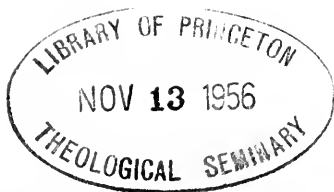


A SKETCH  
OF THE  
SYRIA MISSION.

BY THE  
Rev. JAMES S. DENNIS,  
MISSIONARY IN SYRIA

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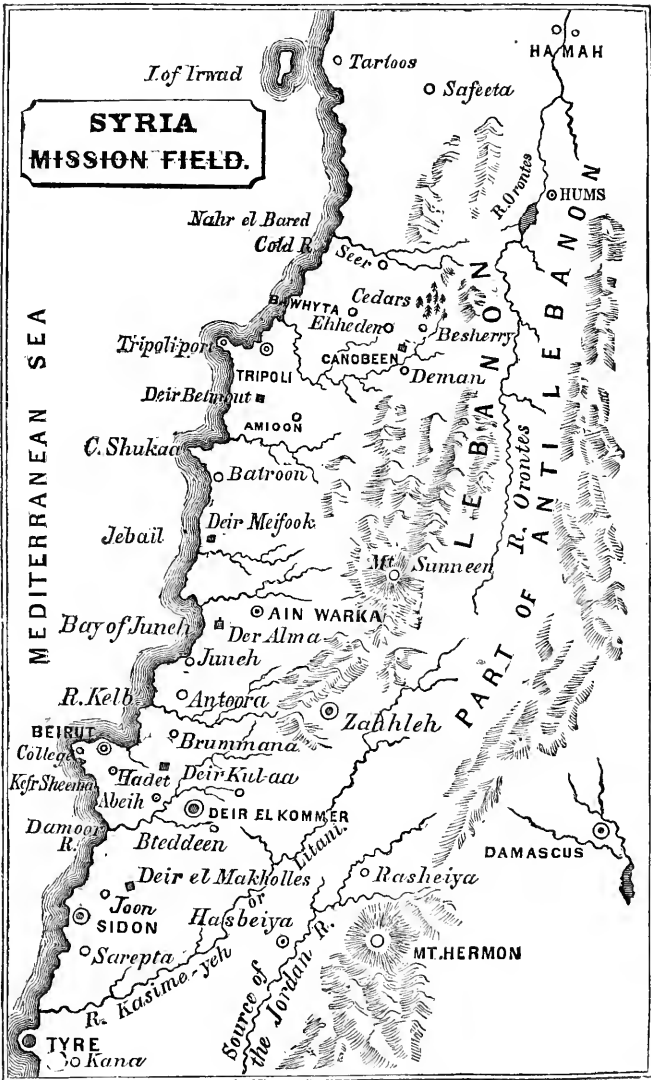
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NEW YORK:

MISSION HOUSE, 23 CENTRE STREET.

1872.



# SKETCH OF THE SYRIA MISSION.\*

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THE object of this pamphlet is to bring to the attention of its readers the Syria Mission as it is at the present time. Any attempt to give a history of this interesting field would require more space than is desirable in this publication; those desiring a more complete historical review than is given here are referred to the excellent pamphlet already issued from the pen of Rev. Thomas Laurie, D.D., and to the forthcoming "History of the Syria Mission," by Rev. Isaac Bird, soon to be issued by the Presbyterian Board of Publication.

We propose herein simply to group together in a condensed and connected review the salient facts of interest which mission work in Syria presents, and if possible to bring the field more vividly and clearly before the minds of its friends at home. This plan involves :

- I. A GLANCE AT THE FIELD AND ITS PECULIARITIES.
- II. A STATEMENT OF PROGRESS UP TO THE PRESENT TIME.
- III. A GLANCE AT THE PRESENT CONDITION AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF THE MISSION.

## I.

### THE FIELD AND ITS PECULIARITIES.

1. *Its Geography and History.*—The geographical limits of the field, reach from Acre on the sea coast northward for about 150 miles, and extend from the coast inland an average breadth of fifty miles. The prominent and interesting feature of the natural scenery of the Syrian coast, as thus limited, is the grand Lebanon range, which towers in sublimity and beauty along nearly the entire extent of the mission territory. Along the sea-coast are populous cities, and the western slopes of Lebanon are thickly dotted with villages, some of them of considerable size. For convenience in the prosecution of missionary operations this whole field is subdivided into four smaller fields, named respectively after the prominent and central station where the missionary families reside, the Beirut, Tripoli, Sidon, and Abeih fields. Beirut, a large and flourishing city of 80,000 in-

\* The papers relating to Syria published recently in the *Foreign Missionary*, have been largely drawn upon in the preparation of this sketch.

habitants, the sea-port of Damascus, with which it is connected by an elegant carriage road scaling both ranges of the Lebanons, is the central and most important station of the field ; twenty-five miles down the coast is Sidon, the head-quarters of the southern work ; fifty miles up the coast is Tripoli, the base of operations in the northern regions ; while the mountain field is worked from Abeih, a pleasant village clinging to the western slope of Lebanon, 2400 feet above the sea, and located in a south-easterly direction from Beirut, fifteen miles distant.

The historical associations of the region now occupied by the Syria Mission lead us back through the centuries until history is lost in tradition, and our only source of authentic information is found to be the few brief hints given us in the early chapters of Genesis.

This narrow plain between the glittering Lebanons and the sea, was the scene of Phœnicia's glory. Yonder is Sidon, of which we read in the 10th of Genesis ; just there is Tyre, sleeping her prophetic sleep amidst the ruins of ancient splendor, which for 1500 years dazzled the world. Two thousand years, and over, before Christ, she was born of royal Sidon, and for long centuries the history of these renowned cities reveals a record of brilliant prosperity and guilty luxury, which not even the dimness of those early ages can obscure.

Upon many of the "high places" of Lebanon and Hermon are imposing ruins of ancient temples, where, no doubt, were celebrated the tragic and idolatrous rites of heathenism. The fertile plain of the Buka'a was the home of idolatry ; the magnificent ruins of Baalbec are, no doubt, the lingering relics of one of the most imposing centres of sun-worship which the world has ever seen. Just over the crests of Anti-Lebanon is Damascus, probably the most ancient city of which the world can now boast. As we run our eye up and down the coast, we can recall to mind Assyrian, Egyptian, Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, Roman, Arabian, and Turkish conquerors, each in turn marshalling their victorious armies, and planting their standards upon those picturesque shores. Back of Tripoli, upon the bleak heights, may still be found a grove of the ancient cedars which flourished, no doubt, in the times of David and Solomon ; while the very earth is populous with the tombs and sarcophagi of past generations. In the gardens of Sidon, in 1854, were found some copper pots full of the beautiful gold coins of Philip of Macedon and his son Alexander, and near by, in 1855, was discovered the celebrated sarcophagus of King Ashmunazer, son of Tabnith, son of Ashmunazer, king of Sidon, whose Phœnician inscription is the longest which has yet come to light, and in most perfect preservation. Every step we take in this richly historic region, brings us into contact with the relics of the long past. It is, therefore, a field deeply interesting and suggestive in its historical associations. Our Lord himself once trod the mission soil of Syria, when He visited the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, and was at Cæsarea Philippi. The heights of Hermon above the latter place, most

probably, witnessed His Transfiguration. Paul touched at the Syrian sea-ports on his missionary journeys. This, then, is *sacredly* historic soil, and a tenderer interest lingers here than could be given by human history alone.

2. *Its People and Religions.*—The mission is in the heart of the great Turkish Empire, Syria being a province of the Ottoman Empire, and governed by a Turkish Governor General, receiving his appointment from Constantinople, and having his residence at Damascus. Since the civil wars of 1860, Mount Lebanon has been an independent Pashalic, whose governor is selected from one of the nominally Christian sects. The present Governor, Franco Pasha, is a Maronite. Although there is a diversity of nationalities throughout the field, the spoken language is universally the Arabic; all missionary operations are through this medium of communication. The population within the geographical limits of the field, is a little less than a million; and a more complex, fragmentary and antagonistic million, cannot be found in any other single spot on the face of the earth. Side by side, either in separate villages, or in distinct quarters of the same city or village, live, generally in a state of mutual distrust and alienation, the Moslem, the Metawely, the Druzé, the Orthodox Greek, the Papal Greek, the Maronite, the Latin Catholic, the Nusairiyeh, the Jacobite and the Jew; while the wild Bedouin has his home in the neighboring desert. Protestant Christian missions are here face to face with two of the most fanatical, bitter and zealous opposing systems to be found in any mission field; viz. Mohammedanism, and the degenerate Eastern Christianity. The ultimate aim of all Protestant mission work in the Orient, is to plant and nourish a true Christianity in the midst of Mohammedanism, with the hope of ultimately gaining a victory for the Gospel over Islam; and, in the prosecution of this aim, the work is directly upon the degenerate, erring Christian sects. Hence there is in Syria no single stratum, social or religious, upon which to work; as, for example, some anciently united and historic church or people, like the Armenians. But the task is, to fuse into one harmonious, evangelical church, these diverse and intensely antagonistic elements; to draw them into fraternal and confiding unity; to form a church which will be itself a centre of organized, self-supporting missionary operations; and thus to redeem Christianity from the scandal and shame which attaches to her history in the Orient. Hitherto the Christianity of the East has been itself the strong argument against Christianity. In the midst of this ancient and curious society, with its striking and peculiar antagonisms, which have been petrifying for centuries, until their absurdity and bitterness fairly defy representation to the American reader, is located the Syria Mission, with its heroic history, its precious names, its earnest and persevering toils, its encouraging successes, and its brightening prospects; now the inheritance of the re-united Presbyterian Church.

Of these various sects the nominal Christians are perhaps more numer-

ous than any other one class of people, consisting of about 250,000 Maronites, 70,000 Orthodox Greeks, 50,000 Greek Catholics, and a few thousand Syrian Jacobites, and Armenians. The Druzes may number 50,000, and the remainder of the population are Moslems, Metāwelies, Nusairiyeh, Bedouin Arabs, and Jews. The Maronites reside chiefly in Northern Lebanon. The Orthodox Greeks, and Greek Catholics, are found in the cities, and in the villages of the mountains. The Druzes occupy the southern half of Lebanon, the valley of the Upper Jordan, and the western slopes of Hermon. The Metāwelies are found chiefly in Sidon, Tyre, and the mountains east of those cities, also, at the north end of Lebanon, and in the Buka'a about Baalbec. The Nusairiyeh dwell on the mountains about Safeta, and in a few other localities. The Jacobites are found at Hums, Sūdūd, and dependent villages. The Moslems abound in the chief cities, and in parts of the mountains both at the north and south end of our field. They also occupy many villages in the Buka'a. Fragmentary tribes of tent-dwelling Arabs are met with in nearly all parts of our field, but we come in contact with the great Bedouin wanderers of the desert chiefly in the neighborhood of Hums on the north-east, and Baniās at the south-east of our limits.

Dr. Thomson of the Mission, in his "Land and the Book," speaking of the uncongenial and inharmonious relations of Syrian society, says: "The various religions and sects live together, and practice their conflicting superstitions in close proximity, but the people do not coalesce into one homogeneous community, nor do they regard each other with fraternal feelings. The Sunnites excommunicate the Shiites, (rival Moslem sects,)—both hate the Druzes, and all three detest the Nusairiyeh. The Maronites have no particular love for any body, and in turn are disliked by all; which is true also as said of the Druzes. The Orthodox Greeks cannot endure the Greek Catholics; and the fact that the former, more generally than any other sect, accept the missionary and the Gospel, arrays all other sects against them. All despise the Jews. These remarks are also true of all the minor divisions of this land."

"Another curious fact," says Dr. Thomson, "is, that, with the exception of the Jews and Bedouin Arabs, no one can trace back his own origin to any ancient race or nation. The general mass of the Moslems are the mingled descendants of the various races who composed the population of the Greek Empire at the time of Mohammed; and this original confusion of races has been infinitely augmented during the twelve centuries of their lawless occupation. In all the Christian sects there has been the same blending of primitive races, and a large infusion of foreign and European blood, during the times of the Crusades, and subsequently even to our day; so that the most intelligent and learned admit that it is absolutely impossible, now, to ascertain their true national origin. The Maronites, as a body, may have descended from the ancient Syrians. The Nusairiyeh suggest the



idea that they are the miserable *debris* of the accursed Canaanites. The Metāwelies appear to have immigrated from Persia; they have a decided resemblance to the Jews. In the inhabitants of Lebanon and the plains at its base we may possibly find some traces of the original Phœnicians. The Druzes are Arabs, who came from the eastern confines of Syria, and settled in Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon within the last nine hundred years."

The Christian sects of Syria, as well as some others in the East, are designated as only nominally Christian, for the reason that, while they are the descendants of the early Christian Church, and so inherit the *name* Christian, they are yet unchristian in the degeneracy of their corrupt religious faith and practice, and have long since forfeited by their scandalous lives, their depraved church-polity, and the virtual idolatry of their religious worship, any right to the full and simple title of Christians.

There are marked differences in the religious characteristics, and also in the accessibility of these various sects. Of all, the Orthodox Greeks are the most accessible to missionary labor. This is owing to several causes. No doubt, the most influential is, that the Greek Church has never forbidden her people to receive and read the Word of God. They have, in fact, been always willing to accept at our hands the sacred Scriptures, and to have them taught in our schools. They are also disposed to accept the Bible as paramount authority on religious matters. From this cause, too, they are more willing to read other religious books, to converse on spiritual topics, and to listen to the preached Gospel. It is an interesting fact, that mission work in the East, thus far, has been blessed with a rapid and special success among the Armenians and Orthodox Greeks, who alone of all the nominal Christian sects have cherished a respect for the Bible, and among whom it has never been a proscribed book. God is remembering in mercy those who have paid even a formal respect to His Holy Word. The Greeks also reject the Papacy, and earnestly protest against the monstrous pretensions of the Pope, so that they have many points of agreement with Protestants, and, to a certain extent, look upon them as friends and allies. Owing to these and other causes, partly social and partly political, these people are everywhere open to missionary labor; most of the members of our churches are from this sect, and as they are found in considerable numbers throughout our entire field, they constitute a practical working basis of the utmost importance.

The Greek Catholics—a papal off-shoot from the Greek Church, which began about 150 years ago—abound most in the cities and on Lebanon; and, though greatly restrained by a watchful Papal hierarchy, the people retain, and at times assert a good deal of independence, and from the mere fact that they have once broken away from their original community, they are the more ready to investigate religious subjects, and more open to conviction, than the Maronites. They are, like the Orthodox Greeks, a minority, and dwell side by side with other sects. They probably number a larger

*proportion* of educated, intelligent and enterprising young men, than any other body of people in the country.

The Maronites, as a rule, are bigoted Papists, very ignorant, and wholly subject to the stringent and ever-watchful control of their clergy. Their hierarchy is also very numerous, well organized and powerful, being reinforced by a multitude of learned Jesuits, and numberless monks and nuns, both native and foreign. In a large part of northern Lebanon, they are the only inhabitants, and have been hitherto inaccessible. Still, even in this stronghold of the Maronite Patriarch, the light of the Gospel is beginning to penetrate, in spite of all opposition; and not only individuals, but considerable communities are found, from time to time, attempting to break away from their bondage, and to declare themselves Protestants. This number is steadily increasing, and there is good reason to hope that a wide and effectual door for the Gospel amongst this large and needy people, will ere long be opened, which no man can shut. In other parts of our field, where the Maronites are few, they are, of course, more accessible, and less stringently bound by their priests.

The Druzes are, and always have been, our personal friends—are glad to have us reside amongst them, and open schools for the education of their children. Of late, many of their most enterprising youth are seeking a higher education in our seminaries, and in the college. It is very desirable that more definite and adequate measures be adopted and worked efficiently for their conversion. Their religion is a medley of Mohammedanism and ancient philosophical systems—especially that of Zoroaster—with some notions borrowed apparently from Judaism and Christianity. They hold to the absolute unity of the Godhead, and that the highest perfection of man is to have all his powers of mind and heart mystically absorbed in the Deity. According to their views, there have been seven lawgivers and ten incarnations, the last being in the person of El Hakeem, chief founder and prophet of the sect. The world was populated instantaneously with beings of every age and condition. The transmigration of souls is a cardinal doctrine, and furnishes a just and convenient system of rewards and punishments. The number of Druzes in existence is not to be changed, therefore proselytism is undesirable, and apostacy cannot be tolerated. Desertion from their ranks also breaks in upon an organization marvellously compact and effective in war and politics. The higher mysteries are known only to the initiated, but all are bound to unqualified secrecy, and, for this end, any deception is allowable. China is inhabited, as they suppose, by their co-religionists, and at the predicted day of reckoning, two and a half millions of Chinese monotheists are to sweep across Asia, crush out a war that shall be raging between Christians and Moslems, and enable Hakeem, again in human form, to punish all who reject his sway. His armies shall then go plundering through the world, and finally set up his throne in Egypt, where believers, rewarded with rank and wealth, shall reign with him,

forever. This glorious era was to be ushered in nine centuries after the establishment of the faith. Their computation declares the day to be close at hand; among the ignorant, expectation is high, but those of more intelligence begin to question the traditions of a Chinese invasion, and to fear some stronger faith must supplant their own. If such is to be the case, rather than adopt any of the religions about them, Protestantism would be their choice, particularly as their patron, the English nation, professes it; few, however, are yet willing to turn their back upon the religion of their fathers. Light is beginning to make its way among them, they have in a few instances even established schools of their own, with teachers trained by the Mission. Three years since a prominent Druze was publicly baptized with his children at Abeih, and last year nine young men, representing leading families, entered the College at Beirut. This bold, vigorous, industrious race, lifted out of their degrading superstitions by the power of the Gospel, would make Mount Lebanon a strong-hold of the truth.

The Moslems and Metāwelies are, as a rule, still inaccessible to direct missionary labor. They are, however, waking up to the necessity of education, and in many places some of their children are beginning to attend our schools. In Beirut there are two schools exclusively for Moslem girls, which are well attended though conducted on Christian principles. A spirit of inquiry on religious subjects is manifested more frequently than in former years, and a few are found who express a desire to forsake the faith of Islam. Influences are at work which tend slowly but surely to break down the hitherto impregnable wall of separation which forbids the introduction of the Gospel among the Moslem population, and the time draws on apace when this vast field will be thrown open to the Church.

Along the northern limits of our field we come in contact with the large body of the Nusairiyeh—a semi-heathen and more than semi-barbarous community. These people are, in some respects, in much the same state as the Druzes, and from the results of missionary labor among them by the brethren at Ladakiyeh, there is every reason to hope that they will be found to offer an open and a promising field of evangelistic labor.

To complete this survey, we must briefly refer to the Bedouin Arabs. Small fragments of these tent-dwelling descendants of Ishmael are met with in nearly all parts of our field. These fragmentary tribes are, to a certain extent, stationary, that is, they never wander far from the settled parts of the country, and have constant intercourse with the villagers in the vicinity of their encampments. In the region of Hamah and Hums, however, we are brought face to face with the genuine Bedouins, who swarm all over the plains and deserts of Syria. So also on the east and south of Baniās we encounter the same wild wanderers in great numbers. The only way in which mission work can as yet be carried on amongst them, is to send col-porteurs to wander about with them in their migrations. This kind of work has been prosecuted for several years by the Sidon station, and is at

present urged forward at the expense of a benevolent English gentleman, Mr. Arlington of Leeds, who is also supporting some Bedouin youth in the school of Mr. Bistany, in the hope that they will, in time, become missionaries to their people in the desert. This good work should be sustained and fostered by every wise and available means, in the assured belief that the time is not distant when these outcast children of the desert will be converted to Christ.

3. *Its difficulties and encouragements.*—The preceding survey of our field will of itself suggest to a thoughtful mind some of the difficulties and discouragements which it presents. But it is desirable to present these matters in more detail, that the Church may be placed in intelligent sympathy with the Mission, and be better prepared to prosecute those measures which are necessary for success, with the greater patience, perseverance and faith.

The fragmentary and antagonistic character of the population creates one of the most obstinate difficulties in the way of *general* and *rapid* evangelistic success. There is no single, common stratum of society underlying the entire community, which, as a basis, might be worked throughout the land; and it is, of course, very difficult to fuse such discordant elements into one harmonious Christian community. In addition, the fanaticism and bitter prejudices of the various religious sects—not alone the Moslems but, as well, the nominally Christian—make a profession of Protestantism on the part of an individual or a community, a trying and even hazardous ordeal. In many cases, it involves either the severing of family ties, or the loss of property, or social and political disgrace, or persecution, cruel and long-continued; in some cases, this dire catalogue would seem to be all combined in the crushing avalanche of troubles which overwhelms the feeble and, perhaps, faint-hearted convert. Neighbors, friends, and even relatives, seem, sometimes, to be transformed into incarnate devils, bent upon driving, worrying, frightening, or torturing the recreant one back into the fold of the family religion; while the priests are equally zealous to avail themselves of every agency, which their influence or official station can command, to accomplish the same end.

Again, each of these sects is fenced about by peculiar creeds and customs, and defended by watchful leaders and zealous subalterns. To counteract these opposing influences, and break the power of superstition, prejudice, and habit, implies a vast amount of labor, study, patience and perseverance. Then again these barriers against the reception of the Gospel are immensely strengthened by political entanglements. Each of the sects has, or seeks to have, some foreign protector, upon whom it can depend for protection against its enemies. The Maronites look to the French Government to sustain their independent existence; the Greeks depend upon Russia; the Greek Catholics upon Austria; and the Druzes rely upon England. They are all, in fact, dealt with by these various governments as so

many political allies in this country, and this marks them off into distinct and hostile camps. The recent war between France and Prussia, brought out this element of discord and antagonism in an amazing manner.

Time and other influences will, however, modify these partizan animosities. Experience has proved, also, that even this fragmentary and antagonistic character of the inhabitants is overruled, in the providence of God, for the protection of persecuted Protestants, and as a means of gaining access to many parts of the country, which might otherwise be effectually closed against us. The Protestants keep aloof from all these entanglements, and cultivate friendly relations with all, that the Gospel may not be hindered, but rather commended to all classes of the community.

Another hindrance to missionary success in Syria is the familiarity of the people with the language of religion, while strangers to its power. Religious phrases and expressions abound. The most sacred words and devout phrases are on the lips of all. Their very salutations contain an amount of holy language that is astonishing. Dr. Laurie, in his Historical Sketch, says: "Good people in America are often at a loss to understand how there can be so many Christian sects in Syria, and no religion. But if they will bear in mind the natural character of the heart, and then consider, that in all the nominal churches of Syria spiritual instruction is never given—that the doctrines of the Gospel are never taught—that piety is made to consist in outward ceremonies, in the observance of days, and obedience to their priests—that their idea of worship is the repetition of prayers in an unknown tongue—that the distinction between the regenerate and unregenerate is known only as the difference between the baptised and unbaptised—that religion is separated from morality—that the priest is held to have power to pardon sin, and does it for money—that their preaching is either a teaching of the worst errors of Popery, or incredible and silly legends of saints; they will see how the name can exist without the substance."

The mission work in Syria has also been greatly retarded by frequent political changes, and the unsettled, restless state of society. The minds of the people have been occupied, and their attention distracted, by the constant expectation or fear of social disorder and anarchy, while at times civil wars of the most harrowing and desolating cruelty have swept over the land. The recent fearful massacres of 1860 are an example. The result of these apparently and, no doubt, directly adverse influences has been, however, in many cases, to gain a vantage ground, or secure an opportunity, for which the missionaries had, perhaps, been waiting and praying many years. "It is true, moreover, that but few Protestants were either implicated or injured in these frightful outbursts. We quote again from Dr. Laurie's Sketch, with reference to the results of the civil wars of 1860.

"The direct results of this war on our operations were, doubtless, injurious. Some stations were broken up for a time. Many hearts were hardened by suffering, and immorality increased, through the homeless poverty of many

\* Nominal y. no  
 name without substance

exposed to temptation. But the general result shows much that calls for gratitude. The power of the clergy that martyred Asaad el Shidiak, and formed the greatest hindrance to the progress of the truth, weakened by previous wars, in this, received its death-blow."

"Again, the war brought missionaries into more extensive and favorable intercourse with the people than ever before. At different times, as many as 75000 persons, in all, were fed daily from their hands. At one time, 2500 were fed in Beirut by native members of our church; 60000 piastres, (\$2400) contributed in England and America, were distributed every week by the missionaries; Dr. Thomson having charge of the clothing, bedding, etc.; Dr. Van Dyck devoting his time to the sick; and Mr. Jessup dealing out daily bread to the starving multitudes. Besides all this at Beirut, Mr. Lyons visited the vicinity of Baalbec, on the same errand; and Mr. Eddy ministered to the thousands who had fled to Sidon for refuge. Yet, out of 15000 widows there were only twenty Protestants. Such a refutation of the slanders by which the clergy had sought for more than forty years to fence out the missionaries from the people, could not but produce a reaction in favor of the truth. During some months there was daily preaching at Beirut."

In all the trials of this Mission, though sickness and other causes have constrained some to return home, the missionaries generally have stood at their posts, and sought to bear up the courage of the churches on the wings of their own faith.

Amid the discouragements of 1841 and 1842, the lamented Dr. Eli Smith, though his mind was never free from anxiety respecting the prospects of the Mission, yet pleaded against its being abandoned by the churches, and was content to do good by piece-meal, as opportunity offered, assured that all the preparatory labor then performed would one day yield abundant fruit.

In 1845, the Mission wrote: "Our history presents so many instances of most marked divine interposition in behalf of the Mission, that it would indicate feeble faith indeed if we should be greatly cast down by present difficulties." Again, in 1861, while the waves of the storm of 1860 were still raging, a beloved brother still at his post wrote: "To the question—Are you discouraged? We answer, No. The walls of Jerusalem were built in troublous times. Storm and tempest are as needful as the dew and sunshine. We may see darker times than ever, and we may see lighter; but light or dark, our duty is plain. We are to hold on till the divine Hand itself loosens our hold; we may and ought to walk in the light of God." The Mission in Syria now stands on higher vantage-ground than ever before; and those "who are alive and remain" there, now begin to realize the truth, that they who sow in tears shall reap in joy.

Another difficulty which makes the gaining and confirming of souls in the spiritual life such a laborious, and often discouraging work, is the unprom-

ising and spiritually impoverished character of the material which is available for missionary work. It is buried beneath the dust and ashes of Orientalism, religious and social, as Pompeii lay overwhelmed by the ashes of Vesuvius. Dig it out, and strike it with the Gospel hammer, and it seems often simply to dissolve into suffocating dust. An ignorance of any high spiritual experience in the churches also tends to retard their growth, and makes them contented to live with less of earnest aspiration and spiritual development than should mark their piety. The presence of the Spirit has never been known in the churches in any such striking and generally prevalent power as is often known in Christian communities here. The converts have been almost entirely adults, won by the power of the truth, convincing, conquering and subduing; hence, the prevailing type of piety is intellectual rather than emotional. The Syrian missionary prays for the mighty power and influence of the Spirit, to give tenderness and love where faith and intellectual convictions are often so clear and simple.

As regards the special encouragements of the field, there are some strong points of interest. The geographical limits of the field would be a very inadequate indication of the actual and prospective sphere of the Mission in its influence for good. A far wider view is the true one to take. By means of the press, the Bible and religious books have been spread already over the vast regions occupied by Arabic speaking races, from Western Africa to India and beyond it, and from Mosul and Marlin to Ethiopia and Abyssinia. By means of the common school, the normal school, the female seminary, the college and the theological seminary, teachers and preachers are trained and sent forth to extend the blessings of the Gospel, and the advantages of education, to many distant places. These long lines of precious influence and spiritual power are but just beginning to be worked out extensively, and they afford the highest encouragement for rapid expansion and early results.

While there are other honored missionaries who labor in the Arabic language, and so also for their vast Arabic speaking constituency, yet it would not be invidious to say that the Syria Mission enjoys special opportunities to carry on an enlarged and expansive work in this direction. Her Arabic printing press is the largest and most active in the world, and her means and appliances for educating and Christianizing the Arab people are the result of many laborious years of missionary effort. Beirut, with Lebanon for her protector, feeder, and chief support, is rapidly and surely becoming the radiating centre of literary, scientific and religious light and culture for this people. The same is true with regard to the vigorous and growing educational institutions of the Mission. The College also is destined to occupy a noble sphere, and do a grand work for the race in whose interests, for Christ's sake, it has been founded. A spacious and beautiful building for the uses of the institution, is now in process of erection at Beirut, the corner-stone of which was recently laid by an esteemed friend of the Mission,

Hon. W. E. Dodge of New York, who was then visiting the East. A building for the Medical Department is also in process of erection.

Another encouragement is to be found in the strategic location of the Mission. It is in the heart of the Mohammedan world, and any success which the Gospel may achieve here will exert an important, if not decisive influence in overthrowing the ancient faith of Islam. But our hope and great encouragement, after all, is in God. He has given us this commanding position; He has blessed us with these noble opportunities; He has prepared these agencies and instrumentalities of special value and efficiency, that He may bless the Mission with spiritual power, and work mightily through His servants, by the energy of the Holy Ghost, for the salvation of vast numbers who would otherwise be left to be the prey of Satan and the victims of sin.

## II.

### A STATEMENT OF PROGRESS UP TO THE PRESENT TIME.

1. *In Relation to Evangelistic Work.*—In the prosecution of their work, the Mission have ever regarded the preaching of the Gospel as the most efficacious instrumentality for bringing the truth into contact with the hearts of the people, and they have held all other agencies as only auxiliary to this.

The acquisition of the language has, therefore, been the first duty of the new missionary, to the end that he may as soon as possible address the people in their own tongue. Every Sabbath, and more or less during the week, they are accustomed to preach in their stations and out-stations. Their audiences average from 50 to 100 hearers, except that the Beirut congregation numbers nearly 500 souls. Connected with the Beirut congregation is an interesting sabbath school, numbering 350 scholars, and also a weekly Bible-class for young men, conducted by Dr. Jessup, numbering about 80 regular attendants. Sabbath schools and Bible-classes, not so numerous attended, are in operation at other localities in the mission field.

There are three ordained native evangelists in the field. One is a settled pastor, another is a professor in the Medical Department of the College, and the third is preaching as a supply, with the expectation of soon becoming a pastor. A class of five has just graduated from the Theological Seminary of the Mission, and it is the expectation that they will become pastors also at various points in the field.

Besides these, there are as many as twenty pious native helpers and preachers, some of whom act also as teachers in common schools, who have most of them enjoyed more or less theological training in Abeih Seminary, and who conduct religious services in the various parts of the field on the Sabbath, besides gathering the people for religious conversation and instruction during the evenings of the week; so that it is not too much to



say, that by means of the missionaries and the native helpers the Gospel is preached statedly in as many as thirty places in Syria, as far as it constitutes a part of their mission field, and the regular attendants will number about 2500 souls.

These native preachers and teachers command the respect and confidence of the Mission, and are a powerful auxiliary to their labors. The problem yet to be solved is, how to greatly increase the number of such laborers, so as to meet the pressing wants of the field; duly to educate them, and to induce the native churches to assume their support.

*Churches.*—In the northern field are two churches, at Tripoli, and at Hums. The church members in and around Beirut form a church in that city. In the Lebanon are two churches; one in Abeih, and the other in Ain Zehalta. In the Sidon field are four churches; in Sidon, Alma, Kliyam, and Hasbeiya, these various churches collect the members from the regions of which they are the centres. The number of church members in them all is about 320.

*Church Edifices.*—In the Tripoli field there are two church edifices, one at Safeta, and the other at Hums, both recently completed; in Tripoli a room is hired for an indefinite number of years; in other places rooms are hired.

In the Beirut field there is at Beirut a fine church, with tower and clock, and one at Kefr Sheema, recently dedicated. Another preaching service has recently been established in Beirut, which promises well and may in time call for another church edifice in that city.

In the Abeih field there is a fine church building in process of erection at Abeih; an inferior one in use at Ain Zehalta; a new one now completed at Bhamdun; and several rooms are hired and occupied for church purposes.

In the Sidon field there are church buildings in Sidon, Kanah, Alma, Deir Mimass, Khyam, Ibl, Rasheiya, and Hasbeiya. The people of Mejdal, Jedaide, and Jun, are also making efforts to complete churches in their respective communities. For the most part these churches have been built by funds raised by the missionaries among friends of the Mission at home; yet considering the poverty of many of these native communities, they have themselves given largely, and made many sacrifices for the honor and success of the Gospel.

*Theological Seminary.*—A Seminary for the training of theological students has been in operation for three years past. Formerly it was located at Abeih, but it is a distinct institution from what is known in the Mission as the "Abeih Seminary." Recently it was removed to Beirut. Its instructors are Mr. Calhoun, in the department of Exegesis and Biblical Introduction; Mr. Eddy, in the department of Systematic Theology; Mr. H. H. Jessup, in the department of Church History and Homiletics. Its first graduating class of

five are young men of ability and zeal; it is hoped that they will be greatly useful as native pastors.

We close this brief statement of evangelistic progress with a summary of results.

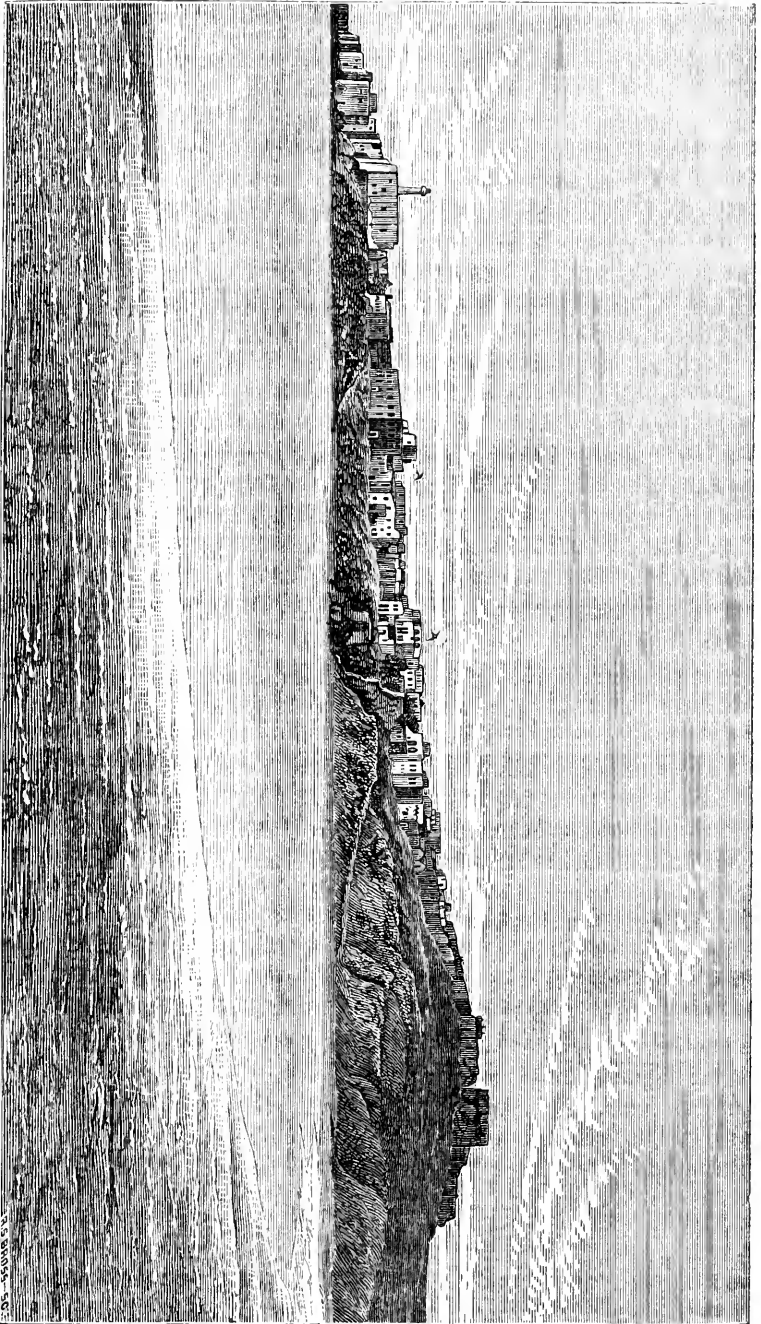
(1) *Direct Results.*—What has been hitherto accomplished seems small, if estimated merely by the number of churches formed, church members admitted, native pastors ordained, Protestant communities enrolled; but in no country does this comprise the sum of missionary influence, and least of all would this scale of reckoning results apply to Syria.

These results will not seem small, if the difficulties of the field are borne in mind, the difficulties of the language, the small number of laborers, and the counteracting influences from hostile organizations, powerfully sustained by men and means. Only God could have wrought so much, through instrumentalities so inadequate. Only God could have prevented the cause of truth from being overborne by such powers leagued against it.

While the number actually converted seems as yet small, it is nevertheless true, that many minds are enlightened, and multitudes are Protestant in sentiment who will ere long join the mission ranks. The children of Syria will many of them become Protestants. A prominent Greek at Beirut recently said to Dr. Jessup, "You missionaries need not trouble yourselves about converting Syria, our children are all going to be Protestants; the Bible will do the work." The month of December in each year has been set apart by the Foreign Board as a season of special prayer for Syria among the churches. Hardly had the prayers of God's people last December ascended before the throne, when there was manifest in the Mission an unusual spirit of inquiry among the natives; the spirit of the Lord was evidently present; the Word was listened to with eagerness and solemnity; large and interesting prayer meetings were held; souls were converted, and the churches edified, strengthened and refreshed. In many years there has been no such hopeful and significant religious movement as that which blessed Syria last winter. Let the people of God, and the friends of Syria, pray, and the work will go on gloriously.

(2) *Indirect Results.*—These have been among Mohammedans, Druzes, and Nominal Christians.

To Protestant influence, in great part, may we ascribe the changed feeling which has come over the minds of the Mohammedans towards Christians. The Christian religion has become understood by them to be not wholly the system of idolatry which they once regarded it, nor professing Christians as devoid of morality as they once seemed. As a consequence, there has been a sensible quenching of the flame of Moslem bigotry, and a greater respect for Christians, their rights, their Bible, and their religion. The relative positions of the Crescent and the Cross are not what they were when the



SIDON, SYRIA.

A. S. WOODS. SC.

missionaries came to Syria. The Bible has gained ground, and the Koran has lost it, as a controlling influence in the land. Some Mohammedans are among the attendants upon our preaching, and these would, doubtless, be more numerous, but for the risk to property and to life which inquirers from among them incur. A young Moslem in Sidon recently asked Mr. Eddy if he might come to his (Mr. Eddy's) house, and learn arithmetic, adding that this would be only an ostensible reason, as the truth was, he had been reading the New Testament, and wanted to know more of our religion. Several interesting cases of religious inquiry among Moslems have come to the knowledge of the missionaries within a year or two past.

The first really satisfactory *convert* from Mohammedanism in the history of the Syria Mission, was admitted to the church during the past year. His calmness amidst persecution, and his heroic adherence to his Saviour, in the face of threatened death, make one of the most interesting and thrilling chapters in the annals of our Mission. He was rescued by the efforts of consuls and missionaries from the clutches of the Turkish Governor General of Syria, and his right to religious liberty on the basis of the guarantees of 1856, fought for and secured; although he was obliged subsequently to flee to Egypt to escape private assassination, as some forty young Moslems in Beirut had sworn to kill him in some way. But every convert thus rescued gives added dignity to the guarantees of religious liberty, which are legally perfect in the Turkish Empire, and tends to make them more and more a recognized law of the land. The time is not far off when religious liberty will be a literal, as well as a legal fact, throughout the Turkish Empire. As yet, it needs to be vigorously contended for in Syria and the remoter provinces, lest the tiger spirit of Moslem fanaticism, which still lurks in the hearts of "the Faithful," should do its bloody work secretly in the darkness of its prisons, and under the protection of Turkish authority.

Not without results, also, have the children of the Druzes been taught in our schools during all these years, and so many conversations been held with adults of that sect.

The leaven of the Gospel has pervaded even to the secret inner sanctuaries of their religion, and the white turbans of the initiated Druzes seen in our Sabbath congregations, and the inquirers who come to our houses, and the baptized converts from among them, show that not in vain to the Druzes has the light of the Gospel again dawned upon Syria. One of the young men who graduated from the Theological Seminary last year is from the Druze sect, and it is hoped will do a good work among his people.

But principally among the nominal Christian sects have the indirect results of missionary labor extended. These are visible in the changed power of the clergy. Once, excommunication was a terror above all terrors. Now, it is so powerless a weapon that those who once wielded it so effectively are ashamed to challenge ridicule by exposing its weakness.

Protestantism, once regarded by the mass of the people as the blackest

of heresies, finds everywhere its defenders and vindicators, even where it lacks followers, and no longer can the lies, with which the clergy were accustomed to frighten away their flocks from contact with Gospel influence, gain currency.

The religious instruction given in their churches has been modified. More Bible is taught, and less tradition. The preaching is more of Christ, and less of the saints. The adoration of pictures has greatly lessened. All sects have been compelled to introduce schools, and to educate both boys and girls; to educate their priests, and to modify the prohibitions against reading the Bible. At times, even now, the fanaticism of the priests breaks forth in disgraceful exhibitions; as, recently, in Kanah and Tyre, at the command of the Greek Catholic clergy, the people burned their Bibles. This action, however, on the part of the priests, drove some of their adherents into the Protestant ranks, and called forth bitter reproaches from the Moslems, who denounced it as scandalous and shameful.

The circulation of the Scriptures, and of religious books, has been widespread, and we have heard of some who have been enlightened by these silent teachers, and have through them found Christ as their Saviour, and died in joyful trust in Him, though they never had an opportunity publicly to profess their faith in Him.

Among all sects—Mohammedan, Druze, Greek, Maronite and Catholic, the glaciers of prejudice, which for centuries have been forming, are now melting and crumbling under the light and warmth of the Gospel.

The gift of the Bible to this people in their own tongue is the rich tribute of gratitude which the West has returned to the East, in acknowledgment of its obligation to the land whence the Bible came; and the East, in its turn, is again paying tribute to the West, sending back to the churches the stimulating and precious tidings of the victories which the Word of God is winning.

Not in vain have Hebard and Smith and Whiting and De Forest and Ford sowed the seed of the Word in tears, even though they went home with few gathered sheaves. From the heights of heaven they now behold the springing harvest. Not in vain have the Syrian workers who yet remain, toiled, many of them for long years in that arduous field; God is giving them abundant evidences of His favor, establishing the work of their hands with signs and wonders of His grace.

The churches in America which have aided in sustaining the Mission by their offerings and their prayers, have seen fewer results than have crowned their labors in other fields, and their faith has been sorely tried: yet they have been permitted to hear, from time to time, of souls ransomed from darkness and sin; echoes of the songs of triumph sung by departing saints have been borne to their ears; and they have felt that their labors have not been unrewarded.

And the Church which now adopts the Mission, adopts a charge of peculiar difficulty. This "Crown Jewel of Missions," as it has more kindly than de-

servedly been called, needs years of careful cutting and polishing ere it will be worthy to shine on the Saviour's brow. Yet, surely it may be counted a privilege, and none the less so because the campaign is prolonged, and costly, and difficult, to recover to its rightful Lord the land of patriarchs and prophets, of apostles and martyrs; to restore primitive Christianity to the home of its birth, after fourteen centuries of exile.

To the question, therefore, Missionaries, what have you done in Syria? We answer:

By God's grace, we have laid anew the foundations of God's living temple, Christ being the chief corner-stone, and we have seen some courses already built upon it.

We have set up and maintained the banner of the cross in the face of its pretended friends and its avowed foes. We have collected a little army on the Lord's side, and armed them with the sword of the Spirit. We have prepared an arsenal of spiritual weapons for future conflicts, in the Scriptures, and other religious books, translated and committed to the people. We have established outposts of schools and seminaries, and have raised strongholds of the truth, in churches planted here and there throughout the land. We have taken possession of the land in the name of King Immanuel, and we aim to subdue and hold it wholly for Him.

Under this same general head of a "Statement of Progress up to the Present Time," we remark:

2. *As to Educational Agencies.*—The awakening mind of the East craves education. We make it the hand-maid of the Gospel. By it we gain positions and attain an influence, which we could hope for, as Syrian society is now constituted, in no other way. Through it we have hundreds of children under the most direct religious instruction, whom we could not reach in any other way. Our reading books are made up of Bible history and incident. Religious truth is also illustrated and enforced. Much of the New Testament is committed to memory in our schools, and the children are all carefully drilled in the catechisms, and also in books of Scripture history and religious doctrine. They are also taught to recite and sing many of the best hymns in our language, which have been translated into Arabic; "Just as I am," set to the Turkish national air, is a great favorite. The music with which the Mohammedan marches into battle has been impressed into the service of the Gospel, and as its sweet and stirring notes echo through our churches, it seems both a type and a prophecy of happy and glorious changes yet to come.

This whole matter of Education in Syria, is so ably and interestingly presented in a "Special Report on Education in its Relations to the Mission Work in Syria," by Rev. W. W. Eddy, of the Sidon Station, that we can do nothing better than introduce it here entire, as presenting the subject in all its importance and in its present aspects.

(See *Foreign Missionary* for September, 1871.)

It may be well to define, in the outset, the position of the Syria Mission in regard to this branch of benevolent enterprise. With them education is not an end, only a means to the securing of an end. Their object is the salvation of souls. They regard education as an important auxiliary in this, their great work.

With this view, of course, they have always sought to combine religious with secular instruction; directly, earnestly, plainly, have they endeavored to bring before their pupils the truths of the Bible.

Without stopping to consider the general question of the bearings of education upon the missionary work, the first topic proposed is :

I. *Is there anything peculiar in the structure of society, and habits prevalent, in Syria, which gives to education here a special efficacy as a means to the introduction of the Gospel?*

The way is not yet open for bringing the Gospel *directly* into contact with the masses of the people by *preaching*. Large congregations could not be gathered with facility in the open air, as in India. Crowds of curious listeners do not throng our churches, as those of the missionaries in Africa and the South Sea Islands. Nor is the land, to any great extent, a field for *colporteur* labor. Work of this kind is impracticable in many places, and difficult in most. In consequence of the variety of religious sects here, and the bitterness of feeling between them, men attach great value to their religious distinctions, and are jealous of any encroachments upon them; so that the obstacles to direct attempts at proselytizing are almost insurmountable. Where the work has reached an advanced stage, of course, it is different, but in all *new* advances we are very much shut up to the use of *indirect* means; and of these, one of the most hopeful is education.

This appears more plainly in considering the obstacles to the Gospel among the different religious sects, and how these obstacles are met by this means.

*First. Among the Mohammedans.*—They rarely attend our preaching, rarely visit us for religious conversation. As religious teachers, we, therefore, come but little into contact with them. Pride in the superiority of their own religion, contempt of Christianity as they understand it, and of Christians, as being in this land a subject race, bigotry, and fanaticism wall them around; while a persuasion that the Scriptures have been tampered with, shuts their hearts from the benefit of their perusal.

But Mohammedanism, as a system, is vulnerable through science. To an educated mind there are in it puerilities, absurdities, glaring inconsistencies. Education lays these bare, and thus prepares the way for the consideration of another faith.

Contact with Moslem minds, so difficult through other means, is in a

measure possible through education. Scripture truth may be inculcated in connection with science, and this when youthful minds are most susceptible to impressions. The Moslem children in our schools are, as yet, not numerous, but among all the pupils none read the Bible with such interest as they manifest.

Considering the great importance of gaining a hold upon the Mohammedan mind, we are justified in setting a high value upon this almost sole means of reaching them, especially when this means is in itself so hopeful.

*Secondly. Among the Druzes.*—These people are eager to have their children taught. They prize education as a means of power and influence. They despair of again recovering by the *sword* the position they once held in society by means of it, and turn now to education. They have confidence in us as they have in no other sect, and willingly place their children in our hands. Either clanishness, or some peculiar power in a secret religion, bars their hearts to the direct approaches of the Gospel; but through education a wide and effectual door is opened for access to their minds and consciences.

*Thirdly. Among the nominally Christian Sects.*—Their state is characterized by ignorance of the religion they profess, except in its outward forms, ignorance of the Bible, and of the history of the Church; while superstition and priestcraft have thus free scope to mould the heart and life, and ruin the soul.

Enlightenment, both in science and in religion, the disenthralment of mind from its bondage, and the revelation of truth in all its aspects, are the indispensable means for rescuing those thus having a name to live, while yet they are dead. We reach many of this people directly by our preaching. We reach more through our schools, and some of them we could never reach at all but through this means.

In regard to the Arabic-speaking races in Syria, it may be affirmed of them, as a whole, that they are eminently capable of receiving instruction; their minds are quick and retentive. Labor spent upon them is not expended upon a people few in number, and feeble in influence. Syria, enlightened, is fitted by its position, its language, and the character of its people, to become the teacher of vast numbers of the human race.

## II. *What has already been done here in the way of Education.*

### (1.) *By the American Board.*

(a) *Common Schools.*—When the missionaries of the Board arrived here, more than forty years ago, there was almost a total dearth of books and of readers. Great obstacles had to be surmounted in order to the introduction of a few schools into the land. At first, only reading and writing were taught, as there was little demand for more than these, and teachers capable of teaching higher branches, were wanting.

These schools were commenced in Beirut, then pushed into the adjacent portions of Mt. Lebanon, then into other cities of the coast, and of the inte-



rior, and they have raised up a great body of readers, capable of perusing and understanding the Word of God. They have stimulated other sects to open schools in rivalry, have awakened a desire for learning, have caused a demand for books of all kinds, and for newspapers and magazines, and for higher schools and seminaries of learning. Many educated in these schools have been converted, have become members of our churches, teachers in other schools, preachers to their countrymen.

Around these schools have clustered Protestant communities. Their influence has pervaded all other sects, and raised the standard of knowledge in all.

Without them, it is hard to conceive how Protestantism could have gained an entrance into many parts of the land. With them, it has gained a strong hold upon the reason and conscience of a great number of the inhabitants of Syria.

All honour, therefore, to the common schools, which have been for so many years a source of blessing to the people of this land! Honour to those who established them, to those who supported them, and those who have taught in them!

(b) *The Abeih Seminary*.—The institution now bearing this title was first established in Beirut. It was intended for the raising up of teachers and preachers, and has occupied a large place in the interest and care of the Mission. For a time no small amount of the strength of the Mission was expended upon it; its standard of education was very high, and its graduates were among the most highly educated scholars in the land.

For various reasons the standard of education was gradually lowered; and prominent among these reasons was the fact that the Mission failed to secure the object originally aimed at, to raise up, by its means, pastors for the native churches, the young men turning aside to other pursuits; and more latterly, the establishment of the Syrian Protestant College has rendered unnecessary the teaching here of the higher branches of knowledge.

Most of the teachers of our schools, and religious instructors in the various congregations, are graduates of this institution.

The study of the Scriptures has been a prominent object in the conduct of the Seminary, and this branch of study has always been conducted by a member of the Mission, and remains so until this day.

Until within a short time, a part of the instruction, literary as well as religious, was given by a missionary, and the government was administered by him; but of late other duties have devolved upon this missionary [Rev. S. H. Calhoun], and he has been obliged to entrust the literary instructions and the government into the hands of native teachers, retaining, however, a general superintendence over the whole, and giving daily religious instruction, as heretofore.

The applicants for free admission far exceed the number which the means at the disposal of the institution allows it to receive. Several of the pupils pay a moderate sum for their expenses.

(c) *The Syrian Protestant College.*—This is an outgrowth of missionary labor in Syria. Missionary instruction created a demand for it. The plans and prayers and labors of missionaries established it. The friends of missions endowed it. Its aim, and that of other missionary labor, are one—the enlightenment and salvation of the Arabic speaking race.

This institution is still in its infancy, but its influence is already widely felt, in creating a demand for general education, in raising the standard of thought, and in stimulating other sects to enlarge and elevate their schools of learning. It has sent forth two classes of graduates, most of whom are now actively employed in the service of the Mission.

It commands the confidence of the missionaries, and has their best wishes, their prayers, and their efforts, for its success. The Medical Department of the College is an able auxiliary to the missionary work, and its manifest benefits, through its *clinique* and hospital practice, are a powerful argument in favor of the religious system which sustains it.

(d) *Female Education.*—When the missionaries came to Syria it was an almost unheard-of thing for a woman to read and write. It was argued that to teach her would tend to the disruption of society, to the disorganization of society, to the unsexing of woman.

For a number of years, girls were adopted into the families of the missionaries, and there trained and educated. Gradually they have entered the common schools and studied with the boys, yet they still constitute but a small minority of the pupils. In some places day schools have been opened expressly for them, taught by female teachers, and these have been well attended.

For many years the Mission have sustained in Beirut a *Female Boarding School*, to which much labor and expense have been devoted. At one time a missionary and his family were detailed to its care, then it was given in charge to young ladies from America. The experiment of conducting it by means of native teachers was tried, and for five years proved successful, but circumstances have combined to render a return to the previous plan a necessity, and it is now under the care of American ladies, with the best native assistants.

Changes have been made in it, of late, to suit the advanced stage of civilization and education in Beirut, introducing the study of European languages, and the practice of instrumental music; also, in giving it a permanent home in buildings erected expressly for its accommodation, and in endeavoring to make it self-supporting.

This institution stands high in the regard of the community and the Mission, and is a powerful auxiliary to the missionary work.

[The support of the Beirut Female Seminary has been wholly assumed by the "Ladies' Board of Missions of the Presbyterian Church," New York.]

✓ The mission has sustained for about eight years another *Female Boarding School* in Sidon.

This is intended to meet the wants of the people who do not come into contact with European tastes and refinement. It is supported by the funds of the Mission, except that the salary of the principal teacher, Miss Jacombs, an English lady, is paid by a society of ladies in England.

This school is purely a missionary institution. Its plan is to teach only girls from Protestant families, the best pupils of the common schools, with a view to their being directly useful hereafter as teachers and helpers in the missionary work.

All the stations have a right to send pupils, and of those now in attendance some have come from the extreme borders of the field. Being purely a mission school and its pupils Protestants, there is here the best opportunity for thorough religious instruction in connection with mental and social culture, and its success realizes fully the expectations of its friends. Like the Mt. Holyoke Seminary in America, the household labor all devolves upon the pupils. The Beirut and Sidon schools for girls have both their spheres; neither interferes, nor renders the other unnecessary.

[The support of the Sidon Female Seminary has been wholly assumed by the "Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church," Philadelphia.]

This outline comprises most of what has been done by the American Board in behalf of education in Syria. To it may be added, of general work, the preparing and publishing of reading books and primers; of two arithmetics, of lower and higher grades; of two geographies, a grammar, a work on logic, and another on rhetoric, an algebra and geometry; and the preparing of manuscript works in natural philosophy and astronomy. Recently, in connection with the College, works on physiology, botany, chemistry and natural history have been published. A monthly religious paper has also been issued from our press for about four years past. [Recently changed to a weekly.]

(2.) *By other Protestant Agencies.*

Other Protestant agencies during late years, have co-operated with the American missionaries in their educational efforts. Most of these have been enlisted, however, in behalf of females.

Mrs. Watson, an English lady, opened a school for girls in Beirut in 1856 which has since been transferred to Mt. Lebanon.

Mrs. Bowen Thompson opened schools in Beirut in 1861. These are still continued, and have been extended to four places in Mt. Lebanon, to Damascus, and to Hasbeiya.

Miss Hicks and Miss Dobby, young ladies sent out by a Woman's Society in England, have a school for girls at Shimlan on Mt. Lebanon.

✓ Mr. Elias Suleiby, aided by friends in Scotland, mostly in connection with the Free Church, has, for ten or twelve years past, conducted schools in a part of Mt. Lebanon, and also, latterly, in the Buka'a.

The Established Church of Scotland has a school for Jews in Beirut, conducted by the Rev. Mr. Robertson.

The Prussian Deaconesses, in 1861, established an institution in Beirut, partly for orphans, and partly for paying pupils.

Mr. Butrus Bistany, a native Protestant of Beirut, has, for about six years past, conducted a flourishing school for boys in that city.

In the same place, Miss Taylor, of England, has also conducted, for the past two years, a day school for Moslem girls.

This comprises mainly what has been done within the limits of our field in Syria, in behalf of education.

III. *Has not the work of Education been brought so far forward by the Mission, or have not other agencies arisen so capable of carrying it on, that the Mission can now with propriety withdraw from it and engage in other work?*

To this question it may be replied briefly —

The Mission would find it difficult to act in many places, but through schools. Long as the Gospel has been preached in Syria, there are still extensive districts in mountain and plain, where prejudice and the power of the clergy have kept out the light. New fields are, therefore, constantly to be occupied—schools are the entering wedges. They furnish an occasion for the presence of a missionary, and give an opportunity for the exerting of influence. The school teacher by day, becomes a preacher for adults in the evening, and on the Sabbaths, and the school-rooms are thus the nuclei of churches.

Again, the Mission and all other agencies combined, fail now to meet the wants of the field. The demand for schools and teachers is greater than the supply. How would it be if the larger source of supply should be withdrawn?

Again, these other agencies act only at or near certain centres. The area of their influence is limited, reaching but little beyond Beirut and a part of Mt. Lebanon. The mission schools are extended widely through our whole field—north, south, east and west. To leave these other agencies to act alone, would be to leave the greater part of the land without schools.

And, moreover, it would be impossible for those not engaged in the missionary work to make their schools as directly auxiliary to the work of the Gospel, as would the Mission, whose aim in conducting these schools is to further their plans in raising up self-supporting Christian churches and communities.

For these reasons, as well as others, the Mission would find itself crippled, thwarted, embarrassed, in its action, if it was compelled to give up the work of education, and to leave it to others. Much of it would certainly be left undone, as there are not agencies on hand prepared to assume it, and the cause of Christ would inevitably suffer.

IV. *If the Mission continue the work of Education can they properly continue it on the same system and the same scale as they have done heretofore?*

Unquestionably the answer to this must be in the negative.

*First. In regard to common schools.*—There is a demand for a *large increase in their number*, particularly among the *Druzes*. We could properly occupy many additional fields of much promise, had we the means. Appeals from various quarters have come to us which we have been compelled to refuse.

There is also a demand for *the elevation of the standard* of many of these schools. That which met the wants of the field twenty years ago, does not meet it now. Syria has made vast strides forward within a few years, and our common school system should move forward in correspondence.

It is time to commence a revision of the whole plan of these schools; to remodel them, as far as possible, according to modern ideas; to introduce a uniform programme of studies; to employ as a whole a higher grade of teachers, with new checks and responsibilities. Thus increased in number, and newly organized, their power might be augmented many fold, as an agency in restoring to Syria a true Christianity.

There might with advantage be added to the mission force a superintendent of common schools, able properly to visit and regulate them in the length and breadth of the land.

*Secondly. In regard to Abeih Seminary.*—The Mission need for the conduct of their schools a greater number of teachers than they can reasonably expect to obtain from among the graduates of the College. Not all of these schools require teachers of so high a grade. It is not enough that these teachers should be apt *scholars*: they need also to be made apt *teachers*. A system should be adopted here, corresponding to that of the Normal Training schools in other countries, so that the graduates may carry into effect in the common schools what they have learned, and thus give them new life and efficacy.

This involves, besides the training of the regular pupils in the best modes of imparting knowledge, the assembling in Abeih, for two or three months in the year, of the teachers already engaged in teaching, and the drilling of them with a special course of training in the art of instruction.

These educational institutions, combined with our printing-press and our native agency, are the channels through which your missionaries can bring light and blessing to the people. They are the complement of our force—our machinery. They bring to our hands the material upon which we are to work, and help us to mould it.

We can, therefore, cordially commend the work of Education in Syria to the prayers and sympathies of the friends of Christ at home, as being one of the means of undermining the fortress of error here, and establishing the truth; and if they desire to give new impulse to this work, and to push it

forward with greater vigor, they will find us prepared to second their efforts heartily, hopefully, and vigorously, being assured that thus the day of Christ's triumph will be brought nearer—the hour of Syria's redemption will be hastened.

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The above report seems exhaustive on this subject. It may be noted, however, that the number of common schools now in operation under mission auspices is about fifty ; many of them are large and flourishing ; the attendance in some ranging as high as a hundred.

Again, under the same general head of a "Statement of Progress up to the Present Time," we mention also :

3. *Press-work.*—Through the scholarly labors of Dr. Eli Smith, and Dr. Van Dyck, we have one of the most accurate and beautiful translations of the Scriptures to be found in any language, and many thousand copies in some six or eight different styles have been issued. Several editions are now electrotyped. The voweled edition of the entire Bible, just issued, is regarded as the finest book in the Arabic language, and the Scriptures can now be given to the Mohammedan world free from a favorite objection, namely, that they were unvoweled, and, consequently, incomplete. Some sixty works of a religious and educational character have been published. Text books for the College are either already issued, or well advanced in preparation, by the Professors in their various departments. The Theological Professors are also preparing text-books.

A weekly religious newspaper is issued, which has its regular roll list of over a thousand subscribers.

A monthly illustrated paper, specially for the children, has just been commenced. In reference to this new enterprise of a children's paper, the Annual Report of the Mission for the past year remarks : "It was once thought an impossibility to bend the stiffness of written Arabic so as to adapt it for a newspaper, even for adults, without shocking the tastes of all Arabic scholars, but the contact of the West with the East has so changed ideas and rendered plastic old incrustations, that no one's prejudices are shocked, while the stately Arabic has been made to bend to a child's comprehension in a child's newspaper. The secular newspapers of Beirut have done much to undermine the pedantry of Arabic literature, and to prepare the people to accept a written language somewhat conformable to the spoken tongue." An additional building for the uses of the press has just been erected. It is a handsome structure, standing side by side with the mission church, with which, in external aspect and beauty of design, it is fully in keeping. It is to be used also as a Bible House, and contains besides a large room which can be used as a lecture-room to the church.

A bindery and a lithographic press have been recently added to the press establishment. A new Adams Steam Press will soon be on its way to Syria

to supplement the two (one an "Adams," and the other a "Hoe,") which are now well worn by long service. The printing which is done at the mission press is universally regarded as the most elegant and tasteful specimen of Arabic typography to be found in the world. A few years ago, Dr. Van Dyck superintended the preparation of an entirely new font of type, which, in neatness, clearness, and beauty of style, was a great improvement upon all other kinds. The great printing presses of Germany, recognizing its superior excellence, have recently thrown aside the old fonts of Arabic type which they have been accustomed to use, and have sent to Beirut for matrices of the new type. The British and Foreign Bible Society have also adopted it.

Dr. Van Dyck fills the position of Editor and Literary Superintendent of "The Press," while the business-management is under the superintendence of Mr. Samuel Hallock, whose efficient services are highly valued by the Mission.

As a summary of what has been done through the press by the American Missionaries, it may be stated :

1. They have translated the entire Bible, and it is now issued in many editions, either complete or in parts. An edition of the Gospels in raised Arabic characters, is also issued for the blind, at the expense of Mr. Mott, a benevolent English gentleman.

2. They have prepared and published some sixty works both religious and educational in their character.

3. They edit and publish a weekly religious journal, which has a large and constantly increasing subscription roll throughout Syria and Egypt, also a children's monthly.

Among the religious works already issued from the Syria Mission press in Beirut, are the following ; Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, Edwards' History of Redemption, Nevins on Popery, Bird's Letters on Romanism, Alexander's Evidences of Christianity, Guide to Scripture Study, (648 pp.,) Office and Work of the Holy Spirit, Hymn Book, (200 pp.,) Book of Social and Family Prayer, Imitation of Christ, Religious Story Book for Children, (Illustrated,) Bogatzky's Golden Treasury, Newman Hall's Tracts, Catechisms large, and small, and with proofs, several Scripture Question books, and many pamphlets, sermons, tracts, etc. There are now in manuscript, ready for the press ; A Concordance of the Bible, Mosheim's Church History, Harmony of the Gospels, with notes by Rev. Mr. Calhoun.

Two native converts of the Syria Mission, Drs. Meshakah and Wortabet, have also written able works which have been published.

In course of preparation is a Dictionary of the Bible, also a work on Systematic Theology, and Commentaries on the Pentateuch and Gospels.

Among the educational works issued at the mission press, though not always at mission expense, may be mentioned ; a Geometry and Trigonometry, an Algebra, Arithmetics, Geographies, Grammars, Reading

Books of higher and lower grade, a work on Logic, another on Rhetoric, also one on Natural History, some medical works on Anatomy, Physiology and Hygiene, a Chemistry, a Botany, and an Atlas of the World. In manuscript are a Natural Philosophy, an Astronomy, and a work on Moral Science.

A learned native convert, Mr. Bistany, is the author of a magnificent Dictionary of the Arabic Language in 2 vols. 1200 pp., he is also editor of a semi-weekly newspaper, and a semi-monthly magazine, devoted to science, literature, politics and general information. Both are published at Beirut, and circulate largely throughout the Orient.

The church at home cannot fully estimate the labors of her missionaries in this most important department, the preparation of a religious and educational literature. Several of the most important educational works mentioned above have been recently prepared by Professors in the Syrian Protestant College at Beirut, Drs. Bliss, Van Dyck, Post and Wortabet.

### III.

#### A GLANCE AT THE PRESENT WORKING CONDITION AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF THE MISSION.

Much has been said which anticipates what might properly be said under this head, and, not to prolong this sketch unduly, we will not enlarge upon what is already found in these pages. The list of missionaries at present (March, 1872) connected with the Mission and their respective location is as follows :

**BEIRUT :** Rev. Messrs. Wm. M. Thomson, D.D., C. V. A. Van Dyck, M.D., D.D., Henry H. Jessup, D.D., and their wives, Miss Eliza D. Everett, Miss Ellen Jackson and Miss Sophie B. Loring, Mr. Samuel Hallock, Sup't. of Press.

**TRIPOLI :** Rev. Samuel Jessup and his wife, Rev. Oscar J. Hardin, G. B. Danforth, M. D., and his wife.

**ABEIH :** Rev. Messrs. S. H. Calhoun and Wm. Bird, and their wives.

**SIDON :** Rev. Messrs. Wm. W. Eddy and Frank A. Wood, and their wives, Rev. James S. Dennis. Supported by a Woman's Society of the English Church, and having the charge of Sidon Female Seminary, Miss Jacombs; and Miss Stainton.

Under appointment for Syria, and expecting soon to sail, Messrs. W. J. Cumming and Gerald F. Dale, Jr.

The following compose the Faculty of the Syrian Protestant College at Beirut, including the Faculty of the Medical Department ; Rev. Daniel Bliss, D.D., President, Rev. C. V. A. Van Dyck, M.D., D.D., Rev. Geo. E. Post, M.D., Rev. D. Stuart Dodge, M.A., Rev. John Wortabet, M.D., Rev. Edwin R. Lewis, M.D., Harvey Porter, B.A., with a corps of six native tutors.



*Concluding Remarks.*

A glance at the future of the mission work in Syria suggests expansion, growth, progress.

We have hitherto occupied four principal stations. We must now enlarge the circle of our operations and make another, which will be at Zahley, a large town of 10,000 inhabitants, on the eastern base of the Lebanons, overlooking the plain of Cœle-Syria, or the Buka'a, which, with its many and populous villages, is to be the outlying field of the Zahley station.

We have a great work opening for us among the Druzes, who are friendly and confiding. They regard themselves as under the political protection of England, and should political complications at any time lead them to a nominal profession of Protestantism, our opportunity would be most favorable. New missionaries should be in the field studying the language and preparing to enter upon this special work with the Druzes.

The Mission have another work in view, for which they desire to be ever in readiness, so as to take advantage of any providential openings in its favor, and that is the evangelization of the Bedouins of the desert. Their language is the Arabic, and, of course, they are to be reached by those speaking that tongue. They are professedly Mohammedans, and yet few of them know anything of their religion, being unable to read the Koran, and rarely hearing respecting its teachings from one who understands it. They are as nearly without a religious faith as a people can be, and yet profess one. Their wandering life, and the insecurity among them of person and of property, make their instruction in the Gospel especially difficult. But Christ's command extends to even these, and the difficulties in the way of reaching them with the truth are not insurmountable. The points of contact between the Bedouins and the Mission, are Hums in the Tripoli field, and the neighborhood of Banias in the Sidon field. The course to be pursued for their evangelization is to send among them colporteurs, men of wisdom and experience as well as piety, carrying with them simple remedies for bodily diseases, and aiming to heal the deeper maladies of the soul. As fast as such men offer themselves, they should be commissioned and sent forth at once into this field, so vast, so difficult, so neglected, so loudly appealing to the sympathies of all who love Christ and weep for souls perishing in darkness.

To man and sustain this enlarged work; to guide and minister to the awakening mind of Syria, already aroused and invigorated by academic culture, and give it the balance of a strong evangelical bias; to counteract the heinous deceptions and vile chicanery of Jesuitism; to deal wisely and firmly with Moslem bigotry; to lend a helping hand to the persecuted; to preach the simple, living Gospel; to build up a spiritual, self-supporting, witnessing church; to train a native agency of pastors and teachers; to bring Christianity to bear upon the scandalous and pitiful social degeneracy of the East; this is the task which, with its appalling responsibilities, confronts a

feeble band of missionaries in Syria. Verily! if the Spirit of God be withheld, our task is a hopeless one.

As the future of this great work looms up before us, the conviction grows stronger and more solemn that the great need of Syria is that which no human wisdom can supply. It can be met by no new combination of forces at home or on the field, by no complication of the machinery of missions, nor by indefinite enlargement. It is the want of the influences of the Holy Spirit. The Syria of the present age has never witnessed the mighty manifestations of His presence. Nothing is known there of His power to change the whole aspect of society, and to pervade all hearts with a sense of the coming Judgment. There are no histories nor memories of such a work to which we can refer.

Nothing but a great revival, upheaving the deep foundations of society, and drawing men wholly away from their old refuges of lies, can avail to fuse into one mass elements so wholly at variance with one another, and to bring all into subjection to Christ.

Therefore, we would say to all who love Syria and wait for its redemption, withhold what you will, but withhold not your prayers; nay, rather besiege the throne of grace unceasingly for a return of the Holy Spirit to a land from which He has so long been grieved away. We would name especially these petitions:

1.—FOR AN OUTPOURING OF THE SPIRIT upon our churches and native agents, upon educational institutions, upon our own souls.

2.—FOR THE RAISING UP OF A NATIVE PASTORATE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIVE AGENCIES. We are aiming and planning for self-support. Pray that the educated young men of Syria may have their hearts turned to the ministry, and that the whole corps of our native assistants may be inspired with zeal and self-denying consecration.

3.—FOR THE PROGRESS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY EVERYWHERE, AND FOR ALL CLASSES IN SYRIA. A converted Moslem's life is not safe for an hour in any Syrian city. Papal persecution is still bitter and grinding in many parts of the country. We want liberty of conscience.

Dear brethren, in the name of that Saviour who once trod the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, and was transfigured upon Hermon, we ask you to pray for Syria, that He may again visit that dark land, and lay His hands in spiritual healing upon the sick and dying.

And there, where the first triumphs of Christianity were won, may the latter day glories of the cross eclipse those of its early rising, and all the praise and honor be given to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for evermore!



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