NEW YORK OBSERVER

THURSDAY, MAY 22, 1902

VOL. LXXX., NO. 21. Established in 1823. Whole No. 4124.

TERMS

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Postoffice orders should be made payable at New York Postoffice and not at any sub-station

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Published weekly. Entered at New York Post Office as second class matter

New York Observer 156 Fifth Avenue New York

Martinique and St. Vincent

ST. PIERRE BEFORE THE ERUPTION

ONE of the most dreadful calamities of modern times has just now befallen a beautiful island in the Caribbean sea. I interrupt my series of letters from Cuba to revert briefly to a visit made to the island of Martinique, a few years ago. The account of a winter's tour among the West Indies is published in my book, "Cruising Among the Caribbees," published by Charles Scribner's Sons. While our vessel lay at anchor off St. Pierre, the tourists passed the days in the town or journeyed about in the island. We had been looking forward to Martinique as the queen of the Caribbees, and in some respects were not disappointed. The island was most beautiful in its outlines, admirably cultivated, peopled with lively and enterprising inhabitants, and full of sights and sounds which attracted and entertained the traveller. Its lofty Montagne Pelée remained hooded with clouds a great part of the time, but now and then the summit was revealed, a mass of green, sky-piercing and grand, supported by vast flanks that swept in graceful undulations to the sea. There were luxuriant plantations, dense and dark forests, villages upon the high slopes, and two picturesque towns, St. Pierre and Fort de France, along the shores. The former town was unique, a strange mingling of France and the tropics. It lay along the curve of a pretty bay and rose in terraces upon the mountainside. The prevailing color of the stone houses was a golden yellow, which was set off by red tiled roofs here and there. A hurricane had desolated the place a few years before, and when the houses were rebuilt, many of them were roofed with corrugated iron, which had none of the picturesque effects of the old red tiles. The houses of the town were mostly built along narrow streets, and had unglazed windows, which at night were covered with heavy wooden shutters, in which there were movable slats. The streets were steep and well paved, and through the wide gutters a constant stream of water poured down, carrying all the sewage to the sea. This rushing mountain water was the feature of the town; it flowed in numerous pretty fountains, and was the public scavenger of the island. Men with huge poles and hooks kept the gutters from becoming clogged, and cleared the cesspools at the foot of the streets, which would otherwise have become stuffed with cocoanut shells, and palm leaves, and plantain skins, and all sorts of rubbish which were constantly thrown into these street channels. On the quay were thousands of hogsheads of molasses, and casks of rum, and bags of sugar waiting shipment. Powerful blacks swarmed among them, rolling and carrying them from place to place.

I was at St. Pierre during the festival of Mardi Gras, and the people of the place gave themselves up to a strange mingling of devotion and dissipation. The costumes of the women of this French island were fantastic and bewildering at any time, but as the festival advanced, they became as grotesque and brilliant as in any scene that ever was set upon the stage. The various faces of black, and red, and brown, and yellow, and of delicate cream and rouge, were a study for a painter, or an ethnologist; and the straight bodies and easy swinging gait of the unshod feet of most of the inhabitants produced a novel impression upon the beholder. On Sunday morning, high mass was celebrated in the Cathedral, and afterwards the whole town seemed to be given up to revelry and dissipation. Bands of masked men and women paraded the streets dressed in the most vulgar style. As night came on, the tumult increased, the great theatre was crowded to suffocation, and yelling, laughing, dancing and deviltry of all sorts made night hideous. I was glad of the refuge which the steamer afforded from such a pandemonium, but even at our anchorage we could hear the blare of the trumpets and the shouts of the excited crowds upon the shore.

Martinique, however, contrasted favorably with the islands belonging to Great Britain. The people had an air of thrift and self-respect, which found expression in the cleanliness, dress and taste displayed in their streets, houses and costumes. There was none of the abject poverty and beggary which met one at every turn in the English islands. Some of the women were very pretty. They wore their gay dresses in a style which left one arm and shoulder bare, and with their long skirts looped up at the hips. A large proportion of the population were of mixed blood and had the fondness for ornaments and display which is common to all half-breeds. At the Cathedral, a large and handsome building, I saw a congregation which filled the place, and was composed, like most Roman Catholic assemblies, chiefly of women. Nearly all of these wore yellow and green turbans, made of Madras handkerchiefs, with one end sticking out above the regular rolls of the silk or linen, like the plume of a soldier's cap. Some of the women had many bracelets and bangles on their arms, chains of huge gold beads around their necks, and curious earrings of three or

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Home Mission Centennial

A Backward Glance Over the Work Accomplished

BY THE REV. CHARLES L. THOMPSON, D.D., SECRETARY OF THE BOARD

GENERAL WASHINGTON in his farewell address to the country said: "In proportion as the people have to do with the affairs of the Government, in that measure is it important that they sould be virtuous and intelligent." As in this country the people have everything to do with the Government, it has come to be a truism that religion and intelligence are the twin pillars upon which our national fabric rests. This was recognized by the "Fathers" who first came to these shores. Indeed they came to find freedom to worship God and to govern themselves, hence they early became missionaries. They made their missionary enterprise the very genius of their government. What else should the descendants of the Reformation in Scotland and Switzerland and among the Huguenots do? It was to be expected that our Government would rest upon a religious basis, while steadily maintaining the principle of the separation of Church and State. Democratic government, free institutions, free schools and the Christian religion are the nerve ideas upon which our Government rests and are distinctly traceable to Switzerland and Scotland.

In our colonial history it is very well known that the Presbyterian influence was not only strong but dominant. So true is this that the historian George Bancroft says: "The revolution of 1776, so far as it was affected by religion, was a Presbyterian measure. It was the natural outgrowth of the principles which the Presbyterianism of the old world planted in her sons, the English Puritans, the Scotch Covenanters, the French Huguenots, the Dutch Calvinists and the Presbyterians of Ulster."

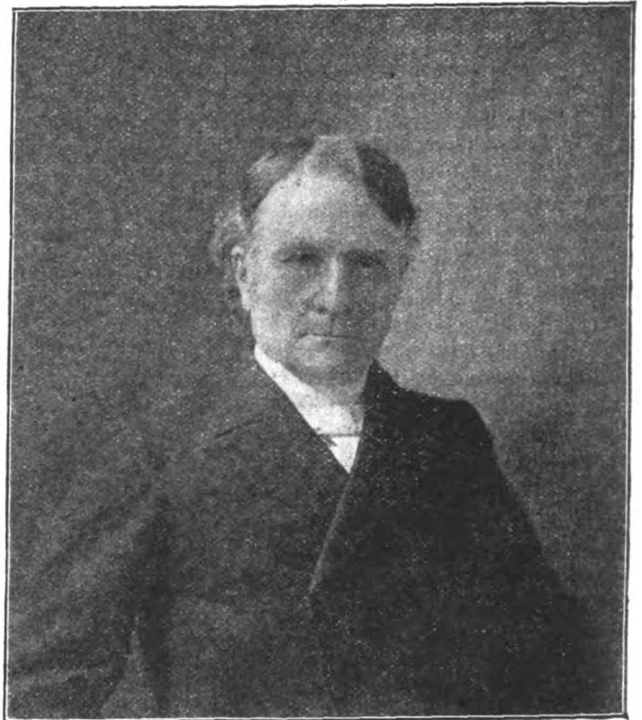
The Declaration of Independence as now preserved in the State Department at Washington, is in the handwriting of a Scotch-Irishman, Charles Thompson, Secretary of Congress. It is said to have been first printed by Thomas Dunlap, another Scotch-Irishman, and a third Scotch-Irishman, Captain John Nixon, of Philadelphia, was the first to read it to the people.

The Presbyterians were rebels almost to a man. The Synod of New York and Philadelphia was the first ecclesiastical body that counseled open resistance to England. The ministers committed themselves in their pulpits to the cause of American freedom, and of many of them it might be said, as it was said of John Craighead, of Pennsylvania, that he fought and preached alternately.

It would be interesting to follow the development of this patriotic and Christian spirit in the early records of our Church. Thus the first Presbytery considered this overture: "That the state of the frontier settlements should be taken into consideration, and missionaries be sent to them to form them into congregations, ordain elders, administer the sacraments and direct them to the best measures of obtaining the Gospel ministry regularly among them."

Thus the very spirit of evangelization breathed in the very first formal ecclesiastical action taken by our Church in this country. At the first meeting of the Synod of Philadelphia in 1717, is found the following record, to wit: "That we are all agreed to unite our endeavors to the spreading of the Gospel of Christ in these dark regions of the world, viz., the province of New York, the Jerseys, Pennsylvania and the territories of Maryland and Virginia."

The names to head the honor roll of our missionary leaders are Nathan Her and Joshua Hart, who were sent out by the Assembly of 1790, on recommendation of the Synod of New York and New Jersey. From that time on, each Assembly gave particular attention to the cause of missions—no other subject occupied them so much. The work of the first missionaries extended as far as Middletown in the State of New York and to the Oneida Indians around Lake Otsego. In Pennsylvania they visited the Lackawanna Valley. They reported thus early of the number of people who were going into those remote regions with amazing rapidity, and they suggested that another missionary be sent out "that the hopes of the pioneers may be raised and the foundation of Gospel principles may be laid in this extensive and growing country." Ah, how little they knew of the extent of the country, or what would be its growth.



REV. CHARLES L. THOMPSON, D.D.

It is interesting to notice that thus early the Synods of Virginia and the Carolinas were supporting their own missionaries. Synodical self-support is thus pretty old. The reason for their taking up their own work, was that they were too far off to get in easy communication with the Assembly.

How friendly our Church has always been with other denominations and how desirous of doing work in a cooperative way is indicated by the action of the Assembly of 1794, in which it was stated: "As our aim has not been to proselyte from other communities to our denomination, we have charged our missionaries to avoid all doubtful disputations, to abstain from unfriendly censure or reflections on other religious persuasions, adhering strictly to the great doctrines of our holy religion, which influence the heart and life in the ways of godliness, to follow after the things that make for peace and general edification."

The "Fathers" were moreover careful that our missionary work should go to the places of greatest need. We hear a good deal of taking advantage of strategic positions. But as the Master went to the lonely ones and scattered ones who had but few friends or helpers, so our Assembly in 1795, charged the missionary "to confine his labors to such settlements and people as may not yet have been formed into regular societies, and appear unable in their present state to make compensation for supplies, and be particularly attentive to such settlements as are most out of the reach of other places."

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That our Church has always held a high ideal of what should be the character of our missionary laborers, is evident from an action of the Assembly in 1798, in which it was declared that the missionaries should be "men of ability, piety, zeal, prudence and popular talents." This is still our standard, and our missionary work will advance in proportion as the best men of the Church give themselves with self-denial and devotion to this most interesting and most important part of our Church work.

We are familiar now with the idea of missionary superintendence in order that the work may be more effectually administered. The first record of an attempt at such superintendence appears in 1799, when one or more persons of suitable character were designated to take up their residence in towns convenient, whose business it should be to receive applications from different settlements, and to aid and direct such missionaries as might be sent out by the Assembly. Fort Schuyler on the Mohawk River, and Geneva on Seneca Lake, were suggested as centers for such superintendence.

It was to be expected that the Church which sent out John Elliot and the Brainerds to do work among the Indians, would continue that Christ-like service. It is therefore interesting to observe that the Assembly of 1800 called attention to the need of Gospelizing the Indians on the frontiers and of selecting men in the character of catechists who "might instruct the Indians, the black people and other persons unacquainted with the principles of our holy religion."

The first action with reference to the missionary relation of our Church and the Congregational Church, which was destined to play so large a part in the first half of the century, appears in 1801, when a plan of union was adopted to promote a spirit of accommodation between Presbyterians and Congregationalists in the new settlements. This continued in harmonious action and with varying degrees of success until the division of the Presbyterian Church in 1837.

At the meeting of the Assembly in 1801, we have the first record of a permanent fund for missionary work. The trustees of the Assembly recommended that the moneys obtained as the result of soliciting contributions for the support of missionaries, should be regarded as capital stock, "to be invested in secure and permanent funds for missionary purposes; that the proceeds of it should be employed in propagating the Gospel among the Indians, in instructing the black people and purchasing pious books to be distributed among the poor, or in maintaining, when the Assembly shall think themselves competent to the object, theological schools, and for such other pious and benevolent purposes as may hereafter be deemed expedient."

It is interesting to notice that while they were thus making large plans for the development of our Church along educational and philanthropical, as well as missionary lines, the first use of these funds was expressly designated for increasing the number of missionaries and extending the blessing of the Gospel by their labors through the greatest scope of the country.

Self-support was not forgotten. The Assembly of 1801 enjoined its missionaries to impress upon the communities where they labored, the necessity of contributing for the support of the mission, and besides that they again took action on behalf of the small settlements "which on account of their obscurity or infancy, might have hitherto been overlooked or neglected by former missionaries." The two great principles of missionary administration are here evolved: (1) That every church should advance toward self-support as rapidly as possible. (2) That the places that had no promise by reason of their obscurity or infancy, of any speedy development toward self-support, should, notwithstanding, be furnished with Gospel privileges.

So far the work of home missions may have been said to be systematic, but it was not organized. The Assembly of 1802 has the honor of having organized it by the appointment of a "Permanent Committee on Home Missions," consisting at first of seven members—four clergymen and three laymen. They should gather information relative to missions and missionaries; they should designate places where missionaries should be employed, they should nominate missionaries to the Assembly, and generally transact, under the direction of the Assembly, the missionary business. It will be seen that between Assemblies this Permanent Committee had practically the power of a missionary board

The responsibility of Presbyteries, which has become so large a factor now in the administration of home mission work, emerges prominently in the action of the Assembly of 1803, which ordered "that the Presbyteries in future report on this subject to the Committee of Missions only and make their reports so early as to enable said Committee to avail themselves of the information, and present the result to the General Assembly from year to year." This is essentially the course that is now taken with reference to the Board of Home Missions.

How close to the border was the missionary ground of our Church in 1803 is illustrated by the fact that the Standing Committee of Home Missions that year was vested with discretionary power to send missionaries to Norfolk in Virginia, to the city of Washington, to the Genesee and Sparta in Ontario county, N. Y.

The Church of Scotland had a few years before offered to the Assembly certain funds for carrying on the work among the North American Indians. They at the time replied that they were unable to avail themselves of the funds for lack of the men to send out as missionaries. But as early as 1803, they began to indulge the hope that they might avail themselves of that Scottish fund, for they instructed their Committee "to procure the whole or such part thereof as may comport with the views of the Society."

At this time they were beginning to send out missionaries to the West as far as the "Mississippi Territory." The beginning of a missionary service that was to tell mightily on the regeneration of the State of Ohio, is marked by the action of the Assembly of 1805, in which it is recorded that Mr. James Hoge, a licentiate of the Presbytery of Lexington, serve as a missionary for six months in the State of Ohio, and the Nachez district. A pretty large commission for one young man—but then he was a large young man. The next year he is again employed as a missionary for three months in the State of Ohio and parts adjacent. How far he ever got to the parts adjacent to the State of Ohio we are not informed.

They were also now beginning to progress toward work among the Cherokee Indians in Tennessee, and the name of Gideon Blackburn, the home missionary hero of that Southwest, appears as one who was employed for two months in missionary service and $500 was appropriated for an Indian school instituted by him. Year after year there is record of continued appropriations for the Hywassee school, which he had started.

The need of an increasing number of missionaries pressed itself upon the Assembly of 1809, and Presbyteries were called upon "to inquire for poor and pious young men who may promise usefulness in the Gospel ministry, and are willing to devote themselves to it, and raising a fund for their education" This is a hint of the beginning of the Board of Education. The Board of Publication has the first hint of its future in the action of the Assembly of 1801, when the Committee of Missions was directed "annually to prepare and publish for the information of the churches a pamphlet or pamphlets entitled, 'Missionary Intelligence.'"

Thus out of the work of the Board of Home Missions the need of one Board after another became apparent. In 1812, we have the first hint of a possible relation of home and foreign missions. A communication had been received from the American Board of Commissioners for

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foreign missions suggesting the expediency of a cooperation of the two societies. Our Assembly replied in substance that the business of Foreign Missions might better be managed by a single Board, and that the home mission engagements were so numerous as to render it inconvenient to take a part in foreign missions.

The year before the organization of the present Board of Home Missions, viz, in 1815, the appointment of missionaries covered a distance extending from Lake Champlain and the Canadian line on the North, and from Long Island and the Delaware River in the East, to the Indiana Territory in the West and Kentucky and Tennessee in the South.

The Home Board in its present form was organized in 1816. Its title was "The Board of Missions acting under authority of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States." They were authorized to generally conduct the work of home missions in all its phases.

After the organization of the Board, the work grew rapidly in every direction. The stream of population flowed into the central and western parts of the country. The Erie canal was completed in 1825, and a new impetus was given to the westward movement; Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin were being settled. Before the middle of the century advancing columns had crossed the Mississippi river under the lead of such pioneers as Marcus Whitman and H. H. Spaulding.

The progress of missions in the latter half of the century is comparatively recent history. It is an epoch of much missionary heroism that has not yet been written. The materials for it are abundant. How in one generation our Church organized nearly two thousand churches in the states of the plains between the Mississippi river and the Rocky Mountains; how schools, colleges and universities sprung up in the new towns and cities all over that region, bearing an impress of and exercising a Christian influence; and how in the latter part of the last century the tide of population, moving toward the Pacific coast and up along that coast to Alaska, gave opportunity for the going of the pioneer column of the home missionary and the Christian teacher; this is now a familiar story. It constitutes the most encouraging phase of our national expansion. Indeed, without that phase our national expansion had been more than a peril—it had been disastrous.

And now for one glance toward the future. To take in the opportunity for home mission work with which this century dawns, would be a survey stimulating enough to awaken the enthusiasm of the dullest brain. Never in the history of our historic American years have events so accumulated to stir the heart of Christian patriotism as since 1898.

What shall we be to ourselves? What shall we be to the nations of the earth? These are questions which come to us with new force. The answer to them very largely is to be found in the work of Christian missions. Whether the gathering of new populations under our flag will be a blessing or a curse, depends on what education and the Gospel shall do for those peoples. They are ready to receive them. Weary of the paganism and superstition under which they have lived, they are ready for better things. The Church of Christ has a summons loud enough to call forth all its energies. Will she respond in a measure at all adequate to the needs of the hour, so far as home mission work is concerned?

And what we shall be in our new frontage to the nations of the earth depends finally upon what we are in ourselves, in our Christian principles and institutions. Again the importance of home missions emerges. If the light that goes out from our shores is mellowed with Christian influence it will indeed be a light to lighten the nations of the earth.

"New occasions teach new duties." The occasions have come and the duties are before us. Let us, as a Church that is proud of its patriotic history in the past, and of its Christian zeal for the extension of Christ's kingdom, gird our loins and trim our lamps and go forward to garner fields that are white unto the harvest.

New York.

An Ordination in the Wilderness

BY THE REV. S. HALL YOUNG, D.D., GENERAL MISSIONARY FOR ALASKA

THERE is no more picturesque and beautiful town in all Alaska than Eagle on the Yukon, just on the eastern border of Alaska. The houses are all built of logs, but many of them have risen to two story dignity beyond the name of cabin. Here is the largest of the military posts of Alaska, Fort Egbert. Here is also the seat of Government for the Third Judicial District of Alaska, comprising more than half of its vast territory.

TWO PRESBYTERIANS AT TELLER

The Yukon makes a bend which is almost a right angle, and just below the bend is a high, rugged and very beautiful mountain. Level table lands shut in the river up and down. On a bank high above the river and quite level, sandy and free from mud, the village of Eagle is built. The climate, while not subject to sudden changes or storms, has a difference between the extreme cold of seventy degrees below zero and ninety above. The summer climate is simply delicious, almost cloudless weather, with unbroken summer day. The night hours show only a cool twilight wherein it is easy to do all kinds of work, affording the miner, traveller, or laborer with mind or hands an opportunity to do his work as if in a cool and cloudy day. So we turn night into day there, because that region resembles Heaven in at least that one respect, "there is no night there."

Here early one morning the first days of July, 1901, arrived quite a company of missionaries. Dr. Horatio R. Marsh was returning with his family to his lonely post of Point Barrow in the Arctic. With him were Peter Koonooya and his wife, returning from the General Assembly to the same mission; and Dr. Campbell with his young wife, going full of missionary enthusiasm to their no less lonely station on the island of St. Lawrence. I had procured passes on some of the Yukon steamers for this company, and so we joined forces. We had descended the hundred miles of river between Dawson and Eagle in a large scow, no steamer being ready. The rapid current of the Yukon, sweeping steadily along at the rate of six miles an hour, leaves the traveller without

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