

THE UNION SEMINARY MAGAZINE

NO. 3—JAN.-FEB., 1896.

I.—LITERARY.

A SKETCH OF THE MISSIONS OF THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

In the last issue of the *MAGAZINE* we gave sketches of the Missions in the Indian Territory, in China, in Italy, in the United States of Columbia and in Brazil; in the order of their establishment. In the present paper we propose to sketch in a similar way the other missions of our Church. We shall present these, also, in the chronological order of their founding; and accordingly begin with

THE MEXICO MISSION.

This mission was opened in 1874. During the preceding year the Rev. A. T. Graybill had, with the approval of the Executive Committee, explored Northern Mexico with reference to the establishment of a mission somewhere along the borders of the Rio Grande. Matamoras was fixed upon as the site of the mission. And in 1874 Mr. Graybill accompanied by Mrs. Graybill, returned to this point to initiate what has since turned out to be a very fruitful work. Linares was opened in 1887, and Victoria in 1892. Hence there are now three main branches of the Mexico Mission.

The following laborers have been employed in the Mexico Mission, viz.: The Rev. A. T. Graybill, 1874—, Mrs. Graybill, 1874—1876; Rev. J. G. Hall and Mrs. Hall, 1877—1895; Miss Hattie Loughridge, 1879, who became the second Mrs. A. T. Graybill, 1880—1889;* Rev. L. Walton Graybill and Mrs. Graybill, 1881—1882; Miss Janet Houston, 1881—; Miss Anne Dysart, 1882—; Miss S. E. Bedinger, 1886—; Miss C. V. Lee, 1890—; Miss Minnie Gunn, 1892—; Miss Ella Cummins, 1894—; Mrs. A. T. Graybill, 1895—.

* She died in the field.

OANNES AND DAGON.

PROF. W. W. MOORE.

In a former article on "The Great Fish of Jonah" we presented some considerations in favor of the historical credibility of the book which records the mission of the son of Amittai to Nineveh, at the same time pointing out that the reason why so many people discredit the book as literal history is not the fact that it contains a miraculous element, since there are scores of scholars who accept without hesitation the scriptural record of other miracles and yet will not accept this, but the fact that there seems to be no sufficient reason for the unique and apparently grotesque *character* of the alleged miracle here recorded. We saw further that the book, taken as literal history, requires belief in a stupendous moral miracle no less incredible to many than the physical miracle of the prophet's preservation alive and unharmed for three days in the shark's belly, viz. the repentance of an opulent and wicked city of more than half a million people under the preaching of an uncouth foreigner who simply shouted through the streets the single sentence, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" Here, then, is the twofold difficulty: the swallowing and vomiting of the prophet who was to preach at Nineveh by a great fish, and the instant conversion of all classes of a luxurious and corrupt and cruel population under the preaching of the man thus miraculously preserved and sent to them, so to speak, out of the very midst of this monster of the deep.

Alongside of this difficulty we placed the following facts: (1) that amid the sculptures exhumed from the ruins of Assyrian palaces and temples there are frequently found figures of a fish-god, having the head and face of a noble-looking man, with a fish's head forming a mitre above, while its scaly back and fanlike tail fall as a cloak behind, leaving the human limbs and feet exposed; (2) that according to the traditions preserved by Berossus, the Babylonian historian (B. C. 270), a strange being called Oannes, having the body of a fish, but under his fish's head a man's head, and with a man's feet subjoined to his fish's tail, came up out of the Persian Gulf in the beginning of Babylonian history and taught the people every-

thing that was essential to their welfare, that he was afterwards worshipped as a god in the temples of Babylonia, and that a representation of him was preserved even to the time of Berossus; and (3) that, according to these same traditions, five other beings of like nature had come up out of the sea, at great intervals of time, with fresh instructions for mankind.

Such being the Assyrian belief concerning the method of divine revelation, the question was raised as to whether God did not adopt the peculiar form of the miracle which has stumbled so many readers of the book of Jonah, for the purpose of accrediting and emphasizing the message which his prophet brought to the people of Nineveh, for the purpose of securing a better hearing for his prophet than he could have got in any other way, and of teaching them most effectively that there was but one only living and true God. This, it is said, would meet both the difficulties connected with the book. It would explain the extraordinary form of the physical miracle by showing a real reason for Jonah's coming up out of a fish, since that was the way in which the Ninevites believed that messages had come from the deity before. And it would explain also the moral miracle, the extraordinary effect of the prophet's proclamation, for, as soon as the fact that he had come up out of a fish was authenticated, to the Ninevites, believing as they did in successive avatars, so to speak, of the deity in this form, the influence of the national tradition would assert itself, and, while they could see for themselves that Jonah was not himself an avatar, they would inevitably connect him with their strange belief and recognize him as a messenger from deity, and, as his short, sharp, terrible cry rang through their splendid city, it would smite their hearts like the voice of doom and bring small and great to their knees in the dust of repentance.

Whether this explanation be adopted or not, it demands careful examination. If it be objected that God would not employ the principle of accommodation to this extent, the answer of those who adopt the theory in question is that he seems to have done so even in the case of the Ark of the Covenant, which bears a certain measure of resemblance to the arks of Egyptian temples, with which the Israelites were already familiar. Even God they say must take people on their own plane, in one sense, and if this involves the possibility of error, it also affords the surest, and indeed the only

effective means of truth. Are not all the anthropomorphisms and anthropopathisms of scripture liable to the same objection? They are constantly exposed to the danger of teaching erroneous views of God, but He did not for that reason refrain from using them; because He knew that they were indispensable to any true views of Him on the part of human beings. Do not all missionaries have to do substantially the same thing that this missionary to Nineveh did, viz: make use to some extent of the religious conceptions and terms already in vogue among the people, mixed up though they are with error? Otherwise they cannot make a start with the heathen at all, they have no fulcrum for their lever.

So argue the advocates of the foregoing explanation, but, as we have said before, the question is simply raised here, not answered in full as yet.

Let us next glance at those subordinate questions which we said were of less exegetical and practical importance, though directly connected with our subject, and at the same time of considerable archaeological interest in themselves.

The name of this fish-god who came up out of the sea and taught the primitive Babylonians civilization, was, according to Berossus, "Oannes." But, though it is thus given in the writings of Berossus (B. C. 270), the name "Oannes" nowhere occurs in the Assyrian records. A great number of these cuneiform tablets have been brought to light in our day, and many of them abound in all manner of details concerning the gods whom the Babylonians and Assyrians worshipped, but no trace has been found in them of any name that is at all like "Oannes." Whence, then, did Berossus get this name? Is there in this name "Oannes" any reference to "Jonah," as the supposed manifestation of the fish-god himself? Jonah went to Nineveh in the 9th century, B. C. Berossus wrote his history in the 3rd century, B. C. Can it be that, in referring to the primal divinity of Babylonia, Berossus calls him by the name of the prophet who last brought a direct message from God to Nineveh after having been inside of a fish, and who was therefore not unnaturally supposed to be a sort of avatar of the same deity to whom the aborigines of the country owed so much? On this point Dr. Trumbull says: "While *Oannes* is not the precise equivalent of the name *Jonah*, it is a form that might naturally have been employed by Berossus, while

writing in Greek, if he desired to give an equivalent of *Jonah*.* And if it were a literal fact that a man called *Yonah* had come up out of the very mouth of a fish in the sea, claiming to be a messenger of the great God to the people of Nineveh, and had been accepted by King and people accordingly, is it not reasonable to suppose that Berossus, writing after that event, would connect the name *Jonah* with the primal divinity of Nineveh?"

While the name *Oannes* is not found in the Assyrian records and while we are driven thus to conjecture the reason for Berossus' giving that name to the being who came up from the sea and taught the primitive Babylonians, the name *Dagan* appears frequently in the Assyrian records, and as the god of the Philistines, whose image fell prostrate before the ark of the God of Israel, is called *Dagon*, and as the Hebrew word *Dag* means *fish*, it has been the common belief that the Philistine God *Dagon* was half man and half fish, that he was the same as the Assyrian god *Dagon*, and that he was also the same as the fish-god *Oannes*. Prof. Sayce, however, strenuously denies that there is any connection whatever between the fish-god and *Dagon* or *Dagan*. He says: "The decipherment of the cuneiform inscriptions has long since shown that *Dagon* and the fish-god had nothing to do with one another. The belief in their identity arose from the fact that the word *Dag* in Hebrew signifies 'a fish,' and it illustrates once more the danger there is in drawing archaeological conclusions from philology. The resemblance of *dag* to *Dagon* is merely an accident.

Who the fish-god actually was, we now know. In the British Museum there is a Babylonian seal on which is a picture

*"This name, *Oannes*, as it stands in the Greek of Berossus, appears in the Septuagint and in the New Testament, with the addition of *I* before it—*Ioannes*. In the Septuagint this Greek word *Ioannes* is used to represent both the Hebrew name *Yohanan* and the Hebrew name *Yona*. (Compare 2 Kings, XXV. 23 [*Iona*] and 1 Chronicles, III. 24 [*Ioanan*], where the Hebrew in both passages has *Yohanan*). Similarly, in the New Testament, the name *Jonah* is rendered both *Jonas* and *Ioannes*. (Compare John I: 42 and XXI: 15, with Matthew XVI: 17). Professor Dr. Hermann V. Hilprecht, the eminent Assyriologist, informs me that in the Assyrian inscriptions the *J* of foreign words becomes *I* or disappears altogether; hence *Joannes*, as the Greek representative of *Jona*, would appear in Assyrian either as *Ioannes* or as *Oannes*. Therefore, in his opinion, *Oannes* would be a regular Greco-Babylonian writing for *Jonah*."

of the fish-god, with the head, hands, and feet of a man protruding from the fish's body; and above the figure is an inscription stating that it represents 'the god of pure life.' Elsewhere 'the god of pure life' is identified with Ea, the patron god of the ancient city of Eridu, which in early days stood on the shores of the Persian Gulf. Ea was accordingly a god of the sea, whose home was in the depths of the watery abyss. Eridu, in consequence of its maritime position and intercourse with foreign countries, became a great center of culture and civilization in primitive Chaldea; and its god Ea similarly became, in course of time, a god of culture. But properly and originally he was a god of the sea (not, as was afterwards the case, of water in the abstract), and as such he was fitly symbolized by a fish . . . 'Dagan,' or Dagon is never associated in the inscriptions with Ea." . . . Dagon was a god of the earth, not of the sea, and the fish were not regarded as being under his control. Dagon and the fish-god Ea were essentially distinct one from the other.

The same testimony is borne by Philo Byblius, a native of Gebal, who wrote a work on the mythology and history of Phoenicia in the Greek language, in which he put together the legends and traditions of various Phoenician cities. He tells us that Dagon was the first who taught men how to sow wheat and make bread, and that he invented the plow. He was accordingly revered by the Phoenicians as the patron of agriculture. The word *dagan* in Hebrew and Phoenician means "grain," and the fact that it does so doubtless had a good deal to do with the belief that Dagon was the discoverer of the use of wheat. But it could not have originated the belief that he was the divine patron of agriculture. The attributes of the old Babylonian divinity must already have been such as to suggest a connection between him and the word *dagan* or "grain." If Dagon had been the god of the earth and its products, this connection would have seemed obvious and natural.

It is evident that Philo Byblius knew nothing of a fish-god whose name was Dagon. The Dagon of Phoenicia was an agricultural deity, a god of the cultivated earth, not of the sea and its inhabitants. This conclusion is confirmed by a seal of crystal, found on the coast of Phoenicia, which is now in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford. On it is inscribed in Phoenician letters, "Belonging to Baal-Dagon;" and the symbol of

the god which is engraved on the seal is not a fish, but a tree.

In the Hebrew text of the First Book of Samuel where the image of Dagon is described there is nothing to suggest a fish (1 Sam. V: 4). That suggestion is made only in the margin of the Authorized Version. On the contrary, we learn that Dagon had a head and hands, to which the Septuagint adds feet, thus implying that he was represented in human form. The words translated "only the stump of Dagon was left to him" are literally "the emptiness of Dagon was left to him," that is to say, nothing remained but a mere shapeless block. Had it been the figure of a fish, such an expression could not have been used.

The exact form of the figure of the god may not seem to be a question of very great importance. But the figure indicates the attributes which were assigned to the deity by his worshippers, and it is only by obtaining a correct idea of those attributes that we shall understand the meaning of the trespass-offering made by the Philistines to the God of Israel. When they sent back the ark, they sent along with it a "Trespass-offering" of "five golden emerods and five golden mice." Why the emerods were offered is obvious enough, but the mice have been a great stumbling-block to the commentators.

Now, however, that we know the real character of Dagon, the meaning of them is no longer difficult to discover. The field mouse was regarded as one of the chief enemies of the agriculturist, and in the Troad Apollo Smintheus was specially worshipped because he was supposed to destroy the mice. Mice, therefore, would be the enemies of Dagon the god of agriculture and wheat, and a victory over him would be regarded as a victory on the part of the god of mice. Mice, in fact, would be the ministers of the deity who were hostile to Dagon and to the crops that were under his care. When, consequently, Dagon fell to the ground before the ark of the Lord, his worshippers concluded that he had been overcome by a deity hostile to agriculture, whose ministers were the mice. Accordingly, they sought to appease the conquering god by a gift of gold which was shaped into the likeness of his agents of destruction. The five golden mice were thus of exactly the same nature as the five golden emerods, images, in the precious metal, of the plagues which the God of Israel had inflicted, or was able to inflict, upon the Philistines and their deity.

What the name of Dagon originally signified we cannot say with certainty. But, like so many of the names of the Babylonian divinities, it was probably of Sumerian derivation; and, if so, it is useless to seek for a Semitic etymology. In the Sumerian language, we are told ("Inscriptions of Western Asia," IV., 20, I. 15; V., 20, 19) that *dagan* meant "totality:" and it is possible that the name may once have denoted the "whole" surface of the visible earth. Such a name, however, seems too abstract for the primitive period to which the Babylonian worship of Dagon reaches back; and for the present, therefore, we must be content with the fact that, whatever else the name of "Dagon" may have meant, it had nothing to do with a *fish*."

Without expressing at present any opinion in regard to several subordinate views put forward by Prof. Sayce in the foregoing passage, and, while conceding that he has made out a pretty strong case against the identity of Oannes and Dagon, we may be permitted to say that there is one passage in Berossus (according to Apollodorus which Prof. Sayce does not mention and which gives us pause about adopting without qualification the strong terms in which he has expressed himself in regard to the difference between these two deities. That passage is as follows: "In his days (i. e. the days of Euedorachus) there appeared another personage from the Erythraean sea like the former, having the same complicated form between a fish and a man, whose name was Odacon." Some texts give this name as "Odakon," and others as "O-dagon," that is, apparently, *Dagon* with the Greek article.

There are still other questions of interest in connection with this subject. For instance, what is the true explanation of the fact that the name of Jonah was preserved in connection with a mound which when excavated by Layard turned out to be the site of Nineveh, though that site had been apparently lost so completely that when Xenophon passed those ruins a century before Berossus, he did not know that they marked the site of the capital of Assyria? The name of this mound is Neby Yunas, i. e. The Prophet Jonah. How came the natives to give the name of Jonah to the very mound under which modern explorers found the ruins of Nineveh?

II.—EDITORIAL.

WHY SO FEW CANDIDATES?

It is a deplorable fact, evident to every observer, that there is a widespread destitution of laborers in the vineyard of the Lord. In the Southern Church there are 204,000 communicants and only 425 candidates and 79 licentiates,—an average of only 1 to 447 members. The professions of law, medicine, and the other avocations of life are filled to overflowing—in many places more are offering their services than can possibly find employment. We would not say one word against the inducements offered by the various professions to draw talented and efficient men into their ranks, for we need such to serve us in these capacities. But should not the *more important* work of the Lord have its proportional number of laborers? Emphatically, yes! Every effect has its cause. To what, then, is due this feeble response to the Master's call for laborers? Is the need not sufficiently urgent? This cannot be the true solution, for the vacant fields all over our own country and the Macedonian cry from benighted lands silence forever such a postulate. It is not because we haven't the requisite material, for the other professions are being constantly augmented by competent young men from our midst. Some would have us believe that the present attitude of the church toward our candidates and her inability or neglect to sufficiently aid them in attaining her high requirements debar many from espousing the gospel ministry. These are doubtless just charges against the church, but to our mind they have a very subordinate bearing on the question before us. If the Spirit of God calls a man to preach the gospel we believe that same Spirit will provide a way for his preparation. If he allow financial embarrassment and similar difficulties to deter him from his convictions we seriously question the reality of his call. Endowed institutions and inexpensive preparation would doubtless draw more young men into the ministry, but would they be the men the church needs? Colleges and seminaries may educate men but God alone can qualify them for efficient service in the salvation of souls. "It is not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

The true cause of this destitution of candidates does, however, lie at the door of the church. It is the non-recognition by Christians of the solemn duty and obligation incumbent on them to obey the explicit order of their Commander: "Pray ye the Lord of the

harvest, that He send forth laborers into His harvest." The Lord could send forth laborers without our asking, just as he could give us every temporal and spiritual blessing without our requests, but it has pleased Him to condition His giving on our asking, for the promise is, "Ask and ye shall receive." If we ask not for laborers we need not be surprised at their not being sent forth. The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: therefore pray for reapers is the divine injunction. This command involves not only the utterance of the petition enjoined, but, as in the case of every other prayer, the employment of all available instrumentalities for its fulfillment. The minister of the gospel should not only pray this prayer, but should by sermon, private conversation and distribution of literature forcibly present the claims of the gospel ministry to the young men of his congregation. But this command of Christ is binding not only on ministers but on *all Christians*. It is the privilege of all to have access to the mercy seat, and it is the duty of all to work as well as pray. By a word or a pamphlet, you, my Christian reader, may be the means of influencing a person to the consecration of his life to the preaching of the unsearchable riches of Christ. God works through human instrumentalities. To ascertain the means the Spirit of God had blessed in bringing the young men of Union Seminary into the ministry, we made a personal canvass of the students, and found that the instrumentalities blessed by the Spirit in either turning their minds to the consideration of the ministry or in causing them to come to a final decision, were, with only a very few exceptions, the following: Sermons by pastors, private conversations by pastors, talks by friends and relatives, books and pamphlets on the subject, and the influence of mothers and their prayers. These instrumentalities blessed by the Spirit in the past will prove effectual under His operation in the future. My Christian reader have you regularly and habitually prayed and by every means in your power endeavored to answer your prayer for reapers in the Lord's harvest? If not, a portion of the responsibility for the dearth of laborers rests upon your shoulders. If we have in our hearts any pitying love for fallen humanity, any desire for the rescue of our perishing fellow-men, any adequate conception of the greatness of the harvest and the fewness of the reapers, and any belief in the power and effectiveness of prayer, may we make it a matter of conscience never to forget this solemn injunction of our Saviour: "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that He send forth laborers into His harvest."

E. E. G.

WOULD A MULTIPLICITY OF SEMINARIES MULTIPLY THE NUMBER OF OUR CANDIDATES :

The above editorial from the pen of an associate editor is an earnest inquiry as to how we may increase the number of our candidates for the ministry. This is a question that has pressed itself upon the minds and hearts of the students of our seminary for many years. Their deep interest in this matter is shown by the fact that each year for the past five years the students have sent one of their number to the colleges of Virginia and one to the colleges of North Carolina to present the claims of the ministry to the college students of these two states. We may say that the visible results of these visits have not been as great as we had hoped. There has been no marked increase of candidates. The truth is that the number of candidates in the entire Southern Assembly is on the decrease. Last year there were twenty less than the year before. "How may we increase the number of candidates?" has been the subject of a number of articles in our religious weeklies during the past year. Our associate editor has given a good answer to the question, we believe. But we had scarcely finished reading his editorial when an entirely new answer was suggested by a statement from the pen of a distinguished and honored minister of our church. Arguing in another connection, he makes this statement: "One of the most useful results of a seminary is the special influence which its presence exerts upon the young Christians of a vicinage in turning their thoughts to the sacred work. We find that churches and schools near a seminary rear about *ten* (italics ours) times as many candidates as those in remote Presbyteries." The answer that this quotation suggests is this—increase the number of seminaries and you will very materially increase the number of candidates. This seems a good answer to the question, but we could only wonder whether the facts and figures in the case would corroborate the statement. So we have collected some statistics and made some computations. On this theory we should expect to find the largest proportion of candidates in the Synods of Virginia, South Carolina, Kentucky, and Nashville. The table below gives the number of candidates, the entire number of communicants, and the ratio of candidates to the communicants in each Synod. We have arranged them

with referencè to the proportion of candidates each has at present. Arkansas heads the list.

SYNODS.	CANDIDATFS.	COMMUNICANTS.	NUMBER OF COMMUNICANTS TO EACH CANDIDATE.
Arkansas.....	17	4,586	270
Mississippi	42	13,735	327
Memphis.....	22	8,173	370
Texas.....	40	14,979	375
North Carolina.....	73	30,278	415
South Carolina.....	44	18,512	421
Alabama	25	11,636	465
Nashville	27	13,073	484
Kentucky	34	19,302	568
Florida	6	3,532	580
Virginia	60	40,080	668
Missouri	16	11,821	739
Georgia	19	14,292	752
	424	203,999	481

These figures speak for themselves. They need no comment. They do not seem to indicate that a multiplicity of seminaries would multiply the number of candidates, but they *do* indicate that when the great need of the gospel is pressed upon the hearts of the Christian young men of our church by their own personal observation they respond to the call, for it will be observed that those Synods which are most destitute of the gospel have as a rule the greatest proportion of candidates.

*
* *

A DISCLAIMER.

We have received a letter from Rev. Dr. R. L. Dabney, a portion of which is published below, in regard to a statement which appeared in the last number of our MAGAZINE and which he desires to have corrected. In justice to ourselves, we may say that the statement to which he refers was based upon a statement made before the Synod of Virginia at its last meeting by a member of that body

who has been a regular attendant at its meetings since the war, and as the statement was not challenged at the time we supposed to be correct. The following is the statement referred to: "The first public advocate of some change was an eminent and honored servant of the church, then a professor in the Seminary, who, shortly after the war, made a powerful speech on the subject to the Synod of Virginia, not indeed advocating removal to a *city* but stating with great force the disadvantages of the present site and demonstrating the necessity of seeking another. The professors and directors generally agreed with him, but the movement took no practical shape at that time because of the impossibility of securing the necessary means to effect the change."

In justice to Dr. Dabney, we cheerfully insert the part of his letter which relates to this article. It reads as follows:

"Dear Bro.,—Your last number, in your article on the Seminary removal, contains words to this effect: That an influential member of the Faculty in one of the years soon after the war made a strong speech in the Synod of Virginia in favor of the removal of the Seminary which has influenced the brethren ever since. This is followed by such remarks as make it point to me apparently. If I am mistaken in your meaning I must ask you to excuse the mistake. If I am correct, I must request you to read the following statement and give it place in your next issue. Dr. Henry M. White writes me thus: 'I am sure that the question of the removal of the Seminary was not brought forward at any of them (to-wit) any meeting of the Virginia Synod.' Drs. J. R. Graham and A. C. Hopkins testify the same. Such is my own recollection. I attended all of the Synods in those years. Of course I made no such speech in Synod. * * * * Of course all thoughtful men foresaw and lamented the difficulties which the Seminary would meet from the prostration of Southside Virginia. I among them. I urged upon both the Seminary and College the best preventive which I could devise for those difficulties, which remedy was not removal nor anything like it, and least of all removal to a city. My plan was rejected, I may say with scant courtesy, and I acquiesced completely."

*
* *

A MISSIONARY CLASS.

A notice of the recent departure of Rev. W. B. Harrison for Corea reminds us that his class ('94) stands out as the greatest mis-

sionary class in the history of Union Seminary. Of its eighteen members, five are already in the foreign field and another will sail next fall. Of the five who have already entered the work Rev. H. W. White is in China, Rev. W. Mc. Buchanan in Japan, Rev. C. R. Morton and Rev. C. R. Womeldorf in Brazil, and Rev. W. B. Harrison in Corea. Rev. C. C. Owen, who is now pursuing the study of medicine at the University of Virginia, will sail in the fall, so we are informed. What an inspiration this class should be to all the classes which follow it at Union!

