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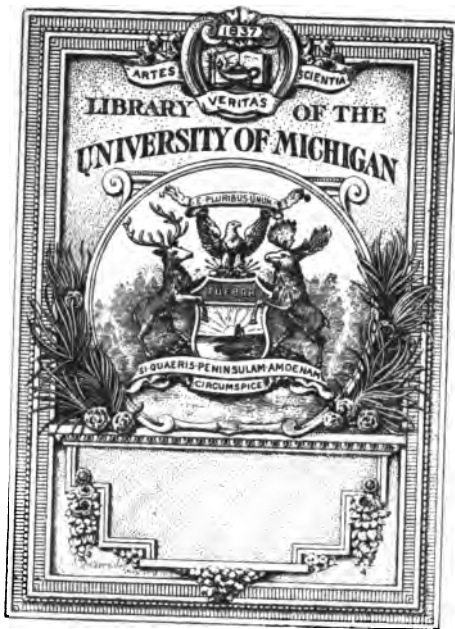
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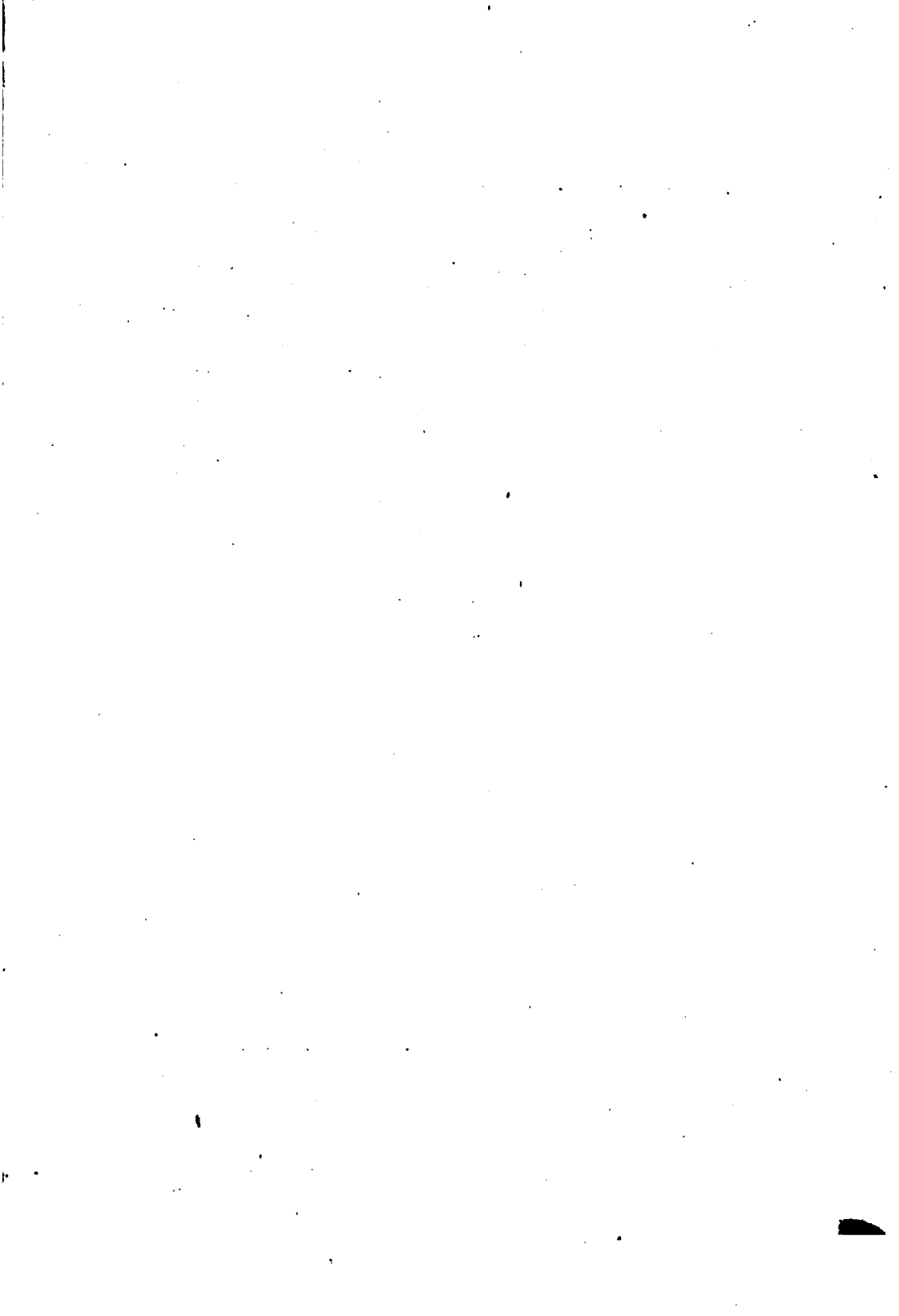
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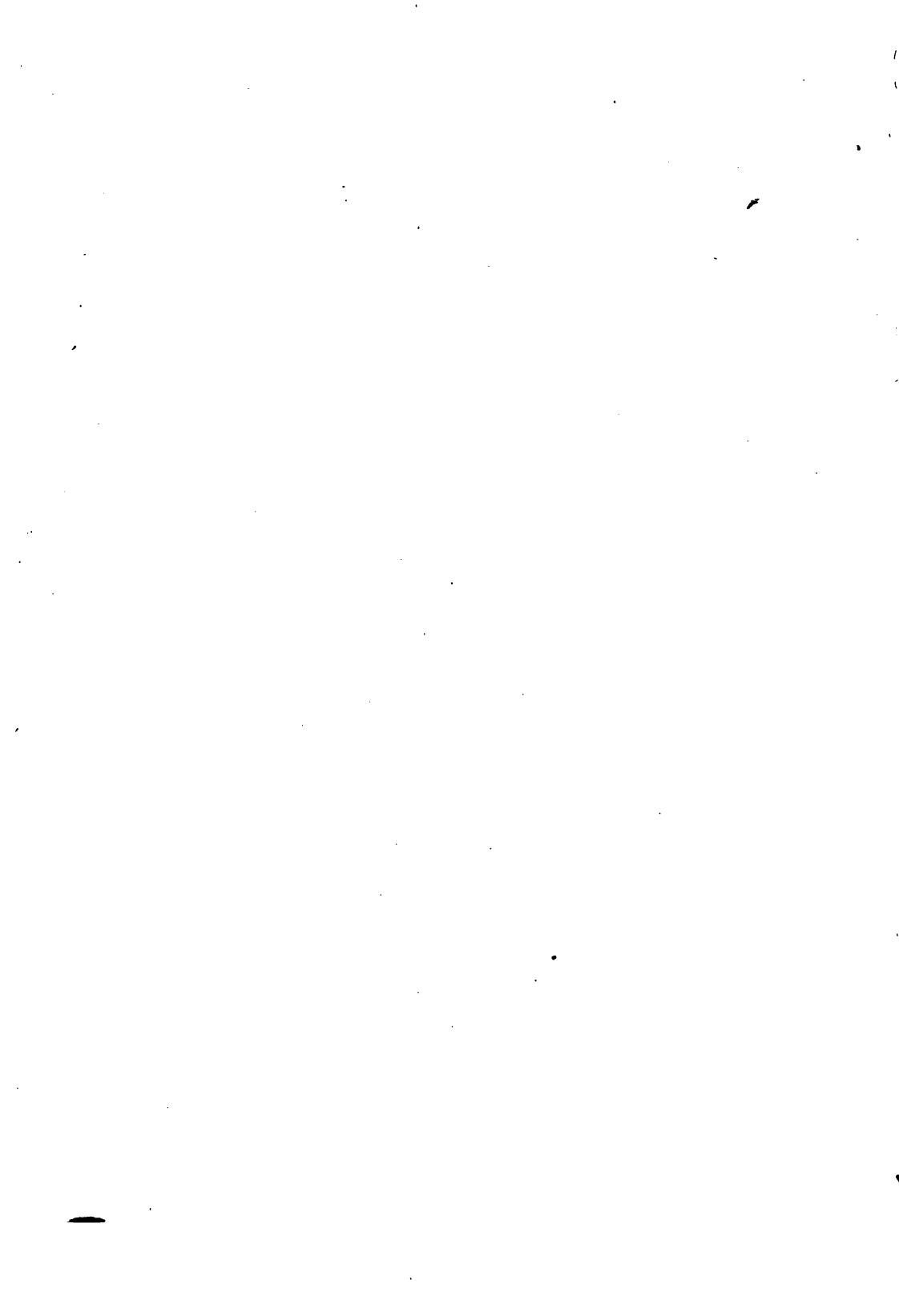
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Enlargement Through Service

Annual Sermon

*Before the American Board of Commissioners
for Foreign Missions*

BY THE REV. REUEN THOMAS, D. D.

Pastor of Harvard Church, Brookline, Mass.

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Enlargement Through Service.

"OUR MOUTH IS OPEN UNTO YOU, O CORINTHIANS, OUR HEART IS ENLARGED. YE ARE NOT STRAITENED IN US, BUT YE ARE STRAITENED IN YOUR OWN AFFECTIONS. NOW FOR A RECOMPENSE IN LIKE KIND (I SPEAK AS UNTO MY CHILDREN) BE YE ALSO ENLARGED." — *11 Cor. 6: 11-13.*

As the Apostle himself had been. Coming into living personal contact with the living Christ had enlarged his heart, opened his lips, set his life in another key and made him the great missionary to the Gentiles. In himself he was an illustration of that to which his nation was called—called in Abraham and in every great person and great event afterwards, "to be a light to lighten the Gentiles," that was Israel's glory. "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed," is the first recorded promise given him who among Jews and Christians bears the name of "the father of the faithful."

National life realizes itself to the full in great individuals like Washington and Lincoln in America, Gladstone and Tennyson in England, Cavour and Leonardo in Italy, Thiers, Bossuet and Fenelon in France, Castelar, Murillo and Cervantes in Spain, Kant, Hegel and Bismarck in Germany. According to the tone and quality of the supreme individual, so we may judge of the heart of the nation. We may infer of what the nation is capable. The best apple on the tree, not the worst, indicates what under favorable conditions of climate and soil, the tree can do. A degenerate cannot fairly indicate the possibilities of manhood. That to which the Hebrew nation was called is more clearly seen in Paul than in Rothschild. Any nation with great spiritual possibilities hidden in its constitution will produce great men *of all kinds*,

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(as a field that will grow good wheat will also yield big weeds,) for the spiritual is the vital. The country that produces great poets and great philosophers will produce great generals and great statesmen. The nation that produced Paul and Isaiah produced Moses and David and more modern men great in all departments of literary, civil and commercial life.

But a nation may fall away from its highest ideals and therefore from its noblest practicabilities. Only a few of its people may attain to the glories of which it was capable, and forevermore stand as witnesses of the nobility which pulsed at the heart of the people whom God had called,—for it remains true for all generations that out of the many who are called only a few hear, recognize the voice as that of God, rightly interpret and obey the call.

In Paul we see what that great Hebrew people might have been—the supreme missionary nation of the world. In his own person Paul represents the real heart of his race—at once an illustration and a condemnation. He met with the Christ. It enlarged his heart. It opened his lips. It developed his humanity into pre-eminence. He became the Apostolic Missionary to the Roman world.

Now, if looking at our theme of the *Enlargement that comes to the mind and heart of all who are practically associated with foreign missions*, HISTORICALLY, we find that the Jew failed through his refusal to be a foreign missionary, the discovery may have the effect of creating in us a distrust and a fear that shall be wholesome. For, in these days we have great confidence in what we assume to be "common sense" and we are not sufficiently afraid of losing that spirituality, the possession of which is necessary to all great perceptions and achievements in all departments of things. If only we can create a suspicion that this so-called "common-sense" of ours is oftentimes a very narrow and selfish thing and that the loss of spirituality reduces us to the condition of those to whom our Lord refers when he says "having eyes they see not, having ears they hear not, neither do they understand," the way will be open for some of those larger and more

humane views of life and duty and privilege, which bring greatness into the mind and life of all who are possessed by them.

I.

When we study carefully the Old Hebrew Scriptures especially the production of those most remarkable men, the prophets of Israel, it is impossible to escape the recognition that Israel had a unique calling, involving a mission to the world. Gradually we come to see that she clung tenaciously to the idea of a world relation. She cherished all the fine and comforting words about redemption from Egypt for a great purpose, all words about electing love, special providence, Divine jealousy over the nation, all words that implied her own distinctiveness and superiority—all these she cherished fondly—until pride and exclusiveness developed into obstinacy and impermeability of character, and the high ideals gradually receded, or took on a mere political complexion. No study is more instructive than that which the late learned Hebraist, Dr. A. B. Davidson of Edinburgh, enables us to make in his great book on "Old Testament Prophecy." Under his guidance it is almost impossible to fail of the recognition that the Hebrew people were intended to be the great missionaries to the world at large, that their call was to evangelize the nations and to proclaim a Kingdom of God whose characteristic elements should be justice and universality. Except in the persons of their poets and prophets they fell away from their high calling. They never lost the sense of privilege and superiority. They became selfishly aristocratic. They indulged in self-flattery and self-congratulation. Their character gradually lost its noblest elements. A political selfishness mastered them. They became imperialistic in their hopes and anticipations—imperialistic but unspiritual. Their very religiousness became less and less what it is in the Psalms of David and in Deutero-Isaiah, and hardened itself into an orthodox formalism which must not be criticised or disturbed. Pharisaism became inevitable and Sadduceeism

also. One extreme always produces another. The two will combine when once a Jesus Christ comes reviving and illustrating the higher spirit from which men have degenerated—but ordinarily, though they move towards the same blindness, between them is a great gulf fixed.

If we knew what Israel's true mission was, nowhere better than in the second part of the Book bearing the name of Isaiah can we find it. "Nations shall come to thy *light*, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." This is the true imperialism—not political—not military—not the imperialism of force—not Roman—more Grecian than Roman—more Hebrew than either—for this was the old Hebrew mission, to be the light bearer to all the nations of the earth. Not to rule *over* the nations, to rule *in* them. There is a difference. Power is one thing, influence is another. The more spiritually undeveloped a man is, the more he is fascinated by the showy vulgarities of power. But it demands a prepared mind adequately to estimate influence. "Nations shall come to thy *light* and kings to the brightness of thy rising." "I will make thy officers *peace*, and thy exactors *righteousness*. Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, desolation nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation and thy gates Praise. Jehovah shall be unto thee an everlasting *light*, and thy God thy glory."—That is the true imperialism, the imperialism of the Sun in the heavens, an imperialism which the old Hebrews could not appreciate, from which they fell and in falling lost their spiritual distinctiveness. Their eyes were covered with cataract. Vision failed them. Only among a remnant did it linger to show what might have been. Is not this one of the great mysteries of Providence, that a nation can be called to the noblest destiny and fall from it? The fact seems to cast a shadow on the Divine competency to foresee and foreordain. "*Seems!*" But we must not dogmatise. St. Paul saw a Divine purpose working even through the temporary rejection of Israel, while he himself and others illustrated the great old truth that "Salvation is of the Jews." All we have to do on this occasion, with this great and mysterious history, is to note the fact

that nations and churches may fall from their high calling, miss their way, lose their opportunity, become flawed, like the clay in the hands of the potter, and serve only some lower purpose than that for which it was originally designed. "Be not high minded, but fear; for if God spared not the natural branches, neither will he spare thee. Behold then, the goodness and severity of God, toward them that fell, severity; but toward thee, God's goodness—if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." The Jewish history as given in the Old Testament records, has in it something more than a hint or suggestion—a very palpable warning—that when God's people refuse to use the truth given them in a great human way for others, the stranger, the foreigner, and specially for those who need it most, they lose it. All greatness is known by its unselfishness. An ecclesiasticised spirituality is a Judaized spirituality. In the spiritual region exclusiveness is death. Only the grace of God can make a man a missionary, but the missionary is the most apostolic type of man. Genuine Christianity *begins* at Jerusalem but it stops not till its rays shine to "the uttermost parts of the earth." We cannot retain what we are unwilling to use *according to the Divine intention for its use.*

II.

This historical introduction is, of course, intended to have personal application. *My next point is the influence of Foreign Missions on ourselves.* Have they brought us enlargement? Have they liberated us from fetters? Under their influences have we grown intellectually? Have they broadened our theology? Have they widened our view? Have they brought us into sympathetic relations with men and women whose lives are spent under conditions very different from our own? In a word, is our *humanity* of finer and nobler quality than it would or could have been but for our interest in foreign missions?

These questions are necessary. For have we not fallen upon days in which we have to do all that in us lies to make it evident, even to many, (I fear the majority) of our semi-Christianized people, that foreign missions are not only consistent with the truth we hold, and the times in which we live, but that we should, if we refused them, be behind our age? For Foreign-Missionariness is not confined in our day to aggressive church action. It belongs to *all* departments of our social life. Books are translated into all languages. Men whose specialty is scientific are invited to be professors in the universities of Japan and India and China, and without the slightest hesitancy on the ground that they have not yet illuminated the minds of their own countrymen — the great majority of us being still scientifically heathen — they readily accept the invitation, "Come over and help us." The American manufacturer is most sensitively nervous lest foreign ports should be closed against his wares, believing with all his heart in free trade everywhere but at home. His sympathies to-day in this most fearful and bloody eastern conflict, are with the little brown man from Japan rather than with the burly blue-eyed Russian, almost solely on the ground that the Mikado and his people are favorable to the door through which he can convey his goods being kept invitingly open. Are not these men flagrantly, almost ludicrously inconsistent, when they object to our sending something of infinitely greater value than they themselves trade in, wherever we can find a market for it? If, when God puts that vital spark into a man which makes him a missionary, we should refuse to have anything to do with this manifestation of the Spirit of God in man, would not the distinguished literary men, the ardent scientific men and the enterprising merchants of our day have abundant reason to twit us with our belatedness, with our unadaptedness to the times in which our lot is cast? Would it not be open to all wide-awake men of all kinds to despise us as mere dwarfs of Christians, in no sense representative of the cosmopolitan largeness of Apostolic Christianity? The day has gone by when the Foreign Missionary can be regarded with wonder and amaze-

ment as a man of singularly fanatical temperament and unbalanced mind. Men and women in our day who do not see how worn out, stale and musty, the old objections to foreign missions are, must have been spending their time in a Rip Van Winkle sleep, for in our day enterprising men of all kinds, literary, scientific, political and mercantile are in their own order foreign missionaries. I know that with some people, good people too, the case is hopeless. All we can do with such is so to put our claim that, in their most serious hours, they may begin to question whether the light in them may not be darkness.

Having paid our respects — in the spirit of true Christian courtesy, we hope — to the objectors to foreign missions and suggested how hopelessly behind the age a non-missionary church is, let us pursue a line not so much hackneyed as some to which on similar occasions to this we have been often invited, and ask as to the influence of Foreign Missions upon ourselves.

First of all, in enlarging our ideas, and deepening our emotions, as the *worship faculty* in human nature has been revealed to us everywhere existent. It is impossible to come upon the fact of the universal religiousness of humanity and not be so impressed by it that our thinking shall not be broadened and our feelings made more cosmopolitan. Wherever we have gone we have found religious men and women — men and women more religious than ourselves, sacrificing more and suffering more for their religion than we sacrifice and suffer for ours. Some of these religions were horrible; they were so inhuman. But they revealed a capacity for sacrifice and service which only needed to be enlightened, directed and guided to secure results which would gladden the hearts of the noblest men and women of Christian instinct and training. The question at the basis of all such efforts as this and kindred societies make, is this, are these other inhabitants of our planet men and women like ourselves, in whom there are evidences of the Spirit of God working, or are they beings of another nature and order? Are they simply bipeds with a more developed instinct than

the quadrupeds, or are they spirits to whom the Spirit of God can appeal? Is it not this capacity for religiousness which determines the nature and quality of any being you meet, here or there, in Boston or in the New Hebrides? The religiousness of these we have termed "heathen," "savages," "pagans" is it not something painfully pathetic? That it should so often be something full of exaction and demand, with no consolation in it, no inspiration, a driving power in it but no subduing and cleansing power, supplying no anæsthetic in the deepest sorrows and agonies of life, is it not pathetic? Has it not in it a fervency and immediacy of appeal which in our tenderest moments becomes almost irresistible? That the religious faculty should have become so perverted and distorted as to add savageness to savagery and make superstition more cruel and tyrannical—is there not something in this which appeals and appals? So religious yet so cruel, so religious yet so blind—who would not if he could, go to such as these, and, putting the very best construction possible upon their doings, say in the language of the great apostolic missionary "whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you?" Recognizing their religiousness, their capacity for service and sacrifice, yet recognizing also their ignorance, their darkness, their consequent cruelty, cruelty sanctified by superstition—in this attitude of mind and with these humane sympathies, does not the missionary of Christ seem to be the one man for whom no apology is needed? If there were no religiousness in these people, the case would be different. If they were incapable of worship we might argue them out of the great human family, but the appalling character of their religiousness supplies an argument of its own kind which no Christianized heart, one would assume, would be able to resist.

I am free to say, (and you will receive it or reject it according to the intellectual quality of your sympathies) that this knowledge which has come to us, through missionary enterprise, of religious capacity in men everywhere, has done more than anything else to broaden and sweeten our theology at home, and to give it a dignity and breadth which, for a

time, it seems to have lacked. We have developed a more apostolic temper and feeling. Our simple apostolic ecclesiasticism cannot give us distinctiveness and save us from uselessness, unless we have something of that sweet reasonableness, joined with the holy fervor and intellectual grasp by which the first great Christian missionary was characterized. The greatest missionaries have been men who seemed to be incarnations of the 8th of Romans, and the 13th and 15th chapters of the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians. When I think of Robert Moffatt, Duncan of Metlakhatla and Dr. Paton of the New Hebrides — all of whom I have personally known — I can realize, as never before, Paul himself. He is no longer an ideal simply, a unique personality appearing once in history never to be paralleled. Whatever relation the one fact has to the other, yet to some of us it is all but clear that our more perfect knowledge and more sympathetic appreciation of the religiousness of the men and women among whom our missionaries have gone (and all which this fact involves,) have helped us all the more intelligently to interpret the Master and his disciples, and have brought us into an appreciation of that sweet, sane and comprehensive apostolic theology much of which had become, through the too complete domination of high-calvinistic logic, "cabined, cribbed and confined." The only thing that Calvinism needed was to be humanized. It was all skin and bones. It needed to be clothed with flesh. The religious capacity everywhere revealed in savage and heathen lands has introduced a climate in which it can once more live and flourish with a healthy human look on its cheek.

In the second place, if foreign missions have expanded our intellect and deepened and mellowed our humanity, they have also tested our faith in the Divinity and consequent Sovereignty of Christ. In the realm of the intellectual and emotional, whatever tests, strengthens. We see as we have never seen before, that to confine the Sovereignty of Christ by any race-limit is to deny the essential unity of humanity. In a word, it is to deny the Divinity of our Lord. Whoever limits the range of missions, limits the range of the "grace of

God." That, I know, is a serious accusation. To stop short of foreign missions, to confine our interest to missions at home, is to affirm Divine limitations which we have no power to affirm. We don't know enough to limit the grace of God. If we are to err at all it is always better to err on the side of largeness than of narrowness. Our estimate of the person of Christ is certain to influence our hopes and expectations as to the range of applicability of Christian truth. If the range of our Lord's prophetic vision is limited to that of any other man, even the greatest of men, how do we account for those prophetic world-wide generalizations which abound in the New Testament, "This gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world," "As long as I am in the world I am the light of the world," "The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Such language is too original, too large, too sweeping, too comprehensive to have originated elsewhere than in that Eternal Mind which saw the end from the beginning and humanity in its final unity. A mind which accurately sees what is, and prophetically sees what shall be, sees primary causes and their inevitable consequences, sees details working themselves into a larger unity, sees the end from the beginning, sees the whole in one view,—that mind is not of the stature of yours or mine, not even of the stature of Newton or Bacon or La Place or Confucius, or Plato or Isaiah or Moses. It is a mind of another order, even as the mind of man is of another order from the mind of the noblest animal. It includes the animal but transcends it. And so the mind of Jesus includes the human but transcends it. According to the personality of Christ so will be the greatness of his teaching. The response which in so many mission fields, by men of all races and tongues, has been made to the claim of the Master, is an evidence of prime value to the Divinity and Sovereignty of the Christ we preach. He knew, as no one ever knew, before his time or since, the human heart and its needs. And if we want to be brought out from our intellectual prisons into the daylight, if we want to be liberated, enfranchised, enlarged, we must keep close to Christ, appropriate his thought, use his great language, fill

ourselves full of his ideas, cherish his purposes, and throw ourselves into the stream of the great human movement he inaugurated and sustains. There is no other way of attaining to goodness and greatness. "He that doeth the will (he only) shall know of the doctrine." The evidence for the Divinity and Sovereignty of Christ is ampler to-day than it has ever been, for voices in all languages and from all climes are witnessing to "renewing grace and dying love."

In the third place, it is necessary to take a glance at foreign missions as attesting the growth-fulness of the faith faculty in the Christianized man. Growth-fulness is the only test of healthy life. The faith faculty when alive cannot always be as a grain of mustard seed. It becometh a tree. There are stages in its development. To begin with, a Christian man may be selfish, caring only for his own salvation. Upon this he may in time, as thoughtfulness increases, make some advance, become patriotically home-missionary in his sympathies, and under a feeling of alarm for the safety of his nation from the lawlessness that invariably attends irreligion, become practically sympathetic with everything that aims to arrest degeneracy among the citizenship of his own state and country. His faith is growing, enlarging. He is out of the prison of selfishness, not much superior, however, to a Jew of the best period before Christ, who was intensely anxious about his own country-men, but unsympathetic and even hostile to all men of other nations. In every one of us there is a Jew and a Pagan needing to be skillfully dealt with. Not till the disciple of Jesus becomes cosmopolitan is his faith of a quality to which the word "Christian" can be consistently applied. When he attains to the Saviour's view of humanity as a whole, then his faith is enlarged, as was that of Paul after his experience on the road to Damascus. Then his faith becomes genuinely Christian. Then he is able intelligently to read the parable of the good Samaritan—not till then. Then he enters into living fellowship with Paul and John and Peter. Then all sectarianism, all mere nationalism, all racial prejudice weakens and ultimately breaks down. He understands what John Wesley

meant when he said, "The world is my parish." Sympathetically he becomes the brother of all men who have spiritual needs. Thus we may test the sufficiency and ripeness of our faith by the sympathy we have for man *as man*. Man is never humanized until he is Christianized. And he is never Christianized through and through so long as his obedience to the Christ lacks spontaneity, and that earnest willingness which is worthiness, for "if there be first the willing mind it is accepted according to that a man hath and not according to that he hath not." So long as our Christianity is simply personal, of the nature of an insurance policy in a mutual life office, or simply parochial, or even simply national, it fails of attainment to the dignity and greatness of apostolic Christianity. If our Christian discipleship does not make us in every way greater as well as better men than we should be without it, greater intellectually, greater sympathetically, practically greater, there is some serious defect in our personal relation to the Christ. We have not attained to that spirituality which an Apostle glorified when he wrote, "He that is spiritual discerneth all things, yet he himself is discerned of no man," a passage in which he gives pre-eminence of perception and judgment to the man who is ruled in his thinking and feelings and planings and purposings by the Christ of God. Every other man is a slave. This man is a free man. He has but *one* Master, whose service is perfect freedom, others have many masters and cannot even call their souls their own. Nothing so frees a man from the littlenesses and frivolities of life, nothing so enlarges his being, as association with some cause whose greatness is impressive, even superhuman—to all but men of Christian faith, utopian. And what greater is there, what seemingly more impossible than the bringing of all men of all nations and climes to bow the knee to Him who, in the Divine constitution for humanity, is King of Kings and Lord of Lords? As a *test of faith and loyalty to the Master* is there anything to compare with it? It is when rationalists tell us that our expectations are unreasonable, when men occupied with the material outsides of things tell us that we are

dreamers and enthusiasts, when scoffers laugh and the "enemies of the cross of Christ, whose god is their belly, who mind earthly things" pick up stones to stone us—it is then we may be assured of being *right*, for so treated they the Master Himself. Faith in Christ has conquered before, in other ages, when Christianity seemed hopelessly discredited, and it will conquer again. Nothing tests our faith and our courage, nothing strengthens them, like this amazing effort to win the peoples of the world for Him to whom by right they belong.

For myself, I am not exclusively concerned for "the heathen" as we call them, although the term is sometimes most unjustly applied, with no sufficient discrimination between peoples who have been mentally trained in old philosophies, and others who have never been developed beyond the cruelties and vices of savagery. Remembering how much of good has come to us from foreign missions in the enlargement of our sympathies, in the humanizing of our theologies, and in the strengthening and perfecting of our faith,—my concern is FOR OURSELVES, lest in these days of irreverence for old institutions which enshrine and conserve great truths, in these days when science is winning triumphs which seem miraculous, and when the old mediæval dogmatism of the priests of the church has passed to the priests who minister at the altar of science, when every man who is to be an authority of any kind must be a specialist, a man confined to one region of things, with no time or capability for any large outlook upon other contiguous regions,—in these days when mere money-making is the most absorbing of all pursuits, bringing to the successful so much social distinction,—in these days I am concerned FOR OURSELVES; lest we should lose all that we have gained, and degenerate in high intelligence, in great human sympathies, in spirituality, and in the faith which removes mountains,—lest we should become mere "common sense rationalists," incompetent for any great spiritual enthusiasms. May I be allowed in this connection, to quote from an exceedingly supercilious and haughty man of the nineteenth century (whom his friends call the "the apos-

tle of culture"), words which seem to support this contention? "The individual (he writes) while striving after his own development, is required, on pain of personal deterioration, to carry others along with him in his march toward perfection, to be continually doing all he can to enlarge and increase the volume of the human stream sweeping thitherward. Culture has one great passion, the passion for sweetness and light. It has one even greater! the passion for making them *prevail*. It is not satisfied till we *all* come to a perfect man; it knows that the sweetness and light of the few must be imperfect until the raw and unkindled masses of humanity are touched with sweetness and light." Substitute for "culture" the word "religion" which aims at soul-culture, and the ideas are ours more fervently than his! Other words of the same tenor might be quoted from the same source, evidencing that, from a high literary point of view, we are eminently sane and respectable.

Or if again we needed support from Philosophy, one of the most erudite of the tribe might safely be invited to our platform to tell us that the greatness of any true Idea is in its refusal to be the mere ornament of any individual, "It seeks to flow forth in the whole human race, to animate it with new life and to mould it after its own image." (J. G. Fichte)

Said I not truly that we must take the alarm whenever we find men inclined to parochialize or nationalize Christian truth, for only as we give it to others can we retain it ourselves? You may imprison darkness — you cannot imprison light. If Christ is the Light, he is the light of the world.

The application of these truths to the mood of our times need not detain us for very long. We are sometimes discouraged, even dolefully so, when we find how little impression even our most fervent and labored appeals make upon men and women who by their regular attendance on church services and in other ways, seem to be susceptible to the magnetism of the Cross of Christ. The longer we live and the more varied and developed our ministerial experiences, the more convinced we become that there is something mysterious and unintelligible in this human nature of ours. That men

should be found who can plead our slovenliness and incapacity at home for our neglect of mission work abroad, is one of those perplexing conditions of mind which would depress us beyond recovery were it not that there is a humorous side to it by which we are saved from regarding it too seriously. Very few men have occupied a conspicuous place in the Christian pulpit whose mental balance was more constantly preserved than in the case of Phillips Brooks. And yet on one occasion as he contemplated the meanness of this kind of objection, his indignation got the better of him, and in some of the most severe and pointed words he ever used, he broke out into a severity of rebuke which must, I think, have electrified the more susceptible of his hearers. " 'There are heathen here in Massachusetts,' you declare, 'heathen enough here in America. Let us convert them first before we go to China.' That plea we all know, and I think it sounds more cheap and more shameful every year. What can be more shameful than to make the imperfection of our Christianity at home an excuse for not doing our work abroad? It is as shameless as it is shameful. It pleads for exemption and indulgence on the ground of its own neglect and sin. It is like a murderer of his father and mother asking the judge to have pity on his orphanhood."

Of course the position we take — that the truth we hold in trust is for all men everywhere — will be met by those who in our own country do not receive it, with lofty indifference or supercilious scorn. So much we must expect. A man who had been in India said to a missionary, "I have been in India twenty years and never saw a native Christian." "What were you doing?" asked the missionary. "I was shooting tigers." "And I," retorted the missionary, "have been in India thirty years and I never saw a tiger." Men usually find what they seek. There is testimony AND testimony. Some of it is worse than valueless, such testimony as would never be for a moment considered in a court of law, or by any fair-minded man anywhere. If we needed any argument from the SUCCESS of the work so far as it has gone, considering the prejudices to be overcome, the difficul-

ties of language learning, of obtaining a sympathetic and intelligent relation to the mind and heart of the people, of mental adjustment to new orders of intellect and new conditions of life, the success of foreign missions has been enough to prove that the gospel of Jesus Christ is intended for all men because it is adapted to the deepest needs of all men. These arguments from success are the only ones which appeal to the commercialized intelligence. But for minds which have become spiritualized, through the worship and service of the Christ, this argument from success is comforting but secondary. "Success" is not a New Testament word, "faithfulness" is. We have a trust to administer. It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful.

I have preferred to put *the emphasis* of this discourse on the influence of foreign mission work on ourselves, on the development of our own spiritual life, on the mental and spiritual enlargement which we need for more effective work in our churches at home. We want *for our own sakes*, something which shall fire the imagination, something great enough to put a tax on all our faculties and powers and strain them almost to the breaking point. We want something which shall inspire and demand heroism, something which the unspiritualized mind cannot understand, something at which very safe and prudent men will laugh. We are in danger of becoming unheroic and commonplace. Men die for the sake of commerce, for scientific ends, even for political, literary and artistic ends. By wholesale they die in war, war that is often worse than useless, criminal, in the most wholesale and intense use of the word. And if we have no men and women who are willing to die on the mission field in God's service and for man's redemption, we may as well dismiss the officers of our American Board and confess that the Spirit of God has withdrawn his higher inspirations from our churches. A life like that of James Chalmers, a grand, manly, fascinating, heroic personality like that, crowned with martyrdom, is of immense value as evidence to the unmistakable call of God in sane men, and that apostles are not confined to the first century of our era. It is pitiable when such a life produces

no impression on men. We need the romance, the unworldliness, the heroism of foreign missions, to save us from the domination of the lower side of our own semi-Christianized personality, from selfishness, narrowness of view, and all those pettinesses which, mosquito-like, are everlastingly buzzing and biting in the corridors of our churches. The other day I was reading an address on foreign missions spoken in Scotland by an English pastor whose church in London has the largest membership of any in the metropolis. I was impressed by these words, "The growth of the church of which I am the minister, began from the point in which I insisted that the missionary work in the foreign fields must be first and foremost in all their thought and in all their contributions." That, it seems to me, is a testimony which we do well not to ignore. It may also furnish consolation to those of our friends who are afraid that the movement in Biblical interpretation known as the Higher Criticism may tend to weaken interest in such missions as those to which this corporate body is committed; for the speaker I have quoted, more than most ministerial men, has been for years under its influence. The fact is that Higher Criticism, as it is called, like everything else, acts differently on different constitutions. What is one man's meat is another man's poison. We may be comforted, however, with the very latest word that has come from the very centre of the conflict: "Jesus was the beginner of a new Era in the spiritual history of man. He gave men a new God and a new ideal of humanity. For us men of the 20th century it is either Christ or nothing. Either one believes in Christ's God or none. What forbids the hope that some day Christ's ideal of society may prevail?" From the very heart of fermenting, sceptical and speculative Germany that word has come to us. Is it not the word of all words we most need for the time in which our lot is cast? If the Higher Criticism has driven us out from the distant doctrinal outworks, which we have built for our resting places, into the impregnable citadel itself, no harm has come to us. Starving theological prodigals, we have found our way back into our Father's embrace and into

the communion of our elder brother, who, unlike the brother in the parable, has come out to meet us and greet us. Can we doubt that closer fellowship with the Christ, intellectual and sympathetic, will be shown in the enlargement of our manhood, and that that enlargement will know no limit short of that enthusiasm of humanity which foreign missions embody? It is true that great truths need great men to incarnate them. It is true that great tasks spring out of great visions. The vision of a redeemed humanity is magnificent. Anything greater is inconceivable. Small minds cannot attain unto it. If the vision of Christ had not fallen upon our spirits with convincing and converting power, should we ever have dared to enter upon the gigantic enterprise to which we are invited? To be satisfied with the world as it is would be to consent to a sort of semi-civilized barbarism. It would be the dreariest form of pessimism. It would be the dolefullest form of unbelief in the universality of Divine grace. It would be proof positive that some of the richest and most hope-inspiring passages of Holy Writ had never revealed their heart to us—for has not our Lord ascended on high "that he might fill all things." "Greater works than these shall ye do, because I go to my Father." "That at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of those in heaven and those on earth and those under the earth." It would be the most flagrant practical denial of the limitlessness of that Divine presence which as far back as three thousand years ago elect souls perceived,—“Whither shall I go from thy presence, whither shall I flee from thy spirit; if I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning and flee to the uttermost part of the seas, even there shall thy hand lead me and thy right hand uphold me.” Wherever the spirit of God is there surely his servants have a right to go.

In all conditions of life there are dark days for us all, nights of deep, dense gloom as well as mornings of sunny brightness, but whatever the weather that encloses us, the Sun is shining in the heavens, controlling it and using it.

We have had no such revelation as would enable us to turn Tennyson's faith-dream into dogmatic affirmation :

"Oh yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood ;

"That nothing walks with aimless feet ;
That not one life shall be destroy'd,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete."

Yet we can, I think, hopefully accept what follows :

"Behold we know not anything ;
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last — far off — at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring."

For why? A multitude which *no man can number*, out of every kingdom and nation shall call Him Lord. For why? "He shall see of the travail of his soul and *shall be satisfied*," and what will satisfy *Him* will surely satisfy *us*.