Inquiry on Missions, was held at the Western Theological Seminary, at which resolutions were passed; and an address was delivered by James J. Marks of the Senior Class, the President of the Society, in the course of which he said: “The fatality which has attended this effort *to plant the standard in Africa*, makes this subject put on the garb of sober reality. The man, that now ponders over the duty of dedicating himself to this cause, must look to Africa over the new made graves of those who have gone but one step before him—must bring the command and the promise of the Head of the Church along side of these astounding facts, and there *decide* which of these should be his rule of action. The Missionary Society is made to pause over this question—‘Whom shall we send; and who will go for us?’ After they have spread the letter of their solitary Brother Pinney before the Lord, like Hezekiah, they turn to the churches for the *means*, and to the Theological Seminaries for the *men*. Christians! Friends of Missions! Friends of Africa! It is yours to pause over this question. Does this subject reach your prayers? Does the injunction of the Savior to ‘disciple’ Africa, reach your hearts? Then the means will be furnished. The voice of our brethren and sisters which we lately heard, is silenced. Then hear the cry of wail that comes over their yet warm graves from the deep groves of Africa. How long must Africa wait? How long?”

*Hold the Fort!*

But now hear the sequel. There were in the Western Theological Seminary at that time, as undergraduates, and therefore undoubtedly present at that meeting,

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five men: John Newton of the Senior Class, and Edward Cope, Nathaniel Crane, Robert W. Orr and Joseph S. Travelli, of the Junior Class. William McCormick of the Middler Class, who was already preparing to go to Africa, was not present, for by a strange fatality, he died that very day, June 30, 1834. The first of the five, John Newton, was to set out for India in June of the next year, accompanied by James Wilson of the Class of 1833, the first reinforcement, bringing fresh hope and enthusiasm to Lowrie's heart. And Newton was to die in India, the senior missionary on the field, in 1891, after 56 years of as remarkable service as any man ever rendered. Cope was to go out to India and Ceylon, Crane to India, and Orr and Travelli to China. Indeed, Orr was not only to begin the work of the Presbyterian Church in the Chinese Empire, but even the work in Siam was to be undertaken as a result of his counsel after a visit paid by him to the city of Bangkok. What more remarkable answer has there ever been to prayer!

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### IV—THEY PLANT THE BANNER IN INDIA

#### *The Lonely Traveler*

Let us return to John C. Lowrie, whom we have left alone in India long enough. But now the picture changes, and instead of defeat and disappointment, we are to follow the footsteps of the "organizer of victory." The Synod of Pittsburgh had undertaken, through the Western Foreign Missionary Society, to "lift up a banner around which the friends of missions in the *western country* might rally." But it was given to Lowrie, in the Providence of God, to carry that banner to India, and to plant it on the farthest outpost, where it still remains to-day, a banner lifted up, to which the whole Church has looked for inspiration for lo, nigh these hundred years!

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Mrs. Lowrie died, as you will recall, November 21, 1833; and the Reeds sailed for America, on July 23rd, 1834. Lowrie waited at Calcutta to see them off, and was not to learn of the death of his companion for nearly a year. "The solitary survivor of this little band was not dismayed, but passed on into the far north-west, where no missionary had ever gone, to lay there the foundations of the great missions of his Church."\* That he was oppressed by the feeling of an overwhelming loneliness, he himself confesses, writing at this time:—"What with bereavement, loss of companions, and health far from good, the long and solitary journey to Lodiana, appeared to me exceedingly distressing." "But trials can be supported with cheerfulness," he bravely adds, "if we are in the path of duty. Here then was a work to be done, of the most sacred character, by which the weightiest interests of the souls of men would be affected; and if the Savior's spirit, not less than His command, but moved me to take part in that work, surely I could not doubt that all temporal and earthly sacrifices should readily be made in order to fidelity and success in so holy a calling. These were the circumstances, of all others, in which a missionary might humbly hope for the fulfilment of our Lord's promise,—'Lo, I am with you always.' I could not hesitate, therefore, to go forward."

Neither was there any delay in his setting out. Two days after his companions had sailed, he began the long journey up the Ganges. I know of no better introduction to the history of Presbyterian Missions, than to follow John C. Lowrie on that toilsome and tedious journey, as he records it in his letters, and in the little book, "Travels in North India," published in 1842. But before we follow him further, let us ask how they determined on the choice of a field.

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\*Speer, 'Presbyterian Foreign Missions,' p. 44.

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*The Wisdom of the Fathers*

“The energy and broad-mindedness of the Society were astonishing,” writes Dr. Speer, and “the scope of its projects is surpassed even by its foresightedness.” The following extract from the Second Annual Report is a case in point:—“The Committee were led from the information which they had previously obtained, to direct the first missionaries (Lowrie and Reed), to seek some eligible position in the northern provinces of Hindustan, as the field of their labors; but they were authorized to make a different selection, if, on arriving in India and consulting with the friends of missions at Calcutta, it should be found expedient to do so. After mature deliberation, and taking the advice of many judicious and well informed counsellors, they came to the conclusion that the original designation of the Committee was decidedly the best, varying from it only in the selection of an adjoining province, somewhat further to the north-west.”

Fortunately we have Lowrie’s own account of how they arrived at their decision:—“After carefully weighing the information we had received, Mr. Reed and myself were clear in our conviction that the north-western provinces presented the best field of labor, in which to begin our efforts. They contain a numerous and hardy population, with a better climate than the lower provinces, and there is a ready access to the lower ranges of the Himalaya mountains in case of failure of health. They are in a great measure *unoccupied* by the missionary institutions of other bodies of Christians. And their position connects them with other countries *in which no efforts have yet been made to introduce the Christian religion*. The Sikhs, to whom our attention at first was specially directed, are a distinct people. They inhabit chiefly the Panjab. *No missionary establishment had ever been formed for their benefit*. These general considerations appeared of sufficient weight to authorize



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our deciding on this part of the country. It was deemed, moreover, highly important to choose a large field, and *one sufficiently removed from the missions of other Societies*, so that there might be ample room for extended efforts."

It will be seen from the italicized words and phrases, that there was one motive above all others that determined their choice. Everywhere they looked, the need was overwhelmingly great. "The teeming millions of India need thousands and tens of thousands of missionaries; yet have not a hundred at work," Lowrie tells us; and then he adds that, "talking with Dr. Marshman, and asking his opinion about a particular field, he replied,—'O, there is no use in pointing out particular locations; *everywhere* the door is open.'" What was this motive, then?

### *Even Unto the Parts Beyond*

It may be best expressed, perhaps, in the words of the Apostle Paul, who tells us that he had made it "his aim so to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was already named, that he might not build upon another man's foundation." While in another place, he declares, that he had purposed "to preach the Gospel even unto the parts beyond, and not to glory in another's province in regard of things ready at hand."\* That this was Lowrie's purpose also, comes out again and again. Dr. Speer has pointed out that Carey, Marshman, and Duff, "were among the missionaries Mr. Lowrie met in Calcutta, who sympathized with his desire to press on into untouched fields." And Lowrie himself says that Duff advised him that he had chosen, "the most promising, *unoccupied* field of labor in India." "Their number,"

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\*Dr. Lowrie quoted in *Historical Sketches*—"I have no doubt that Lodia was on many accounts preferable to any other as a point from which to commence our efforts. At no other point were we less likely to find ourselves laboring 'in another man's line of things made ready to our hands' or to occupy ground that other bodies of Christians would shortly cultivate."



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he writes to Dr. Swift, referring to the Sikhs, "is between one and two million, *among whom no appeals have yet been made* to introduce the Gospel." And in this same letter:—"This region is connected, by commercial business, with Afghanistan, Cashmere, and Tibet, *in all of which countries, no appeals whatever have been made* to fulfill our Savior's last commandment."

Two further extracts from his correspondence only deepen the impression we have already received. Writing to a friend in Butler, Pa., he says,—“You have most probably heard of our expected field of labor. It seems to be more important than we at first supposed. Our nearest missionary neighbor will be a Baptist brother at Delhi, not less than 200 miles South East; while to the East and North, we will have no neighbors; and, to the West, the brethren under the American Board—perhaps 1400 miles distant. There are two or three stations in Siberia, south of Irkutsk; but they are many hundreds, if not thousands, of miles from our post.” And again, writing to Dr. Swift,—“We have, therefore, Dear Brother, *the entire field before us, unoccupied, unattempted*. It is indeed an inspiring thought, that our Society has the prospect of *beginning* (these italics are his) all that shall yet be done in communicating the blessings of science and religion to millions.” To quote Dr. Speer once more, the Society “was not content with small plans.” To which we might add that they were worthy descendants of the founders of that first Presbytery, whose western boundary was the setting sun.

### Up the Ganges

Lowrie left Calcutta on July 25, 1834. The first part of the journey was up the Ganges, 1000 miles to Cawnpore; and thence overland to Lodianna, about 500 miles. The river journey was both tedious and dangerous. The journey was made in a twelve-oared budgerow,—“a half round bottom boat, without a keel, rather wide towards the stern, and tapering to a long point in front.

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These boats have a cabin over the after part, with a flat roof, on which the boatmen sleep at night, and work the boat much of the time by day, particularly in poling or sailing. A single mast stands nearly in the center of the boat, just forward of the cabin, and oars are fastened to the long deck before the mast, but are seldom used. They carry no ballast, and the lading is so placed as to be above the water-line; being thus top-heavy, there is constant danger of being overturned. The boatmen *tracked* a good part of the way, that is, six or seven men went along at the rate of about two miles an hour. It is hard work; as the poor fellows have to cross nullahs, or arms of the river, frequently so deep as to require them to swim, and to walk often knee-deep in mud, all the time exposed to a hot sun."

### *And Overland*

Cawnpore was reached on the 9th of October, from which place the overland journey was made by dak, or in a palanquin. "At night," writes Mr. Lowrie, "a dak traveller presents a singular appearance. Foremost are the *petarrah walas*, or bundle-carriers; of whom I have three, each man carrying two bundles of twenty-five pounds each, swung at the ends of a stick over his shoulder; who walk along with a peculiar fast gait. Then comes the traveler in his palanquin, borne by four men, who, at every step make a peculiar unpleasant sound by way of music; while four others run by their side, and thus relieve each other about once in every five minutes. But the most singular appendage is the *mussalchi*, or torch-bearer, who runs along before, carrying a large torch, on which he pours oil every few minutes, making a fine light. Every ten or twelve miles, a fresh set of men are stationed to relieve the preceding set. The chief difficulty in this mode of travelling is its irksomeness from lying in the same position. Persons who cannot sleep at night, are seldom able to endure the fatigue. But I got along finely, sleeping as well as usual,

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until, at the end of their stages, the bearers would awake me for their bakshish, or usual presents of a few anas. From Cawnpore to Agra is about 190 miles; which distance I made in fifty hours."

*Travel Notes*

As he journeyed up the river, he would stop at the different stations where other missionaries were at work; and where he would be entertained by them, and then continue his journey to his goal beyond. On August 20th, he approached Raj-mahal, the name of the mountain range that had been in sight for two or three days, and which, he tells us, "resemble some of the Allegheny Mountains," and adds, "their appearance is very beautiful." Another of these home touches is when he comes to the junction of the Ganges and the Jumna, "which is regarded by the Hindus as one of the most holy places in the sacred river. The mind always takes an interest in seeing two large rivers flowing into one, but apart from that, there is not so much to excite ideas of power in the junction of these rivers as of the Allegheny and the Monongahela." These souvenirs of home seemed very dear to him; for in still another place, he writes,—“There are few objects of interest to be seen in a journey on this river. The Raj-mahal, and the Gor-ruckpore Hills; and the City of Benares, appeared to me more interesting than anything else—the former by reminding me of our *lovely* native hills.’ ”

Benares was reached, September 21st, Allahabad, on the 23rd, Cawnpore, on October 9th, and Delhi, on the 27th of October,—at which point he notes in his journal: —“Agra and Delhi are the two chief cities of Upper India; and are far the richest in memorials of former greatness that I have ever seen. The Taj at Agra, is a wonderfully chaste and beautiful structure.” But we must not pause on his descriptions. At length, after a journey of over three months he reached his journey's end,—Lodiana; which fact he chronicles in these words:

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—“This the first post of our future duty was reached on the 5th day of November, 1834, about 18 months after leaving Philadelphia.”

*Lodiana*

Lodiana, “the frontier post then occupied by the British on the north-west,” as Lowrie tells us, “was a town of some twenty thousand or twenty-five thousand people, whose numbers were rapidly increasing. It contained a number of Afghans and Cashmerians in addition to the Sikhs and Hindus.” But Lodiana was far more than this! Every famous regiment carries on its colors the names of the places where its battles have been fought and its victories won. ‘Lodiana’ is the first name to be embroidered on that banner lifted up in India. It was the first Mission Station established by the Presbyterian Church. There was erected the first Presbyterian Church building in India, and the first Mission Church in all that vast region. And there the first Presbytery was formed, the Presbytery of Lodiana, in 1836. And from there was issued by the Presbytery of Lodiana, in the year 1858, the Call to Prayer that was the beginning of the World Week of Prayer; and which, singularly enough, was inspired by the great spiritual awakening that was even then sweeping through the churches at the junction of the two great American rivers, at that Gateway both of the East and of the West. Pittsburgh to Lodiana! Lodiana to Pittsburgh! they call back and forth to one another across the continents and across the centuries, even to this day, in a swelling antiphonal of prayer and praise!

We cannot, in this paper, describe the work of Lowrie during that first year in Lodiana, in which he laid the firm foundations of the future missions of the Church. You can read it for yourselves in his own writings, or in the Records of the Board. Dr. Speer summarizes the immediately succeeding period as follows: —“Mr. Lowrie arrived in November, 1834. The first re-



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inforcement consisting of the Rev. John Newton and the Rev. James Wilson and their wives, arrived in December, 1835. Six weeks after their arrival, Mr. Lowrie, whose health had been failing, was obliged to leave, never to return.”\* We will rather hasten on to the coming of the eagerly awaited reinforcement, led by one of the men whom you will remember as being present at that memorable meeting of the Society of Inquiry, and who had heard that day the query,—“Whom shall we send; and who will go for us?” and had answered,—“Here am I; send me.” If it were not an anachronism, we might almost imagine that the lonely defender could hear ghostly voices singing,—

“Ho! my comrades, see the signal waving in the sky!  
Reinforcements now appearing, Victory is nigh!”

### *The Word of His Grace*

Mr. Lowrie had received a letter announcing their safe arrival at Calcutta, February 25, 1835, and informing him that they expected to reach Lodiāna about the first of November. In the meantime he continued his labors, made a visit to Lahore, where he was the honored guest of the “Lion of the Punjab,” Ranjit Singh; and afterwards journeyed to Simla to recruit his health in the hills. On the road, as he was returning, he fell in with his expected comrades at a little village about thirty miles north-west of Delhi, on November 23rd; and accompanied them the rest of the way to Lodiāna, at which point we will let him take up the narrative again:

“After reaching Lodiāna,” he tells us, “we had the

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\*Upon Mr. Lowrie's return to America, he became associated with his father as Secretary of the new Board of Foreign Missions, in which capacity he continued to serve until his resignation in 1891, when he was made Emeritus Secretary. Dr. Speer says in his address, “The Old, Ever New, Call of Christ,” delivered in 1927: “Of the great history of the ninety years that are past I can remember nearly one-half. Indeed, my own life and the life of Dr. John C. Lowrie span the whole of these ninety years. I look back with gratitude to that contact with the very beginnings of our foreign missionary work and to all the wonderful progress of the decades.”



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satisfaction of spending six weeks together. During this time the history of our Mission in all its details was brought under review, and its prospects carefully examined. Various plans of usefulness were considered, and our united and fervent prayers were often made that the blessing of the great Head of the Church might crown our feeble undertakings. On a review of all our affairs, we could not but 'thank God, and take courage.' " At length the arrangements for his journey were made, and "on the 21st of January (1836)," so he notes in his journal, "I bade farewell to my missionary brethren—we commended each other to God, and to the word of His Grace, and then parted, they to pursue their missionary labors, and I to make another long and solitary journey."

### *A Grain of Mustard Seed*

It is a far cry from Lowrie alone in Lodia, to the present situation of the Presbyterian Missions in India, with its three principle branches of North India, the Punjab, and Western India; and its over forty stations, its 240 American Missionaries, its 900 churches and groups, its 12,000 communicant members, and 30,000 catechumens, its hospitals, dispensaries, schools, colleges, etc. Surely he *lifted up the banner!* And if I were to more than mention by name, those who followed his footsteps to India from his own Seminary alone, time would fail me to speak of Newton and Cope and Crane; of Warren and Williams; of Levitt and Fullerton; of Campbell and Johnston—our martyrs in the Sepoy Rebellion; of William F. Johnston, who came to fill his martyred brother's place, and continued in active service for over sixty years; of Wortabet and Holcomb and A. P. Kelso; of the Newton brothers, Charles Beatty and Francis J.; of Hull and the Ewing brothers, Arthur and Sir James; of McComb and Pollock and U. S. Grant Jones; of Wiley and Allison and Hezlep and Dodds and Llewellyn and Weir and Hendrix and Wallace, down to

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Calvin Hoffman Hazlett, who went out in 1923. Through what an Apostolic succession has the torch been handed down!

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V—THE MAP OF MISSIONS OF THE W.F.M.S.

From the culminating point which we have now reached with the establishment of the first permanent Mission Station of the Presbyterian Church, we must content ourselves with reporting the progress of the enterprise as it continued to be conducted during the remaining years of the old Society's existence. And what has been described already surely ought to be enough to indicate its character and its direction, its spirit and the driving force behind it. We have scarcely scratched the surface, to be sure; but if we have been privileged to awaken in any one an interest to dip into the records for himself, we shall feel fully repaid.

Before we come to the end of the story, however, which tells of the transfer of the Society to the newly established Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church; let us pause long enough for a brief glimpse at the Map of Missions of the Western Foreign Missionary Society: and note certain further outstanding achievements of those six short crowded years. It will prove convenient to take up the several missions and projected missions in succession, following the method employed by Dr. Ashbel Green:

*The Mission to Western Africa*

*The Mission to Northern India*

*The Mission to the Western Indians*

*The Mission to Smyrna*

*The Mission to China*

*Projected or Prospective Missions*

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*The Mission to Western Africa*

We left the Mission to Western Africa in sore straits; but find the following encouraging reference to it in the Final Report of the Society, May, 1837:—"This Mission, the first commenced, has always engaged the attention of the Committee. Since the last report, it has been renewed under circumstances of much promise. Mr. Ephraim Titler, a colored man and a licentiate of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, has been sent to the Bassa tribe, on the river John, 18 miles from the flourishing settlement of Bassa Cove. He had spent some time in Liberia. He was instructed to commence at Boblee, a station previously selected by Mr. Pinney, having every facility of access to the natives, and owing to its elevated situation, affording every prospect of health. Mr. Titler sailed from Wilmington, N. C., on the 31st December (1836), on a vessel chartered by the American Colonization Society, with a number of emigrants to Liberia. They arrived at Monrovia in safety early in February.

"It is the intention of the Committee, as fast as they can procure suitable and educated colored men, to strengthen and enlarge this Mission. The employment of colored men, for building up the Redeemer's kingdom in Africa, the Committee now believe, has not been sufficiently attended to by the churches. Their own most painful experience, in the loss of their first missionaries; the lamentable loss of lives among the missionaries of other societies, and particularly of that noble institution, the Church of England Missionary Society, have brought the subject of some other agency strongly before the Committee."

This experimental policy of employing colored missionaries was not to prove an unqualified success, and was eventually discontinued; but it shows us that the Society's *first love* was also one of its last thoughts. And so we leave them bravely carrying on; but we cannot refrain from at least the mention of some of the names of

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the men from Western, who have followed in the footsteps of their elder brother Cloud in the course of the years.

There was George Paull of the Class of 1862, whose grave is on far off Corisco Island, "a young brother greatly beloved, in whose life and labors were recognized a spirit akin to that of a Brainard, an Eliot, a Schwartz, and whose zeal for bleeding Africa, prematurely and almost literally consumed the vessel in which it burned." There was W. C. Gault of the Class of 1881, who "held a very large place in the hearts of the Africans." There was Adolphus C. Good of the Class of 1882, "who opened the interior of the Cameroon, and was a true pioneer; and whose equal for energy and ability, zeal and true Christian manhood, we will go far to find." There is his son, A. I. Good, of the Class of 1909, in Africa to-day, and Jacob A. Reis, Jr., of the Class of 1912.

And finally, there is W. C. Johnston, of the Class of 1895, who has done such a splendid work for Africa, and whose furlough the Board has extended for six months, that he might act as Executive Secretary for this Centennial. President Kelso has recently told how at the last meeting of the General Assembly in Pittsburgh, in 1895, he had volunteered to go to Africa, and as there were not sufficient funds available at the time, they were subscribed upon the floor of that Assembly. Pray God that there may be some other sons of Western ready for service in Africa when the Assembly meets here in May! What better memorial could there be than that?

### *The Mission to Northern India*

We have already treated of the Mission to India at some length; but Dr. Lowrie gives some statistics of the Mission in 1842, only five years after the transfer, that enable us to judge more adequately the results of the labors of the Society on that important field. "There are now three Missions," he writes, "five Stations, seventeen ordained ministers of the Gospel, one printer, one



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teacher, nearly all of whom are married men; several valuable native assistants; three schools, containing nearly two hundred orphan children, who are supported and brought up by the missionaries as if they were the children of Christian parents; three English schools, with about one hundred and fifty scholars, and several common or day schools; two printing establishments, with book-binderies; and four churches, whose members comprise the families of the missionaries, and a number of native converts, besides the orphan children, who have all received the ordinance of baptism.”

He likewise chronicles the arrival of the successive reinforcements, which up to the time of the transfer were as follows: the first, Newton and Wilson and their wives; the second, McEwen, Campbell, Rogers, Jamieson and Morris, and their wives; and the third, consisting of Wilson, Morrison, Craig and Morris, under appointment and ready to sail. To which may be added the dates of the founding of the first five Stations: Lodianna, 1834; Allahabad, 1836; Sabathu and Saharanpur, 1837; and Fettehgurh, 1838.

#### *The Mission to the Western Indians*

It is interesting to note that the line between Home and Foreign Missions was not then as closely drawn as it is to-day; and that the missions among the American Indians were under our Foreign Board for a number of years. In October, 1833, the Synod of Pittsburgh adopted a Resolution to sustain the Western Foreign Missionary Society “in attempting the immediate supply of every unsupplied and accessible tribe of the Western Reserve Indians.” This led to the establishment of two Missions.

#### *The Mission to the Weas*

The Mission to the Weas was established in December, 1833, by the Rev. Joseph Kerr, of the Class of 1833 of the Western Theological Seminary, and the Rev.



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Wells Bushnell, and their wives, with Miss Nancy Henderson and Miss Martha Boal. The Fifth Annual Report of the Society (1837) states that—"The Wea tribe of Indians have greatly profited by the labors bestowed upon them. A church containing ten native members has been formed in the wilderness, and the hearts of the missionaries have been encouraged by thus early seeing the blessing of God on their labors, among this solitary, degraded, and neglected people."

### *The Mission to the Iowas*

The Fourth Annual Report states that the "Iowa Mission comprises one station established among a considerable division of the tribe of that name, about eighty-five miles from the Weas. It consists at present (1836) of Mr. A. Ballard and wife, and Mr. E. M. Shepherd. Two or three schools were sustained during most of the last summer; and when the missionaries have found it impracticable regularly to assemble the children together, they have spent most of each day in going from lodge to lodge through the village, and giving to their pupils in each family their stated lessons, accompanying them with suitable instructions to the parents and other members of the family. The Iowas, like other tribes, have been much addicted to the excessive and ruinous use of ardent spirits. But the mission has already been highly serviceable in arresting the progress and diminishing the evils of this vice; and the missionaries have been a good deal encouraged by the apparent desire on the part of many to be brought to the knowledge of God."

### *The Mission to Smyrna*

The Mission to Smyrna is of a different character than any of the others, in that it was neither initiated by the Committee, nor permanently carried on. The circumstances of its undertaking and abandonment are as follows: In one of the earliest issues of the "Foreign Missionary Chronicle,"—June, 1833—there appeared a

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communication from the Rev. Josiah Brewer, appealing for assistance in the work in which he was engaged in Smyrna. He states that he is the only American and almost the only Protestant Missionary among the six millions of benighted inhabitants of Asia Minor. He likewise states that an independent society, the "New Haven Ladies Greek Association," that has been helping to sustain the work, being straitened for funds, would gladly resign the field to the Western Foreign Missionary Society. The Committee were intrigued by this opportunity of carrying on a work in the ancient territory of the Seven Churches of Asia, and took Mr. Brewer under their care. A Mr. Thomas Brown, a printer, and his wife, were sent out to the field; and the Rev. Wm. McCombs and Mr. John McClintock and their wives were under appointment and ready to sail. "The unexpected return of Mr. Brown, however, and a previous understanding had with Mr. Brewer, led the Board to reconsider its purpose, and to relinquish the field." The Final Report of the Society indicates that this step had been taken in view of the fact that a certain dissatisfaction with this connection existed in the minds of many members of the Church. Nevertheless the Committee entertained the confident expectation that the mission to Asia Minor would be resumed during the course of the year.

The chief significance of this abortive Mediterranean adventure, is, perhaps, its indication of the scope of the views and of the daring leadership of the Society; but it likewise introduces to us an incident that gives us a fresh view point from which to regard the momentous undertaking in which they were engaged. In 1834, the Rev. James Matheson, D.D., representing a Deputation from the Congregational Union of England and Wales, visited Pittsburgh. The following is an extract from his account of that visit:

*The Port of Pittsburgh*

“In all my intercourse,” he says, “with the ministers of this town, the professors of the Theological Institution, and pious laymen connected with benevolent and religious societies, I find the most enlightened views of Christian policy. The religious interests of the world appear to receive much of their attention. Yesterday I met with the Board of Directors of the Western Foreign Missionary Society. The progress of this Society has been equal to that of our most favored institutions at home. Its income for the last year (see Second Annual Report, May, 1834), was seventeen thousand dollars, and it has only been two years in existence. It is only about fifty years since the first preacher passed over the Allegheny Mountains, into the Valley of the Mississippi. This was the Rev. John McMillan. There were few inhabitants then; and for some time he labored almost alone. Two or three years ago, this venerable and apostolic man visited the churches which he was instrumental in planting. And in the Synod of Pittsburgh there are now twenty-three thousand communicants, and about a hundred thousand hearers of the Gospel, besides Christian churches of other denominations.

“But not only has this good been effected for the people themselves. In this infant town they have begun to feel for, and to assist the heathen. How surprising that, from this distant region, messengers of peace should be sent forth to Northern India, Western Africa, and even to Jerusalem itself. The two former countries already have devoted and well-trained missionaries from this Society; and *arrangements are now making to establish missions in Palestine, Asia Minor, and in China.* We have been told of the surprise expressed by certain custom-house officers of one of the European ports, at finding a ship’s papers dated Pittsburgh. No less surprising will it be to the Christian traveler *to meet, amidst the ruins of the Seven Churches, or the mountains of*

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Judaëa, missionaries sent from a spot in the other hemisphere, perhaps unknown to him even by name, and itself but recently blessed with Gospel light.”

*The Mission to China*

From the very beginning, the Society had looked toward China, as well as toward India and Africa, as one of the three major fields of missionary endeavor; but China was a much more difficult problem than either of the other two. At length, in the fall of 1837, we find them ready to undertake the Mission. Their plans are all laid; and their first missionaries—the Rev. Robert W. Orr, one of that group of students at the Western Theological Seminary, who had heard the challenge “Whom shall we send?”—and the Rev. John A. Mitchell—were under appointment, and ready to sail, when all the affairs of the Society were transferred to the new Board of the Church.

In the last Annual Report of the Society (May 1837), there is a masterly presentation of the situation as it then existed, together with a succinct outline of the Society’s proposed program for breaking down the Chinese wall of exclusion. It is well worth our notice, even in this brief sketch, not only because it acquaints us with the almost insuperable obstacles with which these earlier missionary efforts had to contend, but because it affords us our latest glimpse of the courage and resourcefulness of the founders of the missionary enterprise of our Church.

“This great people,” so the Report asserts, “not more remarkable for the extent of their territory and the number of their population, than for their entire ignorance of the true God, have of late engaged the thoughts of professing Christians in all parts of our country. The remarkable fact that one-fourth, or perhaps one-third of the human race read one language, ought long ere now to have called for the exertion of every friend of missions, and of the Bible, to give them



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that blessed book in numbers somewhat proportionate to the demand. But alas! A few small editions of the Chinese Bible is the entire supply for these hundreds of millions. The missionary and tract societies of our own and other countries, have of late years been most usefully employed in furnishing tracts and scripture histories; but all that has yet been done cannot bear any comparison to what is yet wanted.

“The impression that China is closed to missionary exertions, seems yet to rest like an incubus on the minds of Christians, and to paralyze and throw doubt on every exertion in her behalf. China is closed in some respects, but China is open and waiting for the Gospel in others. The government of China, fearful of European politics, and still remembering the intrigues of the agents of the Church of Rome, have forbidden the residence of foreigners within their limits, except at one designated point. The government do not permit even their language to be taught, nor their books to be sold to foreigners. They forbid also the reading of any books brought by foreigners. They permit no schools to be taught by them, nor printing presses to be established. New edicts make their appearance from time to time,\* but these prohibitions are of long standing. Notwithstanding these measures, the people of China are anxious to receive our religious, scientific, and historical books; and if instead of five thousand copies of the Bible, we had half a million, and prudent and qualified men to distribute them, it would not be long before they would be in circulation, in the most thickly settled part of the empire. All the Mandarins, and all the military officers, could not prevent their teeming millions from receiving and reading them. *It ill becomes the Church to be discouraged* till the missionaries abroad report to them that nothing more can be done.

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\*The ‘Foreign Missionary Chronicle,’ vol. v, pp. 77, 139; gives some of the edicts, and makes some interesting comments thereon.



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“In other respects China is open and perfectly accessible to missionary labors. In every island in the Eastern Archipelago, Chinese emigrants are to be found, mostly residing together; and men of a right spirit, sustained by the prayers and the contributions of the churches, only are wanted to carry to these accessible perishing thousands, the bread of life. These emigrants, to a greater or less degree, are connected with the population at home; many are constantly coming and returning; and thus affording facilities and opportunities to disseminate printed books to a great extent. The hundreds of thousands of the Chinese population, engaged in fishing, far out of sight of land, and in large companies together, ought neither to be overlooked nor neglected. The attempt to supply them with printed or oral instruction might not in all cases be permitted, because they are for the most part accompanied by war boats. *But let the trial be made.* It may be found that those very war boats, will be the first to receive the words of life.”

We turn from the Report, to ask what it was that the Directors of the Western Foreign Missionary Society proposed to do. First, they were convinced that if China could not be entered directly, bases of operation could be established outside its borders, from which the Gospel offensive could be carried on. And this is exactly what was done. And it is in reference to this that Dr. Speer has written that, as the Western Seminary has sent out the first missionaries of our Church to India and Africa, so “it sent out Orr and Travelli as our first missionaries to China, although they were never to reach China—their service for China being rendered in Singapore, while they waited for the slow gates to swing ajar.”

*An Adventure in Typography*

But by far the most unique and daring, as well as the most interesting adventure of the old Society, had to do with the problem of making the Bible available

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in quantities sufficient to supply the needs of the Chinese. Once more the clearest explanation both of the problem and of its solution is to be found in the Committee's Report:

“Heretofore the Chinese printing has been almost entirely performed in the Chinese on blocks of wood. The preparation of these blocks requires the employment of Chinese artists. Hence nothing could be done without their assistance. The Chinese language has no alphabet, every character represents either a word or an idea. Their number is estimated by Dr. Marshman at 30,000. The expense of preparing steel punches and matrices for such a number would be so great, that till lately no attempt has been made to supply the whole. Besides the expense, the difficulty of arranging 30,000 different characters in a printing office, so as to be managable by the printer, is seen at once to be too great for practical purposes.

“The Rev. Mr. Dyer at Penang, has been for some time engaged with good success in preparing steel punches and matrices for two or three thousand of the characters most in use. These types when prepared can be used in the common printing press, and even that number of characters will afford great facility in Chinese printing. Still it is most desirable, that when the missionaries have acquired a full knowledge of the language, they should have the advantage of using any character in it they might prefer, in translating or explaining the Bible or in writing their other publications. This most important discovery has quite recently been made. More than thirty years ago, Dr. Marshman discovered that most of the Chinese characters consisted of two elements, which he called *formatives* and *primitives*. He pointed out this principle to the student of the language with great clearness, as one of great importance for him to know.

“Dr. Marshman does not seem to have been aware how very important this discovery was in relation to the

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preparation of a body of metal type, for the whole language. Pursuing the subject with the light thus afforded by this venerable and able missionary, the Chinese scholars in Paris carried it one step farther in reference solely to printing. They divided the whole language into two classes of *divisible* and *indivisible* characters, and by a careful examination of the divisible characters and a reduction of them to their most simple elements. It appeared that with 9000 punches and matrices, the whole 30,000 characters can be formed. By arranging and numbering these 9000 elements under their respective keys, the whole presents but little more difficulty than a common English printing office."

So much for the possibility of the process. The next question was the expense. An experienced typographer was found in Paris who would do the work for \$6,600 a set, but who could not afford to make less than three sets. And so the Committee of the Western Foreign Missionary Society, poor as they were, entered into partnership with King Louis Philippe of France and the British Museum, in ordering the three sets. It is a fascinating episode, and one of the home touches is that the first "remittance for matrices for metal type for printing the Bible in Chinese," was the \$500 contribution for that purpose by the Young Men's Bible Society of Pittsburgh.

*The Hon. Walter Lowrie*

The one man who was primarily responsible for this crowning achievement of the Society was the Hon. Walter Lowrie, who shares with Dr. Swift the honor of having done most for the establishment of the Foreign Missionary enterprise of the Presbyterian Church—no account of which can be complete without an adequate notice of his character and labors in its behalf. I will therefore avail myself of the brief biographical sketch by Dr. Speer in his "Presbyterian Foreign Missions:"

"Walter Lowrie was one of the great characters of our Church. He was born in Edinburgh, Scotland,

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December 10, 1784. He was brought to America when eight years old, and settled with his parents first in Huntingdon County, then in Butler County, Pennsylvania. Intending to enter the ministry, he was turned aside. In 1811, he was elected to the Senate of Pennsylvania, and, then, after seven years of service, to the Senate of the United States. At the expiration of his term, in 1824, he became Secretary to the Senate, and held the office for twelve years, and was urged to remain, but turned from it in 1836, to become Secretary of the Western Foreign Missionary Society\* (succeeding Dr. Swift), and then of the Board. He held this office until, disabled by the infirmities of old age, he laid it down in 1868. He was a man of calm, judicious mind, trusted absolutely by all men, and beloved. In the Senate, among such men as Webster, Clay, Calhoun, and Randolph, he was regarded as 'an authority upon all questions of political history and constitutional law.' And later, whenever he rose to speak in any assembly of the Church, there was a silent and confident attention. Every one knew that Walter Lowrie was absolutely true and genuine. He taught himself Chinese in order to help the press in Shanghai, and he laid the foundations of that great enterprise. No detail was too small for his honest care, and no plans were so great as to appall him. He was a man of missionary heart. He abandoned a lucrative position for one that never supported his family, and he gave three sons to missions, one to India,† and two to China, one of them to a martyr's death.‡ He was as simple as he was great, loving Christ as a little child, and pleading everywhere and always, often with tears, for the work to which he had given up everything himself, and for which his Master had given up all before him."

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\*Hays, 'Presbyterians:'—"He left that high place to take the higher one of Secretary of the Western Foreign Missionary Society."

†John C. Lowrie.

‡He died by the hand of Chinese pirates, August 18, 1847.



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*Projected or Prospective Missions*

In the final Report of the Society, we read that among their projected missions, was one to Calcutta, and an enlargement of their operations among the Indian tribes, extending the work much farther than they had hitherto attempted, in the direction of the Rocky Mountains.\* Neither of these missions were they destined to undertake; but our very last glimpse of them, as they turn their gaze alternately to the far West and to the far East, is symbolical of the breadth and the scope of their ambition to fulfil their Lord's last command—"Go ye into all the world."

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VI—DYING AND BEHOLD THEY LIVE

*The Founding of the Board*

We are now come to the final chapter in the history of the Western Foreign Missionary Society. We are not to follow the course of the continuing debate within the Church on the subject of missionary agency, nor to trace the steps which led to the founding of the Board of Foreign Missions by the Assembly of 1837. That is a story in itself, and would draw this paper out to an inordinate length. Suffice it to record that the Assembly did, in that year, take the action which the fathers of the Synod of Pittsburgh had desired so ardently for so many years.

With this action of the General Assembly, however, and the taking over of the Western Foreign Missionary "lock, stock, and barrel," it might be supposed that the men who had conceived and carried on the glorious enterprise, the course of which we have been tracing, might feel at least a touch of regret. On the contrary, they rejoiced greatly. It was for this that they had

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\*In another place they say, 'the Rocky Mountains and beyond.'

## *Western Foreign Missionary Society*

labored from the beginning. And the Synod now saw all that it had set out to do accomplished, and more than all. They had the added ground of congratulation that, in the Providence of God, they had been instrumental in establishing the Foreign Missionary enterprise of the Presbyterian Church. But far more important to them than this, was the realization that at length they had been instrumental in establishing the principle for all time, that *the work of Foreign Missions is the work of the Church in its distinctive character as a Church*. We may wonder to-day how any one ever thought otherwise; but if we think correctly upon this matter, let us remember that it was these men who have taught us so to think.

However that may be, it was a memorable occasion when, on June 7, 1837, the Resolution was passed: "That the General Assembly will superintend and conduct, *by its own proper authority*, the work of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, by a Board appointed for that purpose, and duly amenable to said Assembly." This was the first official recognition of that principle that was later to receive even clearer and more emphatic expression in the declaration of the Assembly of 1847, that:—"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." And again by the Assembly of 1867, which declared:—"This Assembly regards the whole Church as a Missionary Society whose main work is to spread the knowledge of salvation." No, there were no regrets when the Western Foreign Missionary Society no longer had any existence as a separate entity,—for by that very fact, it became perpetuated, merging its existence in the Board of the Church. It died, and behold, it lives! And when it voluntarily transferred its "funds, its Missions and its papers," to the Assembly's Board, it transferred its principles as well,—its ideals, its program, and its tre-

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mendous missionary earnestness and enthusiasm—all of which are to-day a part of the great inheritance of the Church.

*The First Meeting*

The first meeting of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, was held by the appointment of the Assembly, in the city of Baltimore, October 31st, 1837. The first important transaction was the transfer of the Missions and funds of the Society to the Board. From a summary statement of the Secretary of the Society, of its affairs, it appears that it then had forty-five missionaries; though eight of these were then on their way to their fields of labor; three were expecting daily to embark; seven were detained for the present for want of funds, and two were in this country for other causes. Eleven of these were ordained ministers, five were teachers, one was a printer and book binder, and twenty were women. It had under its care three presses, one high school, two boarding schools and several common schools. The receipts for the year ending October 15th (1837), were \$40,266, and the balance in hand \$5,784, would be wanted for the *China Mission about to be commenced*. The "Foreign Missionary Chronicle" was, of course, included in the transfer, and became the organ of the Board.

The new Board then passed a Resolution which stated that:—"Those who have watched the progress of that Society (the W.F.M.S.) from its formation, cannot but recognize the favor of the great Head of the Church in prospering its interest. It has ample cause for gratitude on account of the direct usefulness that has already been accomplished by its labors, and still more, perhaps, on account of the system of efforts, now fairly commenced, which give fair promise of conveying the most important blessings to extensive regions of the heathen world. It is also a source of unfeigned satisfaction that it has proved the means and the occasion of strengthen-

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ing and extending throughout our Presbyterian Zion, the conviction, that *as a Church, we are debtors to the heathen*; the events of its past history have, no doubt, contributed largely to the present ecclesiastical action of the Church in behalf of Foreign Missions; and now that, *free from debt and all embarrassments*, it has been taken under the patronage and direction of the highest judicatory of our Church, our hope and prayer to God is, that the stream of sympathy and benevolence may flow towards the poor heathen more broad, and deep, and pure, *from the midst of all our churches*, until the time shall come when all nations shall possess and joyfully appreciate our excellent system of faith, and shall with us 'worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh.' "

### *The Board Carries On!*

We have already seen how the Society had planned the Mission to China,—how carefully they had surveyed that great field, prepared their attack, chosen their base, made their arrangements for printing their literature in the Chinese language,—and that the first Missionaries were under appointment and ready to sail. The final details, however, of the launching of this momentous Mission, fell to the lot of the newly established Board, the embarkation of Messrs. Orr and Mitchell taking place on December 9, 1837, a little over a month after the first meeting of the Board in Baltimore.

With these facts in mind, it is with great interest that we read the first paragraph of their instructions to the departing heralds of the Cross:—"To the Rev. Messrs. John A. Mitchell and Robert W. Orr, Missionaries to China. Beloved Brethren,—It is a subject of peculiar interest to the Executive Committee of the Board of Foreign Missions of the General Assembly, that one of their first acts is to deliver instructions to the first missionaries to China sent out by the Presbyterian Church." What if the old Society was no more? Its soul went marching on!



## THE CENTENNIAL

The year 1931 is a double anniversary. One hundred and fifty years ago, old Redstone, the first Presbytery west of the Allegheny Mountains, was organized by three ministers and three elders, their vision bounded only by the setting sun. To-day, one of its successors, the Presbytery of Pittsburgh, has become the largest Presbytery in the world. It is also the Centennial of the organization of the Western Foreign Missionary Society,—an event of such significance to the entire Church, that it is to be signalized by the meeting of the General Assembly in 1931.

The Centennial Committee\* of the Presbytery of Pittsburgh, which was appointed at the suggestion of the Alumni of the Western Theological Seminary at their own Centennial in 1927, have endeavored to stress, from the very beginning, their hope that this may be the occasion of a great *spiritual, evangelistic, and missionary* awakening throughout the bounds of the old Synod of Pittsburgh. There is a danger in anniversaries, however,—the danger that they may exhaust themselves in mere remembrance, in mere memorial, in mere lip-service to the great past. Is it invidious to recall the fact that last year, in which we celebrated the 1900th Anniversary of Pentecost, our Church lost five members for every four it received? No, it is rather a fact to be prayerfully pondered; and should have the effect of leading us in all humility closer to the throne of grace. It is not enough for us to content ourselves by saying,—“*Those were great days!*” Rather, we should learn to say with one of our younger Missionaries, Frank Woodward of the Class of 1911,—“*These are great days, laying the foundations of the future Evangelical Church of Mindanao and the Phillippine Islands.*”

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\*For a full account of the proposal to celebrate the Centennial, and of the organization of the Committee by the Presbytery of Pittsburgh, see leaflet published by the Committee:—“The Centennial of the Western Foreign Missionary Society.”

## *Western Foreign Missionary Society*

There are to be two special features of the Centennial,† apart from its recognition by the Assembly itself. First:—A Memorial Thankoffering of \$150,000, one-half of which is to be used to build Missionary Apartments at the Western Theological Seminary; and the other half to be used for some memorial on the Foreign Field, to be divided, perhaps, between Western Africa and Northern India, where the first Missions of the Church were established. Second:—A simultaneous appeal in all the churches throughout the territory of the old Society, to young men to dedicate their lives to the Christian Ministry and Christian Missions; and to the liberal givers of the present day, to whom we shall say,—“You have given freely of your means; now we ask of you a costlier sacrifice. Give us your sons, in the Name of Him who spared not His Only Begotten Son!”

### *Go, Get Your Own Souvenirs*

In the summer of 1916, the writer of this paper, in company with his brother and a number of other young men of Pittsburgh, attended the Officers' Training Camp at Plattsburg. It was, of course, in the days before America had entered the war. One Sunday we spent the day in Montreal; and as we walked along the street, we found ourselves pausing before the window of a store where there was on display a collection of German helmets, gas masks, officer's field glasses, etc., which had been sent home by members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. I well remember how we stood and gazed upon these objects, in something of the attitude of mind of the little boys whose noses are pressed against the plate glass window of a pastry shop. And the thought passed

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†“I am delighted to hear of the plan for a Centennial celebration of the Western Foreign Missionary Society. I think the idea is an admirable one, and also the suggestion that we should make it the occasion of a great thankoffering in the territory of the old Society for the cause of Foreign Missions, and an occasion also for a definite appeal to young men in the churches in behalf of Missions and the Ministry.”

—ROBERT E. SPEER.

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through my mind, how I would love to take one of those helmets home to my little boy. And I wondered whether by any chance, the proprietor would be willing to sell it to me. At that moment, my eye caught sight of a large poster in the back of the window, on which were these words, —*Go, Get Your Own Souvenirs.*

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WESTERN AND MISSIONS

The close relation between the Western Theological Seminary and the Western Foreign Missionary Society, justifies a more extended treatment than our space will allow. Dr. Elisha P. Swift was one of the founders of both institutions, as well as the first Secretary of the Board of Directors of each. Indeed, the first Board of Directors of the Society was composed almost entirely of members of the Board of Directors of the Seminary. It was with these beginnings in mind, as well as the continuing contribution of the sons of Western to the cause that lay so near to the hearts of these men, that Dr. James I. Brownson was led to exclaim:—"Our loftiest joy is derived from the connection of our Seminary with Foreign Missions." But we will ask Dr. Speer to summarize the record of the Seminary during the first hundred years:

"The first foreign missionaries who were sent out by our Church," he says, "were graduates of the Western Theological Seminary, John C. Lowrie and William Reed of the Class of 1832, the former of whom founded the first foreign mission station of our Church at Lodiana. And Western furnished the first foreign missionaries of our Church, not for India only, but also for Africa and China. And not in India, Africa, and China alone did the sons of this Seminary pioneer the missionary course of our Church, but in many another land as well. Orr visited Bangkok in 1838 and pleaded for the establish-

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ment of a mission in Siam, and some years later, after the work had begun, the Class of 1860 contributed two men, McDonald and McFarland, who joined the foundation layers in this mission of the Church. Sharp, of the Class of '58, was one of our two first missionaries in Columbia. The name of S. Hall Young, of the Class of '78, whose lovely life came to its tragic end only a few weeks ago (1927), will be remembered for all time and eternity as intertwined with the Christian life and all the best moral and social interests of Alaska. And in three great Indian fields men from this Seminary illustrated the pioneering traditions of the early years: Kerr of the Class of '33 established the mission among the Weas, Hamilton of the Class of '37 among the Sacs and Foxes of the Black Hills, and Riggs of the Class of '38 became the great apostle to the Dakotas and the Sioux.

“Not a year has passed since the great work of foreign missions of our Church began that Western Seminary has not had its representatives continuously on the field. According to the statistics which Dr. Kelso has given me, the Seminary has sent out 184 foreign missionaries (1927), who have given a combined service of 3261 years. They have been men of a conspicuous Christian tenacity, not easy comers and quick goers, but men who have taken hold of duty and have stayed with it until the setting of the sun. The average term of their service has been eighteen years. Twenty-five have served between 20 and 30 years each; forty, over 30 years; nineteen, over 40 years; and nine, among whom was the honored and trusted father of President Kelso, served each of them over half a century; and one wonderful son of Western (W. F. Johnston of India) served over 60 years. There have been, I think, only three or four of the mission fields of our Church, to which Western has not sent its sons. But they have been scattered to missionary areas beyond the immediate responsibility of our Church. The long roll shows that 10 have gone to Japan, 49 to China, 22 to Siam, 40 to India, 8 to Persia,



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9 to Africa, 21 to Latin America—8 of these to Mexico, 4 to Columbia, and 9 to Brazil.”

Here then, indeed, is the full justification for the judgment cited at the beginning of this paper, that—“it was natural and right that it was first the Seminary that came out of the missionary spirit, and then the missionary spirit that came pouring forth in augmented volume out of the Seminary.” Surely it is not mere poetical license, but sober truth, that prompts the sons of the Seminary to sing:

“O Western! Thou wearest with grace that endears,  
Upon thy fair forehead the crown of the years.  
How pleasant thy paths, and how peaceful thy halls!  
How brave are thy banners! How lovely thy walls!  
The wells of thy wisdom are brimming and deep;  
The faith once delivered, we pledge thee to keep!  
Then, Western, arising, thy sons will go forth,  
Once more to encompass the ends of the earth!”