

UNION SEMINARY MAGAZINE

NO. 2.—NOV.—DEC., 1897.

I.—LITERARY.

THE SEMINARY COURSE OF STUDY—ITS RANGE, STANDARD, EXAMINATIONS AND TESTS.

In the last issue we endeavored to set forth the *purpose* of the Seminary, to guard against certain developments of seminary discipline; and to maintain that the church should have in every age a set curriculum, suited to the needs of the time, through which the seminaries shall carry their students. In the present issue we offer some further considerations on our general subject.

V.—THE CONTENTS OF THE SEMINARY COURSE AND THEIR DISTRIBUTION AMONG THE DIFFERENT CHAIRS.

According to the church's statement of the purpose of the seminary, in 1811, it was to teach the Hebrew and New Testament Greek, the exegesis of both testaments, sacred geography and antiquities, the overthrow of Deism, Natural, Didactic, Polemic and Casuistic Theology, Church History, Pastoral Theology and Church Government and Discipline. Our Standards also imply that the student must be trained in all these things. That is, a place must be given in the course to Exegetical, Apologetical, Systematic, Historical and Practical Theology. Stating the matter in this general way most of the churches of the Reformed faith would say the same. But, this by the way, the statement by our Assembly of 1811 is a very fine one. We have no time for an exposition of it; but call attention to one or two points.

1. The student is required to study, at the seminary, the Deistic Controversy and thus become qualified to become a

II.—EDITORIAL.

REASONS WHY EVERY YOUNG MINISTER OUGHT TO SPEND A FEW YEARS OF HIS EARLY MINISTRY IN THE HOME MISSION FIELD.

The above caption may seem strange and absurd to some, yet to all it will not. Many of the ministers of our church in seeking to solve the great problem of Home Mission work have lighted upon this very plan. True many have claimed that this is the hardest point of the battle, hence the more trusty and experienced forces are demanded here. While this may be theoretically right, practically it is not, and in the evangelization of the world theory counts for little if that theory is not practicable. To do this work the young men may and ought to be utilized by their Presbyteries. The following are some reasons for the statement :

1. *For the sake of the young man himself.* Such work reacts with great force upon his own heart. Just at the time when he most needs it he is lead to realize his own insufficiency and his entire dependence upon the Spirit. With no one to flatter and none to lean upon save the Master himself, he is kept in such constant, close association with the Lord that the fulness of his holiness—so essential to the minister—is stamped more rapidly upon his nature than it often is under other conditions. It widens also his view of the church and the church's commission. Cramped up in some strong country or city church there is a danger that he come to feel that his work is to begin and end at Jerusalem. When he has once looked into the faces of men to whom the wondrous story of the cross told in love is a strange sound, never can nor will he forget that scene even though his work afterwards lead him to a 5th Avenue pulpit. His heart must ever after burn to do something for those in the "regions beyond."

Still further, such early work must have a happy effect upon the style of preaching. The story of the gospel told simply and earnestly must be the work of the missionary. Moral lectures, pointless and cold, which may attract and interest else-

where, have no place in the mission field. Christ must be the theme. The old, old story told in its simplest way must be the weekly sermon. But such preaching begun here will be carried on through life, and every man knows that this is the kind of preaching which God has honored from the great day of Pentecost, when Peter with "Jesus the Messiah" for his theme touched and led to the feet of Christ three thousand souls, until the present. Thus we see the young minister's piety is deepened, his vision is enlarged, and his capacity for soul-winning is increased.

2. *For the sake of the mission fields.* The need is appalling. In the most moral of our states scarcely one-half the citizens are even nominally members of Christ's church. What is the explanation of the fact. It is found in those sections where the minister has not been sent. In one community last summer I, myself, found thirty families while only the heads of four were church members. Such facts are facts only because the preacher hath not been put and kept among these people. The Gospel preached in the greatest weakness is a mighty sword in God's hand. Even though the arrows from the young man's shaft may be hurled with comparatively little force yet an almighty hand behind them may catch them up and accomplish his full purpose.

Furthermore, the vast need and vast extent of territory demands a large number of workers. But one middle-aged man with a wife and family requires nearly twice as much to support him as a single man. In the average mountain mission field \$400 will tide the single man over the year and leave him a surplus of \$100. The work demands that he be away much of the time. There are no family ties to make him hasten home. The people are always seemingly glad to see him coming. He pays for nothing while out on one of these visiting trips though he may be gone for a whole week at a time. And thus at the end of the month instead of paying the full *six dollars* board he finds it cut down to about *three*. If the church has only a limited amount of funds for the work, nearly twice as many young men just from the seminary can be put into the work as of older and more experienced workers.

Someone may say, however, that the ineffectiveness of the preacher more than counterbalances the additional numbers. Facts do not bear out such an objection. The most effective part of the work is in the visiting, not the preaching. In this

part of the work a man with a little bit of tact and a large slice of godliness may be as successful at twenty-five as at forty. A warm heart, good judgment, and tact are the greatest requirements for a missionary. Such a man, though he may preach a very simple sermon, will not fail to attract and win to Christ multitudes of those in mission districts. Many of the boys as they leave the seminary have these requisites.

3. *For the sake of the church at large.* The fact that a church is paying one hundred or five hundred dollars to the support of the work in a particular mission field is an absolute guarantee that that church will take a greater interest in the work there. The reports coming to the members from *their* field, the personal visits of *their* missionary quicken their interest, strengthen their zeal, and open their pocket books.

The church that pays only a little to such a work realizes that to that extent it is obeying the divine commission to "go into *all* the world." The Spirit blesses that congregation because of its obedience. Then at the next meeting, if it has not done all that it could (and certainly few churches can claim such an eminence) it is easier to raise an additional amount than it was to raise the small amount at first.

Besides the "facts from the field" and the visits of the missionary turn their eyes to other fields. As their horizon is widened and the real needs are made more evident the desire to do greater things springs up within their hearts. Though it may seem an insignificant thing to secure from any congregation one-half of a very small salary for a poor young preacher, yet if we can regard that as the prophecy of the whole salary of perhaps both a home and foreign missionary then who will dare call that beginning insignificant?

To-day in Union Seminary nine-tenths of the students would gladly respond to a call from their presbyteries to do this work. Many of them are urging that they be put into it. They wish it; the field cries out for it; the church needs it; and the Master demands it.

UNION SEMINARY AS A CONTRIBUTOR TO THE FOREIGN FIELD.

What the steam gauge is to the engine, or the pulse beat to the human body, the missionary spirit is to the church. It attests her working power or ability to fulfill the mission for

which she was established. This is seen from the fact that the times of greatest missionary activity in the church have also been the times of greatest purity and spirituality, while on the contrary when she has shown herself unfaithful to the Master's command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," stagnation and deadness have been the result.

To this command the Southern Presbyterian Church has not been unfaithful taking upon herself from her birthday the task of aiding in evangelizing the world. During the thirty years of her existence from 1865 to 1895, she has sent out into the foreign field ninety ordained ministers, and of this number a little over *one-half* have received their training in the halls of Union Seminary. The "missionary" classes of the Seminary have been those of 1868, 1889 and 1894, the first two with four each, the last with six representatives. In the same period of thirty years the Seminary has turned into the home field 540 ministers, an average of twelve men for the home land to every one for the foreign field. These figures indicate that either the Master does not call more men to plant the banner of the Cross in heathen lands, or if He does, the call is not heeded.

One of the primary principles of any scheme of aggressiveness, whether in business, politics, or any other sphere, is not only to hold the ground gained, but also to widen present influences and make fresh advances. Another is the seizing of decisive points at decisive moments. Both are vital principles in the extension of the kingdom of Christ. As the nineteenth century draws to a close, the heathen world stands open to Christianity as it never has before. China it seems must err long, casting off her old garments, awake from the sleep of centuries to a new life, but its being a bright one depends upon whether she does so with Christ's gospel for her stay. Japan stands on the eve of a new era. She has made great progress along many lines, but it rests with God's people to say whether or not this land shall belong to Christ. Africa, though still bleeding from many a pore, offers a field for mission work scarcely equalled since Pentecostal times. To the south of us lies a continent of republics now wavering between the deep blackness of a Romish domination or the hopeless night of Rationalism. Unless truth and the Spirit of God step in, one or the other must win the day. At such a crisis in the world's history the power that avails itself of the opportunity and the moment brings victory to its standard. Should the church

now march forth relying on God for strength and victory, the world would be won for Christ. We might then look for the speedy fulfillment of the promise, "And the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations and then shall the end come."

The General Assembly at its recent meeting in Charlotte called for eighteen men to volunteer for the foreign field. A call certainly for the minimum need. If Union Seminary shall continue to furnish the quota she has in the past, that is one half the men, she should respond to the call with nine. Yet at the past rate of one man in twelve for the foreign field it would require at least *six years* to supply the demand of *the day*.

God often calls His servants by opening up before them golden opportunities for success in His service. Along with these opportunities He often links hardships, trials and sacrifice of self, but the true servant sees only the Master's beckoning hand. Such a servant knows no insurmountable difficulties, he knows no trials too great, he has one law the Master's will. For him there are no impossibilities but great possibilities, the possibility of rendering faithful service to his Lord and "writing on the eternal skies the record of a heroic life."

E. E. L.

DR. GRAYBILL'S VISIT.

The Students of the Seminary are always glad of a visit from a returned missionary. Their interest in the work is deep and sincere. Possibly there has never been a larger number of volunteers in the Seminary at any one time in its history. Ten men from the Senior Class alone are looking to the foreign field. Such facts guarantee a cordial reception to any missionary. Dr. Graybill spent three days on the Hill during October, preaching once and lecturing twice on his work in Mexico.

A little more than two years ago, at the request of the native workers, it was determined to turn this work over to the native church. Experience has proven that the time was not ripe for such action, and the committee will probably give Dr. Graybill another assistant. At present there are eight workers from our church there. Dr. Graybill, who remained as general superintendent of the native church, his wife, and six lady teachers. The work is prospering. Our church numbers about five hundred.

Col. J. G. Woolley, in his speech at the "Neal Dow Banquet" in Boston, quotes the following address of the Presiding Officer of the Ohio Liquor League, at its annual meeting.

"The success of our business is dependent largely upon the creation of appetite for drink.

"Men who drink liquor, like others, will die, and if there is no new appetite created our counters will be empty, as will be our coffers. Our children will go hungry, or we must change our business to some other more remunerative.

"The open field for the creation of this appetite is among the boys. After men have grown and their habits are formed, they rarely ever change in this regard. It will be needful, therefore, that missionary work be done among the boys, and I make the suggestion, gentlemen, that "Nickels" expended in treats to the boys now will return in "Dollars" to your tills after the appetite has been formed.

"Above all things, create appetite."

[No more pernicious truth was ever uttered. Though diabolical in its intent it is certain of success if persisted in. The surest protection for the American youth is his father's home. Will not our ministers often urge upon parents the absolute necessity of knowing the whereabouts of their boys? Editor Mag.]

