

# THE CHURCH AT HOME AND ABROAD.

OCTOBER, 1890.

## DR. VAN DYCK'S SEMI-CENTENNIAL.

On the second day of April, 1890, Rev. C. V. A. Van Dyck, M.D., D.D., reached the end of a half century of missionary service in Syria. The semi-centennial anniversary was fitly celebrated in Beirut by the missionaries and the Syrian people. The natives of all sects united in their congratulations to him, and expressed their appreciation of his services by presenting him as a testimonial more than two thousand dollars in cash—Moslems, Jews, nominal Christians, Druzes and Protestants joining in the presentation. The sultan sent him a "decoration," for humane, scientific and literary services rendered to his majesty's people. The mission presented him an elegantly-bound and mounted set of his twenty-seven works in Arabic.

On his Jubilee day everybody—rulers and people—called on him to tender their congratulations. Few men are so well known and held in so high esteem by the natives of Syria.

The following address to Dr. Van Dyck was presented to him on the joyful occasion, written by Dr. Eddy at the request of the missionaries and signed by them all. Rarely do we have opportunity to present so interesting a document to the readers of THE CHURCH AT HOME AND ABROAD. It is not only a merited honor to a man who has made rare use of rare gifts. Beyond all that is personal, it is a historic monument.

HONORED AND DEAR BROTHER:—Rarely has any mission enjoyed the privilege, of which we now partake, of congratulating one of their number upon completing fifty years of service.

Allow us, first of all, to congratulate you that Mrs. Van Dyck has been spared to you all these years, to be your companion and support in toil. But for her we little think that we would have a Jubilee to celebrate for you. To her as well as you our congratulations belong, for not without reason is "Sit Julia" a name honored and loved in Syria, and proudly worn by many Syrian girls in memory of the bride of 1842.

We would congratulate you upon *the good degree of health and strength* which you have enjoyed and still possess to use in the Master's service; that you have been spared so long while toiling so laboriously; and that you have been entrusted with such high responsibilities and favored with such rare opportunities for usefulness. Of all the missionaries who welcomed you on your arrival in Syria, not one remains in this land. Three survive in America. You can count seventy-five persons, men and women, of those who have been your associates here, who have dropped out of the arena of conflict in which you still hold your course. Most of these are sleeping their last sleep, and from being crusaders have become crown-wearers. A few from across the sea wave their salutations to you to-day, smiling sadly as they see you still running in the race to which their steps proved unequal.

We can congratulate you upon *the noble*

# FOREIGN MISSION NOTES.

BY THE SECRETARIES.

## MRS. J. N. WRIGHT.

The murder of Mrs. Wright, the wife of Rev. J. N. Wright, at Salmas, May 14, by a young Nestorian who had been engaged as a teacher in our school there, has already been announced in the newspapers. The young man had been rebuked by Mrs. Wright for the sin which led to his dismissal from the school, and took advantage of Mr. Wright's momentary absence in an adjoining room to make the fatal assault. Forty-nine hours passed before medical assistance arrived, there being no physician nearer than Tabriz. Mr. Wright and Mr. Mechlin had meanwhile sewed up the wounds and done what they could to make the patient comfortable. For several days there was good hope of recovery, but a complication against which the medical skill available could not provide set in, and on June 1 Mrs. Wright breathed her last. By means of the prompt and efficient services of the Hon. Mr. Pratt, the United States minister to Persia, and Colonel Stewart, the English consul at Tabriz, the murderer was arrested and imprisoned at Tabriz.

The following tribute is from the pen of Rev. B. Labaree, D.D., of our Western Persia mission :

The death of Mrs. Wright, of Salmas, has given us a terrible shock, one we shall not soon recover from. Under any circumstances her loss would have filled us with sorrow; but the terrible crime by which her life has been sacrificed has intensified our grief immeasurably.

Mrs. Wright was the daughter of Kasha Oshana and Sawa; the former for many years a preacher in Koordistan, or a highly-esteemed teacher in our college, while Sawa was one of the first of Miss Fiske's pupils, and has ever been one of our most devoted and beloved Christian sisters. Shushan, as we used to call her by her sweet Syriac name, spent much of her early life in the wild mountains of Koordistan, where she breathed in the free mount-

ain air and the spirit of self-reliance and independence so characteristic of the mountain Nestorians; an independence, however, in her case, that through wise parental training and the influence of divine grace was brought under excellent control. I shall never forget a journey I made with her family and a large party of missionaries and native preachers through the mountains toward Oroomiah. She was then almost woman grown, as full of life and grace as a bird, fearless and active and self-helpful over those terrible roads, and in the midst of dangers from robbers, Christian and Koordish. When our camp was assailed by our own Nestorian muleteers and our equipage seized with the most angry demonstrations of fire-arms, Shushan flew swiftly up the mountain side after them, threw herself upon them, and as others of our party joined in the efforts to calm the turbulent fellows, she quietly wrested one and another's gun from his hand and brought it to the camp. We learned to admire her bravery and tact on this tour as we never could have done in her home or her school.

Mrs. Wright had been in our female seminary from time to time, and showed peculiar aptitude for acquiring learning and culture. Later on she became a teacher in an orphanage conducted by some English ladies here, and later still was an assistant to the mission girls' school in Tabriz. She everywhere won in an exceptional degree the love and confidence of those with whom she was associated. We rejoiced in her as one of the choicest fruits of divine training through mission teaching. She reflected new interest upon her people.

In the year 1885 she was married to Rev. J. N. Wright, of Ohio, and settled with him in Salmas, taking a personal share in the missionary work from the outset. In the year 1888 she accompanied her husband to America, and only returned last fall. All who have known her since her return testify to her growing interest and activity in the Master's cause. As far as the care of her little family would permit, she was assiduous in holding meetings for the women, visiting in their families, teaching a Bible class on the Sabbath, etc. The native pastor of the Oolah church is warm in his

commendation of her helpful influence the past months.

In Mrs. Wright's illness, in consequence of this most wanton, unprovoked assault upon her life, she showed a wonderful degree of fortitude and patience, and at the same time a most sweet and forgiving spirit in regard to her assailant. "If I die," she remarked one day, "I shall go to heaven; but if he dies his soul is lost forever." Her Christian character shone out brightly to the last. We can well believe her remark to Mrs. Shedd, who visited her on her way through Salmas, was true: "All is light about me."

The day of apology for foreign missions is past, but the age of apologetics seems to have but fairly begun. The challenge of such assailants (they can scarcely be called critics) as Canon Taylor and Lieutenant Wood has not only called forth able answers in our religious newspapers and magazines, but it has led to the preparation of several valuable volumes. The latest addition to this apologetic literature of foreign missions is "The Success of Christian Missions," by Robert Young, F.R.S.G.S., of the Free Church of Scotland, author of "Modern Missions" and "Light in the Land of Darkness." The book is a compilation, and derives its chief value from the wide range of the sources upon which it draws, and the wise discrimination manifested in the selection and arrangement of its gathered treasures. It is not a volume hurriedly prepared and thrown upon the market to meet an exigency, but is the result of years of wide personal observation, of careful reading and of methodical garnering. It is a book of testimonies—testimonies not of persons identified with missions or pledged to their support, but of eminent statesmen, distinguished army and navy officers, noted travellers and others. It also cites the testimony of prominent secular journals and magazines, such as the *London Times*, the *Calcutta Review*, the *Cape Times*, the *Japan Mail*, the *Cotemporary Review*, the *Edinburgh Review*, the *Spectator*, etc.

One marked feature of the book is the fairness and fullness with which it states the case of those opposed to foreign missions,

devoting an entire chapter to this side of the question, besides frequent references elsewhere. The calm, patient and thoughtful reading of such a book is well calculated to strengthen the faith of the friends of missions, and to convince the gainsayers. We take great pleasure in commending it as worthy of a place in our congregational and Sabbath-school libraries, and certainly in those of all mission organizations. It is published by Hodder & Houghton, 27 Paternoster Row, London. It is to be hoped that some arrangement may be made with one of our American publishers for reproducing it in this country, so as to give the book a wider range of readers on this side of the Atlantic.

A letter from Dr. Shedd of June 14 announces the arrival of himself and Mrs. S. at Oroomiah after a safe and comfortable journey. After reaching Constantinople they were impressed with the marked "quickening of spiritual life in the great Moslem empire." At Batoum, on the Black Sea, they found themselves in the midst of quite a colony of Christians from the western Persian mission; while a still larger colony greeted them in Tiflis. At Khoy, where they spent a Sabbath, they were cheered by evidence of growth and life in the missionary work, obstacles having been removed, and signs of a coming harvest increasing more than at any point in the Armenian field. Referring to the work at Oroomiah, Dr. Shedd writes:

The most encouraging feature of the work is the zeal of the young men in their spontaneous missionary movement. A praying band of young men visits the congregations, with continual blessing resulting. Two of the most consecrated have started on a mountain tour to evangelize and to hold meetings. They are full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and we expect to hear of fruits gathered in the places they visit. Two others, one a devoted physician, are soon to start eastward to labor for Moslems. You see the native inland mission work has begun, and why should it not go on till hundreds of volunteers shall carry the good news and witness by their lives, or if need be by their death, to the gospel of Christ over all these regions?